

Arkansas House Newsletter

June 4, 2021

Tourism in Arkansas



Tourism in Arkansas is making a big comeback. While the pandemic severely impacted the industry in 2020, there are signs that tourism is rebounding and doing better than before the health emergency began.

The tourism tax collections for March 2021 exceeded collections from March 2019 by 14.6%

From mountain biking adventures to world-class art museums, Arkansas destinations play an essential role in our economy.

Before the pandemic, travel-supported jobs represented 6.6% of Arkansas's total private industry employment.

We also know that 8.4 jobs are created for every \$1million spent on tourism in our state. That is why every session, we consider legislation to improve the industry.

In the most recent session, we passed Act 777, An Act to Establish the Arkansas Cultural Institutions Trust Fund Act. This legislation directs the Division of Arkansas Heritage to promulgate rules for the distribution of

grants to non-profit organizations that acquire or exhibit works of art or works of cultural or historical significance.

Act 840 allows the Division of Heritage to issue up to \$8 million in historic rehabilitation income tax credits each year. The current maximum amount of credits given is \$4 million.

We passed Act 652, which allows for dynamic pricing at state parks.

The division may increase or decrease approved rates charged for lodging, camping, events, services, and all other accommodations using a dynamic pricing strategy based on market forces such as seasonal variation in demand, occupancy, market analysis, and special event interest to maximize revenues from the use of state resources to promote the fiscal soundness and long-term sustainability.

The legislature also created the Arkansas Legislative Arts and Technology Boot Camp with Act 577. The camp will issue a final written report, including an inventory of Arkansas's statewide arts and cultural assets, and identify funding needs to maintain a statewide database.

Arkansas is home to experiences and attractions found nowhere else. We encourage you to explore everything our state has to offer this summer.