

RALEIGH, N.C. — Governor Roy Cooper announced today that North Carolina tourism generated record visitor spending in 2018 with a total of \$25.3 billion. The 5.6 percent increase from 2017 was North Carolina's largest percentage growth since 2011. Additionally, tourism industry-supported employment topped 230,000 jobs to set another record for the state.

"Tourism is a major economic engine for our state bringing billions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of jobs," Gov. Cooper said. "We're proud to welcome visitors from our mountains to our coast and want even more people to know what a great place North Carolina is to spend their time and money."

Gov. Cooper, who proclaimed May 5-11 as [Travel and Tourism Week in North Carolina](#), applauded the growth in direct tourism employment, which was up 2.2 percent from 2017. Payroll income grew 5.3 percent to top \$6.3 billion.

The figures are from research commissioned by [Visit North Carolina](#), a unit of the [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina](#), and conducted by the [U.S. Travel Association](#). Other findings from the study showed state and local tax receipts from visitor spending rose 4.8 percent to more than \$2 billion. Visitors spent more than \$69 million per day in North Carolina last year and contributed about \$5.6 million per day in state and local tax revenues as a result of that spending.

The Travel Economic Impact Model reflects preliminary estimates for 2018 domestic travel in North Carolina based on national travel studies conducted by the U.S. Travel Association, the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Survey of Consumer Expenditures, STR lodging data, data from local/state/federal government organizations, and other public and private data sources. More information about the study can be found online at partners.visitnc.com/economic-impact-studies.

"The tourism industry's success is shared across North Carolina supporting more than 45,000 small businesses," said Anthony M. Copeland, North Carolina Commerce Secretary. "Tourism means jobs in all of the state's 100 counties. In addition, each North Carolina household saves an average of \$532 annually in state and local taxes as a result of tax revenue generated by visitor spending."

Travel and Tourism Week in North Carolina is part of National Travel and Tourism Week. The state's nine Welcome Centers will host activities throughout the week.

Tourism facts

- Domestic travelers spent a record \$25.3 billion in 2018, up from \$23.9 billion in 2017. That's an increase of 5.6 percent.
- Visitors to North Carolina generated about \$3.9 billion in federal, state and local taxes in 2018. That total represents a 4.8 percent increase from 2017.
- State tax receipts as a result of visitor spending rose 4.7 percent to more than \$1.28 billion in 2018.
- Local tax receipts from visitor spending grew 4.9 percent to \$774.6 million.
- Direct tourism employment in North Carolina increased 2.2 percent to 230,560.
- Direct tourism payroll increased 5.3 percent to more than \$6.3 billion.
- Visitors spend more than \$69 million per day in North Carolina. That spending adds \$5.64 million per day to state and local tax revenues (about \$3.5 million in state taxes and \$2.1 million in local taxes).
- Each North Carolina household saves on average \$532 in state and local taxes as a direct result of visitor spending in the state.
- More than 45,000 businesses in North Carolina directly provide products and services to

travelers, with travelers directly contributing more than 26 percent to their total products and services.

- North Carolina hosted more than 51 million visitors in 2018.

About Visit North Carolina:

Visit North Carolina is part of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina. Established in 2014, the EDPNC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that oversees the state's efforts in business and job recruitment and retention, international trade, and tourism, film and sports development. The mission of Visit North Carolina is to unify and lead the state in developing North Carolina as a major destination for leisure travel, group tours, meetings and conventions, sports events and film production. For more information on planning a trip to North Carolina, go to VisitNC.com.

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