



Arkansas House Newsletter

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A Record Year for Tourism



Whether they're hiking our trails, floating our rivers, exploring historic downtowns, or dining at local restaurants, visitors are making a big impact on Arkansas. New figures released by the Governor this week show tourism reached another record-breaking year in 2025.

According to a new report prepared by Tourism Economics, Arkansas welcomed a record 54.3 million visitors in 2025. Those visitors spent \$10.2 billion throughout the state, helping generate a total economic impact of \$17.4 billion. Tourism also supported nearly 71,900 direct jobs across Arkansas and generated enough state and local tax revenue to reduce the average annual tax burden on Arkansas households by \$919.

The benefits of tourism reach every corner of the state. Visitors spent more than \$3 billion at Arkansas restaurants and local businesses, supporting small businesses, creating jobs, and strengthening local communities.

The Arkansas General Assembly recognized tourism's growing importance during the 2025 legislative session and approved several measures to build on that momentum. Lawmakers created the Office of Outdoor

Recreation through Act 318, establishing a dedicated office within the Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism to oversee programs that expand outdoor recreation opportunities and administer grants that help communities develop parks and recreational amenities.

The General Assembly also passed Act 838, making it easier for tourism attraction projects to qualify for incentives under the Arkansas Tourism Development Act. The legislation also expanded opportunity zones surrounding state parks, historic sites, and cultural attractions, encouraging additional private investment near some of Arkansas' most popular destinations.

To support new recreational opportunities, Act 155 established a regulatory framework for recreational tramway systems, opening the door for future attractions while ensuring appropriate safety standards.

Tourism is more than a weekend getaway. It supports jobs, strengthens local economies, and showcases everything that makes Arkansas a great place to visit—and an even better place to call home.