Tourism expert talks bills affecting business

Topics include employee scheduling, contract workers, marijuana and panic buttons.

By KRISTEN KELLEHER
Cape May Star and Wave

Atlantic City — A tourism expert spoke about legislation 92 states are taking on, including scheduling panic buttons for hotel employees and a possible referendum for recreational marijuana use during the New Jersey Conference on Tourism last week.

At a meeting Dec. 4 in the State House Annex, Assemblyman Louis Greenwald (D-Gloucester) announced a marijuana referendum for the November 2020 ballot, which Simonetta said is not yetia drafted but would likely move forward next year, could affect local employers.

“The major elements of the scheduling notification bill are to be given these schedule 14 days in advance of the actual workweek. That’s where we close down the bill.”

The bill prohibits “closing down” when an employee has a closing shift followed by an early opening shift. The bill would mandate a minimum rest period of 10 hours between an employee’s shifts. “There’s also predictability of pay. You’re supposed to be able to project the employee’s pay for whatever the pay period is,” he said. “It prohibits shift-changing. It will prohibit adding shifts without the proper notification. And it will prohibit violating any of the ‘closing down’ operations.”

According to Simonetta, the NJTA is working to include a weather provision in the bill. As an example, he said they are working with an individual who owns a Rita’s Italian Ice location. Under the bill, if it starts raining in the afternoon at Rita’s and four employees are working, the employer would have to pay those four employees, as opposed to sending them home the way the bill is currently written. Som

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