

RALEIGH, N.C. — North Carolina Secretary of Commerce Anthony Copeland announced Tuesday that North Carolina tourism generated record visitor spending in 2016 with a total of \$22.9 billion, a 4.3 percent increase from 2015. Tourism industry-supported employment topped 218,000 jobs to set another record for the state.

"Nearly 50 million people from across the United States visited North Carolina destinations last year," Copeland said. "The money they spent supported 218,340 jobs and more than 45,000 businesses."

Copeland applauded the growth in direct tourism employment, which was up 3.2 percent from 2015. Payroll income grew even more, increasing 5.9 percent to top \$5.5 billion.

The figures are from research commissioned by Visit North Carolina, and conducted by the U.S. Travel Association. Other findings from the study showed state tax receipts from visitor spending rose 5.2 percent to nearly \$1.2 billion. Visitors spent nearly \$63 million per day in North Carolina last year and contributed about \$5.1 million per day in state and local tax revenues as a result of that spending.

"The tourism industry's success is shared across North Carolina," said Wit Tuttell, executive director of Visit North Carolina. "Tourism means jobs in all of the state's 100 counties. In addition, each North Carolina household saves \$497 annually in state and local taxes as a result of tax revenue generated by visitor spending."

The overview of the report can be found online at partners.visitnc.com/economic-impact-studies.

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