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**TOURISM SPENDING A MAJOR DRIVER OF MONTEREY COUNTY'S
ROBUST ECONOMY IN 2017**

New Report Finds Significant Levels of Growth in Spending and Local Tax Revenue

MONTEREY, Calif., May 8, 2018 – As we celebrate National Travel and Tourism Week, the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is also celebrating significant levels of growth in visitor spending and local tax revenue as the destination continues to attract more and more visitors every year. The MCCVB released today the “Monterey County Travel Impacts” report, showing that travelers to the destination injected \$2.85 billion into the local economy, an increase of 3.5 percent from 2016, and the seventh consecutive year of growth.

Tourism is the number one industry on the Monterey Peninsula, and the second largest industry in Monterey County. The new report shows visitor spending in the destination also supported nearly 25,000 jobs and generated \$127 million in local tax revenue, an 8.7 percent increase, to continue to propel the county’s economy forward. This revenue provides communities with the tax resources needed to invest in infrastructure improvements, programs and projects that benefit residents.

“Tourism is a vital part of our destination’s economy, and we continue to see an increase in visitor spending which is a win-win for our entire community,” said Tammy Blount-Canavan, President and CEO of the MCCVB. “It is also a very competitive business, with other destinations seeking to increase their share of tourism spending at the expense of ours. It is crucial that we remain aggressive and focused in attracting valuable travelers whose spending provides critical tax revenue and employs 25,000 people in Monterey County.”

With more visitors coming to the region, the MCCVB is encouraging guests to travel responsibly. Monterey County works hard to make our communities the very best places to live and to visit with a thriving environment and respect for the local culture. As part of the MCCVB’s “Sustainable Moments” initiative, the organization is educating visitors on the importance of protecting and preserving the destination's incredible natural assets and pristine landscape.

“Balance between offering unforgettable experiences for travelers while improving quality of life for residents is imperative for tourism to bring its intended benefit to our community.” says Blount-Canavan. “That is what our Sustainable Moments initiative is designed to do and we’re working with a variety of community partners to make it happen.”

Statewide, visitors spent a record \$132.4 billion, and the tourism industry provided more than 1.1 million jobs for Californians. State and local tax revenue generated by tourism reached \$10.9 billion, providing communities like Monterey County with the resources to thrive.

“Monterey County competes with destinations such as Napa, Sonoma, Palm Springs and Newport Beach. In each of these situations we are being outspent. This growth shows we are using our resources wisely and with great expertise,” said John Lloyd, MCCVB Board Chair and General Manager at the Pine Inn in Carmel-by-the-Sea. “Our Board is focused on synergizing our budget and our community collaboration to ensure that we maximize the positive benefits of tourism for our community.”

The “Monterey County Travel Impacts” report was compiled by Dean Runyan Associates, the foremost company in tourism research and analytics, and demonstrates economic value to stakeholders and leaders throughout the county. To access the complete report, please visit www.seemonterey.com/members/tools/reports.

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ABOUT MONTEREY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU:

The Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is a 501c6 organization that drives tourism for Monterey County. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in the County. The MCCVB is a partnership of the hospitality community and local governments that aims to drive business growth through compelling marketing and targeted sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to our guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was nearly \$2.85 billion in 2017, representing a 3.5 percent increase from 2016. Visitors also generated \$127 million in local tax receipts, an 8.7 percent increase and supported nearly 25,000 jobs.