



**Statement from Scott Dupree, Executive Director, Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance, on Rock 'n' Roll Raleigh and IRONMAN 70.3 Raleigh**

We have enjoyed a superb partnership with the organizers of Rock 'n' Roll Raleigh and IRONMAN 70.3 Raleigh. We've had an excellent six-year run with IRONMAN (since 2013) and five years with Rock 'n' Roll (since 2014). The 2018 races will mark the end of the existing agreement with both events. The decision not to renew the contracts was made jointly by the Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance, the City of Raleigh and the World Triathlon Corporation (which now owns both races).

From the start, both events have been well-run and expertly managed by the organizers and have reflected well upon the City of Raleigh and Wake County. I want to thank both groups for their professionalism and their dedication to the Raleigh market.

The races achieved what we anticipated, producing economic impact for our region by bringing athletes and their families to Raleigh from all 50 states and dozens of countries. The first four years of Rock 'n' Roll Raleigh generated more than 19,000 hotel room nights and \$14.7 million in direct visitor spending. Meanwhile, the first five years of IRONMAN 70.3 Raleigh created 16,000 hotel room nights and \$8.1 million in direct visitor spending. Both have proven to be excellent economic engines for Raleigh and Wake County in general and our hospitality industry in particular.

I'd point to three primary reasons why all partners agreed not to renew the contracts: (1) The events were not growing as much as we had hoped; (2) The tremendous, positive growth in our market has resulted in several major construction projects that have made it a logistical challenge to host these events and give them the space they need, especially in the downtown area; and (3) As it relates to IRONMAN 70.3, we need to condense the overall event footprint (currently spanning from downtown Raleigh to Jordan Lake), but have not yet determined an effective way to accomplish that. We are still studying and considering a different format and whether or not we can make it happen.

We continue to have an excellent relationship with the leadership and staff of World Triathlon Corp., which remains a big believer in Raleigh. It wouldn't surprise me to see either event return to this market in the years ahead. Moving forward, we will certainly keep that possibility in mind as we explore and evaluate future marquee events for Greater Raleigh.