



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

CHOOSE
CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL AND CHOOSE CHICAGO ANNOUNCE ADDITIONAL TOURISM RECORDS FOR 2012: ECONOMIC IMPACT, TAX REVENUE, AND JOB CREATION

Numbers outpace even pre-recession numbers; more than \$12 billion impact on economy

Today, citing information from U.S. Travel, Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Don Welsh, President and CEO of Choose Chicago, announced that Chicago's record 2012 visitation resulted in records in several key areas. Travel expenditures in Chicago continued to surge in 2012 to a record \$12.76 billion. Total tax revenue from domestic and overseas visitor spending increased by 11 percent in 2012 setting a record at \$805.6 million. Employment in Chicago's leisure and hospitality sector exceeded the 2007 pre-recession peak, and all jobs lost during the recession have been fully recovered. Since 2010, Chicago has benefitted from a 6.4% increase in tourism-related employment, adding 8,000 tourism related jobs.

"The City of Chicago continues to be a travel destination for people around the world," Mayor Rahm Emanuel said. "The numbers show that our efforts to attract visitors to our city are proving successful and have had a large and positive impact on our economy and jobs."

Job growth is one of the key areas of advancement. Chicago has seen growth across the board and now has more than 132,000 tourism-related jobs. These jobs support a total payroll of \$4.44 billion – also a record.

Another area of strong growth for Chicago is direct spending related to tourism. Total spending surged to a record \$12.76 billion in 2012, a 6.7 percent gain over 2011. Domestic expenditures grew to a record setting \$11.03 billion, a 5.6 percent gain. International expenditures, reflecting a record level of overseas visitors to Chicago also reached a record level, at \$1.72 billion a gain of 14.5 percent, and more than half a billion dollars ahead of where things were during the recession.

Finally, total tax revenue has grown more than 37 percent since the recessionary challenges of 2009. The tourism industry in 2012 generated a stunning \$805.6 million in taxes. In 2012, as has been previously reported, the growth in hotel occupancy in Chicago led to more than \$100 million in Chicago hotel taxes for the first time ever, besting the previous record set in 2008 by \$23 million.

"The growth in Chicago's hotels and the new jobs the leisure and hospitality sector have created are very promising," said Don Welsh. "I encourage the City of Chicago to continue to make concerted efforts to cultivate tourism to our city. I look forward to continuing to work with Mayor Emanuel as we make further progress."

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

In 2012, Chicago welcomed 46.37 million visitors, and moved up to 9th in International tourism (from its previous position in tenth place). Mayor Emanuel set a goal upon taking office of 50 million visitors annually by 2020, and the city has closed two-thirds of that gap already. Additionally, he has set a goal of being among the top 5 US cities for international visitation by 2020.

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