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CHICAGO ALREADY SETTING TOURISM RECORDS IN 2018

Record-Setting First Two Months Saw Overall Increase in Business and Leisure Segments

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced Chicago set new tourism records in the first two months of 2018. The performance to date builds on last year's record-setting tourism. In 2017 more than 55 million people visited Chicago, supporting more than 146,000 jobs that reached every part of Chicago.

"Welcoming more guests than ever before creates more jobs for Chicago residents, supports local businesses and injects billions of dollars into our city's economy," Mayor Emanuel said. "As Chicago has become a top global destination for visitors our tourism economy has grown by leaps and bounds, and it is a promising sign the that 2018 is off to our strongest start ever."

Chicago hotel performance for the first two months of 2018 saw record growth in demand and occupancy. For the combined months of January and February hotel demand, representing the number of room nights sold, was up 12.5 percent. The record volume helped push an overall occupancy increase of 7.3 percent.

The number of people visiting Chicago for both business and leisure increased significantly in the first two months of 2018. Rooms sold associated with Group and Meetings business was up 32.8 percent in the first two months while Leisure visitor rooms consumed increased 5.9 percent - both record growth for the period.

January and February's strong visitor numbers were driven in part by a series of major meetings and conventions hosted in the city. There were two major conventions meeting in Chicago for the very first time as well as three large meetings convening at McCormick Place this year that were not part of the meetings line up in 2017.

"These results underscore the importance and impact of a successful year-round meetings calendar," Choose Chicago President & CEO David Whitaker said. "Attracting more convention

delegates and their spending while here in the often slower shoulder months of January and February helps fuel the overall tourism economy and the jobs supported by it.”

The increase in Leisure visitors comes on the heels of steady growth experienced in 2017 which saw an annual increase of 6.4 percent.

The increase in demand and occupancy helped support an increase in hotel revenue per room of 11.3 percent. This comes as Chicago has added six new hotels since February of last year adding 4.9 percent more rooms supply.

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