



Governor Rauner highlights importance of tourism to Illinois economy

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CHICAGO — Gov. Rauner today emphasized the role tourism plays in the economic health of Illinois communities at the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau annual meeting and awards luncheon. This year's theme was The Power of Tourism.



“As the third largest employer in Illinois, the tourism industry is vital for the state’s economy and has created 20,000 new jobs over the past two years,” Rauner said. “Illinois has so many attractions to offer and enjoy, and increasing our number of domestic visitors will support communities and small businesses across the state.”

In 2016, Illinois welcomed 110 million domestic visitors and domestic travel in Illinois supported more than 300,000 jobs. For every \$1 invested in tourism in Illinois, \$9 are generated in economic activity and impact.

“I am striving for the economic reforms and regulation rollbacks that will improve Illinois’ business climate and make it easier for Illinoisans to start small businesses in the tourism industry,” Rauner said.

The Chicago Southland region experienced regionally robust tourism in Fiscal Year 2017, during which 1.27 million hotel room nights were sold. This reflects a broader increase in visitors the city of Chicago has experienced during recent years. In 2016, Chicago outpaced the national average of 2.4 percent growth with a 2.7 percent year-over-year domestic traveler growth.

“The governor and State have been incredibly supportive of tourism and convention initiatives here in Chicago as well as throughout Illinois,” President and CEO of Choose Chicago David Whitaker said. “The partnership and collaboration we enjoy with the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Illinois Office of Tourism amplify the importance of a coordinated effort as we all look to grow awareness of and visitation to our amazing city, region and state.”