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LOCAL TOURISM EXPENDITURES EXCEED \$680,000,000 IN ALBEMARLE COUNTY & CHARLOTTESVILLE IN 2019

Visitors generated sales and tax revenue to support a healthy economy in Albemarle County & Charlottesville

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – Tourism expenditures in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville accounted for \$22,943,441 in local tax collection to the region in 2019, according to data released by the United States Travel Association (USTA).

According to the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), tourism in Virginia generated \$27 billion in visitor spending in 2019. The increase is largely attributed to Virginia's tourism promotion and development efforts in coordination with local partner efforts, including hotels, restaurants, agritourism, craft breweries, wineries, distilleries, cideries, sports, outdoor recreation, festivals and events, music venues, wedding venues, meeting and convention venues, attractions and more.

Tourism was a critical contributor to the local economy in 2019. Tourism revenue for Albemarle County reached \$406,052,608, a 3.9 percent increase over 2018. Tourism-supported jobs in Albemarle County totaled 3,415, while local tourism-related taxes were \$13,776,327. Tourism revenue for the City of Charlottesville reached \$277,314,895, a 5.4 percent increase over 2018. Tourism-supported jobs in Charlottesville totaled 2,706, while local tourism-related taxes were \$9,167,113. All data was received by the VTC from USTA and is based on domestic visitor spending (travelers from within the United States) from trips taken 50 miles or more away from home.

The travel industry in the Commonwealth has continued to grow 10 years in a row with a compound annual growth rate of 3.9 percent since 2010. However, these figures do not account for the devastating impact that COVID-19 has had on the tourism industry.

"We are encouraged to receive the news that our industry made an increased economic impact for our community in 2019. The businesses and non-profit organizations we support work hard to provide world-class experiences, which has historically attracted visitors from all over the world to our community," said Courtney Cacatian, Executive Director of the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau. "The tax revenue generated from these visitors then goes to support our local jurisdictions."

The coronavirus pandemic put the Virginia travel and tourism industry in crisis, and imposed a devastating strain on Virginia's hotels, restaurants, attractions and communities. The pandemic caused significantly decreased revenue and a reduced workforce, while some businesses have been forced to shutter temporarily if not completely. As a result, early numbers for 2020 project a sharp decrease in tourism spending.

As the Commonwealth continues to grapple with the impact of COVID-19, the pandemic has further emphasized the stark contrast in 2019 and 2020 and that statewide economic revival cannot occur without the recovery of the travel industry, which will require ongoing support.

The [Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) (CACVB) works from a budget based on lodging tax collection from two years prior but has wasted no time in preparing for the impact of COVID to the local businesses and for future budget years. “The CACVB resumed advertising efforts in late June and has been proactively welcoming visitors back as they feel comfortable, particularly from our drive markets,” said Cacatian. “We want to stay top of mind for visitors, even if they’re not yet ready to travel. I know our lodging properties, restaurants, attractions, the University of Virginia and the local jurisdictions are working hard to keep everyone safe during this time. I firmly believe our destination is in a good position to safely welcome visitors back, especially as we look ahead to autumn.”

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About the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau (CACVB) welcomes thousands of visitors to the region each year from all over the world who are seeking a variety of unique experiences in history, food, wine, spirits and adventure. The CACVB serves as the global resource for marketing the tourism assets of the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle, and assists tour operators, meeting planners, and other groups in planning visits to the destination. The CACVB’s mission is to enhance the economic prosperity of the people of the City and County by promoting, selling and marketing the area as a destination, in pursuit of the meetings and tourism markets.