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## **For Immediate Release**

### ***Tourism Economic Impact Increased 8.1 Percent in 2015***

*Elizabethtown, Ky. (May 11, 2016)* - Statistics released by the Kentucky Tourism, Arts, and Heritage Cabinet show that the 2015 economic impact of Kentucky's tourism and travel industry was more than \$13.7 billion, an increase of 5 percent from the previous year.

The 2015 tourism industry generated more than \$1.43 billion in tax revenues to government, \$1.25 billion to the state and nearly \$184.9 million locally. This is an increase from \$1.37 billion in tax revenues in 2014.

Tourism was responsible for 186,204 jobs in Kentucky last year, an increase of 6,241 jobs from the previous year. These jobs generated more than \$3.1 billion in wages for Kentucky workers, an increase of \$146 million from 2014.

All nine tourism regions showed gains for 2015. Hardin County is included in the largest of the nine regions: the Bourbon, Horses, and History Region. The direct economic impact for tourism in Hardin County increased by 8.1% in 2015..

Hardin County remained the seventh highest income-producing county in the state in direct impact from tourism, continuing to broaden its lead over Owensboro/Daviess County to more than \$30 million. Hardin County continues to shorten Paducah/McCracken County's lead to just more than \$4 million.

Local tourism impact was \$216,304,159 in direct expenditures in 2015. Hardin County's tourism industry received an increase of \$16 million in expenditures since 2014.

"New training missions on Fort Knox such as the R.O.T.C. Cadet Leader Course, and events at the Elizabethtown Sports Park, certainly played a major role in the \$16 million increase in Hardin County. Strategic marketing and promotion efforts by both tourism commissions also helped to make 2015 a banner year for tourism in Hardin County," said Kelly Barron, Executive Director of the Radcliff/Ft. Knox Convention and Tourism Commission.

"As visitors to the Elizabethtown Sports Park and Fort Knox continue to have major economic impact on Hardin County, our industry must continue planning for the future by growing and expanding our tourism offerings. We expect the economic impact figures to rise over the next few years as we continue to partner with other organizations and private developers. There is still so much that can be done," said Sherry Murphy, Executive Director of the Elizabethtown Tourism and Convention Bureau.

*The tourism economic impact survey was produced for the Kentucky Tourism, Arts, and Heritage Cabinet by Certec Inc. of Versailles. More details about the tourism economic impact study are available at [kentuckytourism.com/industry](http://kentuckytourism.com/industry).*

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