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March bed tax report cracks \$3 million for first time

February room-nights show Tampa Bay resonating with visitors

TAMPA (April 11, 2016) – Visit Tampa Bay and Hillsborough County reported more than \$3.3 million in Tourist Development taxes in March – a record for the month that is more than 18 percent higher than the same period in 2015.

The March report reflected taxes collected on hotel room sales in February. The Tourist Development Tax, also known as the bed tax, is a 5 percent levy on hotel rooms and short-term stays.

March's report brings the total bed tax collections for the first six months of Fiscal Year 2016 to just under \$14.2 million, about 14 percent higher than this period last year.

The March report covers a period when Hillsborough County's hotel occupancy averaged 85 percent and hotel revenues and profitability rose more than 8 percent over February 2015, according to analysis by industry expert STR Inc., formerly Smith Travel Research.

"March's report has been the strongest to-date for the year and shows how well the Tampa Bay brand is resonating with visitors," said Santiago Corrada, president and CEO of Visit Tampa Bay. "At a time when tourism is up in Florida and the U.S., Hillsborough County's is still outpacing both of them as a tourism destination."

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About Visit Tampa Bay

Visit Tampa Bay encourages adventurous travelers to unlock our destination's trove of unique treasures. We are a not-for-profit corporation that works with more than 750 partners to tell the world the story of our home – the hip, urban heart of the Gulf Coast of Florida.

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