



For Immediate Release

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Newly Released Research Shows a 2.4% Increase in Tourism's Direct Economic Impact

Elizabethtown, Ky. May 8, 2012—Statistics released by the Kentucky Tourism, Arts, and Heritage Cabinet show that tourism in Hardin County was up by 2.4 percent in 2011 over 2010. Statewide tourism showed an increase of 3 percent, for a total of over \$4 billion in direct economic impact.

Hardin County remained the seventh highest income-producing county in the state in direct impact from tourism, keeping its lead over Owensboro/Daviess County. The impact of tourism in Hardin County showed \$166,871,361 in direct tourism expenditures in 2011. Hardin County's tourism industry increased \$3,911,048 in direct expenditures over 2010.

"We were very happy to see an increase in our economic impact for 2011. We knew 2011 was a recovery year for the economy and all the indicators reflected that fact. Tourism is such a large part of the local economy. Elizabethtown's central location and surrounding attractions are perfect for the traveling public. We are excited to see what next year's figures will reflect given the upcoming July opening of the Elizabethtown Sports Park. We will have a solid six months of tournaments under our belt in 2012," said Sherry Murphy, Executive Director of the Elizabethtown Tourism and Convention Bureau.

"To maintain our position as the seventh highest grossing County in the State, in terms of tourism income is quite an accomplishment. Hardin County's spot among the top ten on the leader board reflects a consolidated effort by both Tourism Commissions and our hospitality partners that roll out the red carpet for visitors every day. The fact that we are a "drive-to" destination that offers free attractions also makes this a desirable vacation spot for visitors and contributes to our success. I am optimistic that 2012 will be another banner year for tourism in Hardin County!" Kelly Barron, Executive Director, Radcliff/Fort Knox Convention & Tourism Commission.