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# MISSISSIPPI

TOURISM ASSOCIATION

## **MISSISSIPPI TOURISM ASSOCIATION HOSTS TOURISM DAY AT THE CAPITOL, CELEBRATES RECORD-BREAKING ECONOMIC IMPACT**

**JACKSON, MISS.** – The Mississippi Tourism Association (MTA) hosted its annual Tourism Day at the Capitol today, joined by Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann and a gathering of statewide tourism professionals. The event highlighted the tourism industry’s significant economic impact, underscoring its vital role in job creation, community development, and economic expansion across Mississippi.

As Mississippi’s fourth-largest industry, tourism is a multi-billion-dollar economic engine that supports 133,880 jobs, strengthens small businesses, and injects new dollars into local communities.

In 2023, Mississippi hosted 43.7 million visitors, who spent an unprecedented \$11.5 billion, contributing \$1.1 billion in state and local taxes. When factoring in direct and induced impacts, tourism generated a total economic impact of \$17.5 billion statewide, reinforcing its role as a critical driver of Mississippi’s economy.

Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann spoke and emphasized the strong return on investment in the tourism industry and what it means for Mississippi.

"Tourism is a vital pillar of Mississippi’s economy, generating billions in revenue, empowering small business and creating economic opportunities statewide, making its investment essential to our future. It is the key storyteller of our rich culture, history, arts, music, agriculture, and athletics. Most importantly, tourism helps make Mississippi a prosperous place our citizens can proudly call home for generations."

Tourism is more than visitor spending—it is a catalyst for economic development. Site selectors, business leaders, and investors often form their first impressions of Mississippi through travel and tourism experiences, making destination development a key factor in attracting new industries and talent. All development starts with a visit and that visit starts with tourism.



MTA's membership is led by a board of directors, with Dr. Rickey Thigpen, President & CEO of Visit Jackson, currently serving as MTA President.

“Mississippi’s tourism success is no accident—it is the result of strategic investment, strong leadership, and the dedication of our industry professionals,” said Dr. Thigpen. “Tourism is not only an economic driver but also a transformational force that strengthens our communities, enhances our quality of life, and positions Mississippi as a world-class destination. Our state leaders have placed tremendous confidence in our industry, and today, we celebrate the remarkable progress we’ve made together.”

As Mississippi tourism continues its upward trajectory, workforce development remains a top priority to sustain growth and maintain high-quality visitor experiences.

“Tourism is more than just an economic driver—it’s a catalyst for community growth and a reflection of the warmth and hospitality that define Mississippi,” said MTA Executive Director Danielle Morgan. “Mississippi’s tourism industry is a powerhouse, but it depends on the strength of its workforce. The hospitality sector is one of the largest employers in the state; and to remain competitive, we must continue to invest in training and recruitment strategies that ensure our workforce is ready to meet demand and offer the unique brand of service we’re known for as ‘The Hospitality State’.”

Tourism is also a key contributor to infrastructure improvements, as increased sales tax revenue from visitor spending directly funds projects that benefit residents and enhance community development.

As part of Tourism Day at the Capitol, MTA and Mississippi Gaming and Hospitality Association will be co-hosting a ticketed event from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. at The South to honor legislators and tourism industry supporters. Entertainment will be provided by The B.B. King Museum Centennial Band in honor and celebration of the late B.B. King’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday later this year.

\* Photos will be added [here](#) following the press conference. If you have trouble accessing, them please let us know.

\* Source for economic impact numbers can be found here: <https://visitmississippi.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2023-Tourism-Economic-Contribution-Report.pdf>

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*The voice of tourism, the Mississippi Tourism Association (MTA) is a membership organization, whose mission is to unite all sectors of the tourism industry through advocacy, promotion and education. MTA's vision is to transform Mississippi's economy through increased visitor spending and overall travel industry growth. For more than 35 years, MTA has led Mississippi's tourism education and advocacy efforts. Membership and organization details can be found at [mstourism.com](http://mstourism.com).*