

Good Point, Business NC

In its coverage of the growth of [North Carolina tourism in 2022](#), [Business NC](#) pointed out that the three regions of the state – coast, Piedmont, and mountains – “cater first and foremost to other North Carolinians.”

The [publication](#) went on to include this line: “The analysis probably gives the folks at the N.C. Travel Industry Association more ammo to argue for the existing school calendar law.”

NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena agrees and said a dive into the numbers provided by Visit NC support protecting the summer months for families to travel is good for everyone, including the financial support for public schools.

“41% of the coastal visits in 2022 happened during the summer months and 70% of all visitors say they want to enjoy the beach and mountains during the state’s hottest months,” said Chelena. “If school systems were allowed to start classes in early August, or even July, it would have a devastating outcome for North Carolina destinations, and increase costs for middle class families.”

To read Business NC’s recap of the Visit NC data, [click here](#).

NC Tourism Grew by 15.2% in 2022

The article below is excerpted from a press release published by the NC Department of Commerce. [Click to read the entire article.](#)

North Carolina set a record for visitor spending in 2022, according to county-level data released today by the North

Carolina Department of Commerce. North Carolina’s urban counties registered the largest gains in 2022 visitor spending, following a few years of rural counties leading visitor spending post-pandemic.

“Even after the pandemic many urban counties continued to struggle as business travel, conferences, and meetings were slow to ramp back up while our coasts and mountain regions did well,” said NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena. “We are pleased to see these urban counties show steady growth over the last year while our rural counties continue to thrive and attract new visitors.”

Click [here](#) to see individual county data from the report commissioned by Visit North Carolina, a unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina. Full data tables can be accessed at partners.visitnc.com/economic-impact-studies.

As previously reported in May, travel statewide rose 15.2 percent in 2022 to set a record in visitor spending. That increase followed a 2021 turnaround from the pandemic’s 2020 peak, which brought a devastating drop of 32 percent in visitor spending. For 2021’s reversal of fortunes, eight of the top 10 counties in percentage growth were classified as rural (the exceptions were Buncombe and Cabarrus).

“Tourism is more than an essential industry for the state,” said Wit Tuttell, executive director of Visit NC. “It’s an economic development force in all 100 of our counties, the places where travelers experience our scenic beauty and adventure, our cuisine and unique culture, our history and the dynamic forces that create our enduring appeal. Our visitor spending reports underscore the value of these assets in terms of jobs and tax revenues that relieve some of the burden on residents. We look forward to continued success in welcoming people to experience places they won’t find anywhere else.”

