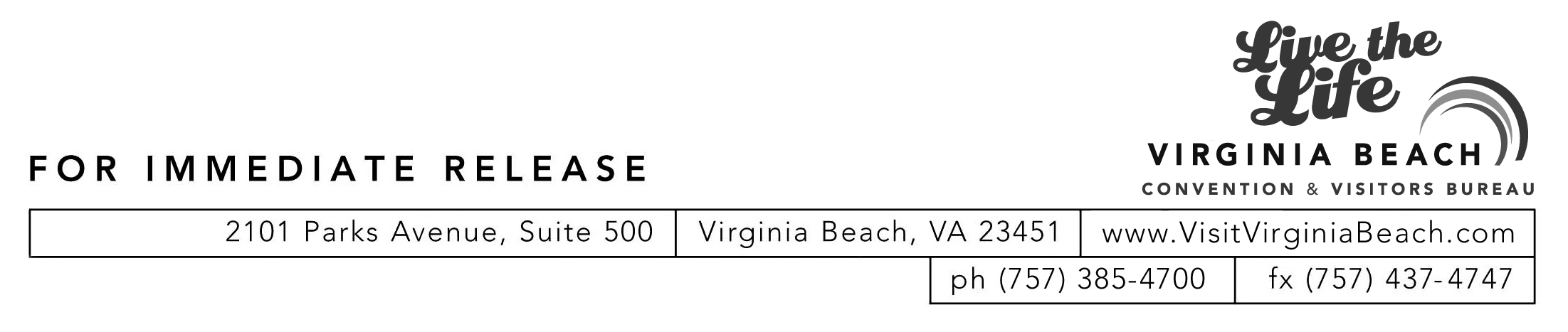
**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**



Tiffany Russell, APR, CDME | Virginia Beach CVB | [tmrussel@visitvirginiabeach.com](mailto:tmrussel@visitvirginiabeach.com) | 757.385.6628

Teresa Diaz, APR | Virginia Beach CVB | [tdiaz@visitvirginiabeach.com](mailto:tdiaz@visitvirginiabeach.com) | 757.385.6631

**Research Shows Continued Tourism Growth**

***Virginia Tourism Corporation shares numbers from leading U.S. travel data resource***

**Virginia Beach, Va.** October 1, 2019) – Economic impact data released by U.S. Travel Association confirms the travel and tourism industry in Virginia Beach is strong and continues to grow at a steady pace. U.S Travel research released by the state tourism authority, Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), shows the city has experienced increases for the past five consecutive years (2014 – 2018) in several key economic impact classifications:

* Virginia Beach visitors spent a record **$1.63 billion** in 2018, an increase of **4.4 percent** over 2017;
* Local tax receipts grew **2.3 percent**, exceeding **$62.6 million**;
* State tax receipts reported in at **$77.2 million,** representing an almost **3 percent increase**;
* Payroll for travel and tourism related jobs in Virginia Beach rose **3.5 percent.**

Research shared by Longwoods International, a research resource for visitation and demographic data, shows a record **20.2 million visitors** traveled to Virginia Beach in 2018, a **6 percent** increase over 2017. Overnight visitation grew to 10.5 million and day visitation reached 9.7 million. Source: Longwoods International, 2019

“From Atlantic Avenue to Sandbridge to Town Center and beyond, Virginia Beach offers a unique selling proposition as a vibrant coastal city vacation and business destination, offering visitors a diversity of experiences. Our residents benefit year-round from increased entertainment and attraction options and a tax base that is subsidized thanks to our robust tourism industry,” said Ron Kuhlman, an interim director for the Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau.

With Virginia is for Lovers celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2019, VTC took the opportunity to look back on historic economic impact data. The economic impact of travel in the Commonwealth has grown from $1.3 billion ($8.6 billion in 2018 dollars) in 1969 to $26 billion in 2018, with a compound annual growth rate of 6.4 percent.

“Virginia’s tourism industry continues to transform communities across the Commonwealth by stimulating our local economies, generating positive growth, and creating jobs and opportunity for our citizens,” said Governor Ralph Northam. “From coast to cliff, Virginia’s rich history, charming small towns, booming culinary scene, beautiful mountain vistas and warm, sunny beaches have positioned the Commonwealth to be a premier travel destination in the United States. As we look ahead to the next 50 years, we invite visitors from across the country and the around the world to discover for themselves why Virginia is for Lovers.”

***Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau (***[***www.visitvirginiabeach.com***](http://www.visitvirginiabeach.com)***)-****Where the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay meet, Virginia Beach promises visitors a unique chance to “Live the Life.” Nature at its finest, just-caught and just-picked local food and toes-in-the-sand relaxation combine for a soul-satisfying experience. A world-renowned boardwalk, energetic downtown, state-of-the-art Convention Center, abundant parks and waterways, and mild weather give rise to an active lifestyle and flourishing local culture. The Virginia Beach CVB is responsible for promoting year-round leisure, business, meetings and conventions, international and sports travel to Virginia’s most populous city. For media information and images, visit* [*www.VisitVirginiaBeach.com/pressroom*](http://www.VisitVirginiaBeach.com/pressroom)*. Follow Virginia Beach on Twitter at twitter.com/VisitVaBch, Instagram at instagram.com/visitvabeach, Facebook at* [*www.facebook.com/VirginiaBeachVA*](http://www.facebook.com/VirginiaBeachVA)

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