

## News Release

### Governor Kaine Announces Virginia Ranked Eighth in the Nation for Domestic Visitor Spending

~ Domestic spending increase 5.8 percent in 2007 ~

**ALEXANDRIA** (September 29, 2009) – Governor Timothy M. Kaine today announced that Virginia's tourism industry rose to eighth in the nation for domestic visitor spending in 2007. The increase from tenth to eighth saw Virginia move past New Jersey and Georgia in nationwide rankings for domestic visitor spending, according to data just released by the U.S. Travel Association. The governor made the announcement at VA-1, the state's annual tourism conference, held this year in Old Town Alexandria.

*Even through tough economic times, Virginia has maintained our focus on being the leading destination in the country for business - and the results are paying off, Governor Kaine said. Tourism in Virginia is producing billions in revenue, creating hundreds of thousands of jobs, and bringing in more than a billion dollars in state and local taxes every year. Its results like these that have made Virginia the Best State for Business in America for four years running.*



[VA-1 Travel and Tourism Conference](#)

Tourism, one of Virginia's largest industries, generated \$19.2 billion in revenue, supported 210,620 jobs and provided \$1.28 billion in state and local tax revenue in 2008. Since 1993, Virginia has tracked domestic traveler spending in competitive states and has consistently ranked tenth in the nation. Since 2000, Virginia has been steadily gaining ground.

Virginia contracts with the U.S. Travel Association to receive annual domestic traveler spending estimates for the Commonwealth and each of its localities. Domestic visitor spending grew from \$17.6 billion in 2006 to \$18.7 billion in 2007, representing a 5.8 percent increase.

Governor Kaine also celebrated the continued growth of the *Virginia Green* travel program by naming the Hilton Alexandria Old Town as a newly-certified *Virginia Green* destination. The Virginia Green program has grown from 300 certified businesses at the beginning of 2009 to more than 650 to date, more than doubling the program in less than one year. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality awards *Virginia Green* certification to tourism businesses that commit to waste-reducing activities such as recycling, optional linen service, water and energy conservation, green cleaning, purchasing eco-friendly products and other steps that help reduce harmful environmental effects.

This year is the 40th anniversary of Virginia is for Lovers, making it America's longest-running state tourism slogan. Forbes.com recently named Virginia is for Lovers as one of the top ten tourism marketing campaigns of all time. On September 21, Virginia is for Lovers was inducted into the Madison Avenue Advertising Walk of Fame as an iconic slogan.

For more facts and figures about tourism in Virginia, including statewide and local economic impact data, go to [www.vatc.org](http://www.vatc.org). Visit [www.virginia.org](http://www.virginia.org) or call 1-800-VISITVA for travel planning resources.

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