


MACKINAC CENTER
FOR PUBLIC POLICY

April 18, 2017

Ms. Deanna Richeson
President & Chief Executive Officer
Michigan Lodging & Tourism Association
2175 Commons Parkway
Okemos, MI 48864

Dear Ms. Richeson:

I write to you today to request your assistance. On March 7, 2017, your organization distributed an electronic mail in which you claim the research on state tourism promotion by an unnamed think tank had “already been discredited.”

Despite my best efforts, I have found no studies, op-eds, blogs, vlogs, tweets or even so much as a letter to the editor to suggest that such research had been discredited. I ask you kindly to please present me with whatever evidence you have to support that assertion.

In scouring the tourism universe for some type of discrediting work, I have only found one public statement that I would even consider a semi-serious response to our own research, and it is a factually incorrect one. The charge was that we had not controlled for particular variables when in fact we had done so. You can read our full response online in the essay titled “Tourism Promotion Study Criticism Absurd, Ironic.”

Ms. Richeson, we take our scholarship very seriously. If our research has indeed been discredited, as you have alleged, we would like to know how and by whom. That way we can learn from any possible oversight or error on our part or — if in disagreement — offer a thoughtful rejoinder.

The Mackinac Center for Public Policy challenged you and Travel Michigan Vice President Dave Lorenz to a public debate last November. You declined. If you are truly aware of evidence that would discredit our tourism promotion research, then, by all means, share it with us and join us in a debate. It seems only fair that you do and our invitation still stands.

If you choose to not join us in a public and open debate, I ask that you kindly refrain from making any more allusions to our research that suggest it has been discredited.

Sincerely,



Michael LaFaive
Director
Morey Fiscal Policy Initiative