

Nevada resurrecting annual tourism conference

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

Former Nevada Gov. Richard Bryan, who developed the first Governor's Conference on Tourism more than two decades ago, will be honored at December's revamped two-day event.

But a representative of the Nevada Commission on Tourism's marketing committee warned that if the event is more fluff than business, it could be the state's last Governor's Conference for the state's leading industry.

"The Governor's Conference took a hiatus, and it's coming back in a new format," said Commissioner Ferenc Szonyi in this week's marketing committee meeting. "But when people come back to their businesses after the event, they've got to be able to say that this either taught me a lot or 'I met the right people.' If this gathering is a boondoggle, it's going to be the last one we ever do."

The conference has been the top gathering of tourism professionals in the state for 24 years. But in 2008, the event was abruptly canceled when Gov. Jim Gibbons called lawmakers into a special session to solve the state's budget woes days before the event.

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