

Jim Hagen has served as South Dakota's Secretary of Tourism since 2011. After a decade of leading the department, he is as passionate as ever about seeing the tourism industry in our state attain new heights.

Before being appointed to oversee the Department of Tourism, Jim served four and a half years as the National Fundraising and Public Relations Director for the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation. From 2004-2006, he served as South Dakota's Secretary of Tourism and State Development. From 1995-2002, he served as Chief of Staff and Special Advisor to Governor Bill Janklow.

Under his leadership, and in close partnership with the tourism industry, the state set new tourism economic impact records nine years in a row, including all-time spending and visitation records. Despite the challenges thrown at travel and tourism during the global COVID-19 pandemic, which saw average nationwide visitation and spending levels drop 50 percent or higher in other states, Secretary Hagen and his team were able to guide the tourism industry in South Dakota to much stronger numbers. In 2020, visitor spending was down only 18%, and visitation down only 13%. During the pandemic year of 2020, South Dakota was one of the three best-performing states in the nation in travel and tourism. It was the very first state tourism industry in the country to fully recover from the effects of the pandemic and return to pre-COVID spending and visitation levels.

Secretary Hagen has also been active on the national travel and tourism stage. In March 2014, he was appointed to the 32-member National Travel and Tourism Advisory Board (TTAB) by then-U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker. The board is charged with advising the United States Secretary of Commerce on travel and tourism issues affecting the United States. In March 2016, he was reappointed by Secretary Pritzker to an additional two-year term. U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross reappointed Secretary Hagen to a third term in September 2018. Secretary Hagen also served five years on the Executive Board of the U.S. Travel Association, chaired the association's Membership Governance Committee, and also served a recent two-year term as Chairman of the National Council of State Tourism Directors.

During his tenure as secretary, the Department of Tourism has been the recipient of numerous state, regional and national marketing and public relations awards. Jim was named the **National State Tourism Director of the Year** in 2014. In January 2021, Governor Kristi Noem honored him with the South Dakota tourism industry's highest honor, **the Ben Black Elk Award**, for exceptional lifetime achievement and contributions to tourism in the state.

Secretary Hagen grew up in the northeast corner of the Mount Rushmore State. He is an honors graduate of the University of Southern California.