

Report: Delaware tourism sets new records

Dover, Del. – Delaware tourism experienced a record-breaking year as the state welcomed 9.2 million visitors who accounted for \$3.5 billion in economic impact.

Gov. John Carney highlighted those impressive numbers in discussing Delaware's thriving tourism industry as part of his State of the State address on Thursday.

According to data for 2018 released today by the Delaware Tourism Office, visitors paid \$545.1 million in state and local taxes and fees, without which each Delaware household would have had to pay an additional \$1,562 in taxes.

"Tourism is a multibillion-dollar industry in Delaware, our fourth-largest private employment sector and a vital part of the state economy," **Gov. Carney** said. "By supporting tourism, we also enhance the quality of life for all Delawareans by offering recreational and cultural activities and making sure there's even more cool stuff to do in Delaware."

"Delaware benefits from a strong tourism industry," **Secretary of State Jeffrey Bullock** said. "More than 44,000 people work in the industry in Delaware, which includes hundreds of small businesses and nonprofit organizations."

For visitors to Delaware, the most popular activities in 2018 were, in order, tax-free shopping, dining and beaches. Visitors spent an average of \$346 during their stay in 2018.

More than two-thirds of visitors came from nearby metropolitan areas in the mid-Atlantic and northeast with Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York and Washington, D.C., being among the most popular origination markets.

“At the Delaware Tourism Office, we share Delaware’s ‘Endless Discoveries’ with out-of-state travelers each year,” **Delaware Tourism Office Director Liz Keller** said. “From launching award-winning marketing campaigns to embracing innovative technology, we are proud to share what makes Delaware an ideal destination and help create a positive economic impact for our state.”

In 2018, the Delaware Tourism Office launched several initiatives to drive visitation, including a national, multimedia ad campaign, a 360-degree virtual reality tour of Delaware attractions and attendance at national consumer and travel industry trade shows where DTO highlighted Delaware’s “Endless Discoveries” in conversations with potential travelers.

The Delaware Tourism Office, 99 Kings Highway in Dover, Del., is part of the Delaware Division of Small Business. DTO promotes tourism and economic growth in Delaware. For more information, visit the official Delaware Tourism website at www.visitdelaware.com or call toll-free (866) 284-7483.

Sources: D.K. Shifflet & Associates and Rockport Analytics. For the 2018 Delaware tourism industry report, visit <http://www.visitdelaware.com/industry/tourism-statistics>.

Media Contact

Michael Chesney

Director of Communications

Division of Small Business

Michael.Chesney@state.de.us

(302) 577- 8472 (office)

(302) 943-9508 (cell)