



**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**  
*Office of the Governor*

Mark R. Warner  
Governor

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**GOVERNOR WARNER ANNOUNCES  
RECORD ECONOMIC IMPACT OF VIRGINIA TOURISM IN 2003**

*~\$15.2 billion industry grew 5.2% over 2002~*

**RICHMOND** – Governor Mark R. Warner today announced an economic impact of \$15.2 billion for the state’s tourism industry in 2003, a 5.2 percent growth over 2002 and a figure that makes tourism 5.1 percent of the Gross State Product. The 2002 economic impact in Virginia was \$14.5 billion.

“Tourism has proven itself to be an engine of growth in the Virginia economy,” Governor Warner said. “The core industry of travel and tourism generated 7.9 percent of total employment in 2003 for a total of 280,700 full-time jobs, compared to 264,184 jobs in 2002. This makes travel and tourism the fifth largest private-sector employer in the Commonwealth.”

Tourism-generated jobs provided \$10.6 billion in labor income in 2003 – salaries and benefits for Virginians -- as compared to \$9.7 billion in 2002, adding up to a 9.3 percent increase. Tourism is also a significant source of government revenues and was responsible for \$2 billion in combined state and local tax revenues in 2003, an 8.9 percent increase over 2002’s \$1.86 billion.

The 2003 tourism impact is a Virginia record. Even following the September 11th terrorist strikes, the 2001 and 2002 tourism impact declined only slightly in Virginia. Every other year it has grown, since Virginia started keeping records in the 1970s.

The impact figure comes from the Virginia Tourism Corporation’s Tourism Satellite Account, a methodology used first in Virginia last year, and developed by the World Tourism Organization. The account puts the tourism industry on par with the economic impact of other industries. Used by many nations, it is more detailed, more accurate and more comprehensive than traditional economic impact approaches.

For more information on the economic impact of travel and tourism, go to the Virginia Tourism Corporation’s industry Web site at [www.VATC.org](http://www.VATC.org).

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