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Tourism to DeKalb County Contributing to Record Economic Growth in Illinois

DeKalb County generated \$1.69 million in local tax revenue and \$101.7 million in visitor expenditures.

DeKalb, IL – The Illinois Office of Tourism announced both international and domestic travel expenditures reached \$41.7 billion in 2018 which is a \$2 billion boost to the state’s economy since 2017. More than 117 million visitors came to Illinois in 2018 – the 8th consecutive year of record tourism growth in the state – contributing to an increase of visitor spending, tax revenue and local jobs.

DeKalb County contributed to the state’s added economic domestic growth, with \$101.7 million in travel expenditures (a 2.9% increase) and \$1.69 million in local tax revenue (a 1.5% increase). More than 5,200 jobs were created across the state as a result of visitor spending, with 590 of them in DeKalb County.

“Tourism is a critical part of our economy, helping to boost local and state tax revenue and create jobs,” said Jan Kemmerling, Acting Director of the Illinois Office of Tourism. “From scenic road trips, stunning state parks, amazing family-friendly attractions and spectacular nightlife, Illinois offers incredible experiences for visitors all year long.”

Economic Impact of Domestic Travel by County:

DeKalb County

Travel expenditures – \$101.7 million (2.9% increase)

Local tax revenue – \$1.69 million (1.5% increase)

“DeKalb County looks forward to attracting visitors as we continue to work hard to develop the region as a tourist destination,” says Erin Reynolds, Interim Executive Director, DeKalb County CVB.

“This marks the ninth consecutive year of growth for the economic impact driven by visitor spending. These numbers reflect the success of the marketing and sales efforts that the DeKalb County CVB does to promote our area to visitors. They are also reflective of the thriving tourism industry that our partners are building. Many attractions are expanding to keep up with the demand for additional meeting and event space. New business developments and community events continue to draw both business and leisure travelers to our area as well,” stated Reynolds. “Tourism continues to make a significant impact on the economic vitality of DeKalb County. We thank all our financial stakeholders and hospitality partners for their support. Local investment is the key to our continued success.”

Fast Facts about Illinois Tourism in 2018:

- Of Illinois’ 114.6 million domestic visitors, 16% were for business and 84% for leisure
- Illinois welcomed more than 2.3 million international visitors in 2018
- In the past 10 years, domestic travel to Illinois has increased by 26 million visitors
- The visitor expenditures generated by domestic visitors supported 342,300 jobs in 2018 which is an increase of 6,200 jobs since 2017
- State and local tax revenue generated from visitor spending jumped 7.1 percent to \$3.3 billion, creating an addition \$220.8 million for the state and local communities

Illinois Office of Tourism receives domestic visitor volume estimates from DK Shifflet and international visitor numbers from Tourism Economics. Visitor expenditures, tax revenue and jobs numbers come from U.S. Travel Association.

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The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents