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Statement on introduction of Senate Bill 285

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Barb Newton, President and CEO of the California Travel Association, today issued the following statement on Sen. Mike McGuire’s introduction of Senate Bill 285 to help jump start California’s tourism economy:

“California Travel Association applauds Senator McGuire for introducing Senate Bill 285 to help the tourism industry lead California’s economic recovery from the pandemic. The one-time \$45 million appropriation to stimulate Visit California’s tourism marketing program when it is safe to travel will deliver more than \$10 billion in visitor spending in California, help restore hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions in state and local tax revenue.

“In 2019, California’s tourism industry generated \$145 billion in visitor spending, employed 1.2 million people and brought in \$12.2 billion in state and local taxes to support public services. The pandemic reduced those numbers by more than half in 2020. Leisure and hospitality has been by far the hardest hit workforce segment in California, and hundreds of cities that rely on hotel taxes to provide services to all residents have seen revenue declines, some approaching 60%. California’s world-class gateway regions – Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego and Orange County – have been especially affected as business meetings and conventions stopped and theme parks shuttered. Visitation from other countries, which amounted to \$28.3 billion in spending 2019, dried up.

“The stimulus provided by SB 285 will allow Visit California to expand its industry-funded marketing program to inspire Californians to travel safely and responsibly in state, not only to rediscover the wonders of California, but to help struggling hotels, restaurants and other tourism businesses return to solvency, replenish their payrolls and support local governments.”

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California Travel Association (CalTravel) is the influential, unified voice of the travel and tourism industry in California. It protects and advances the interests and investments of California’s travel industry through advocacy, collaboration, and education. CalTravel members include CVBs, destinations, resorts, attractions, airports, transportation companies, industry associations, ad agencies, media companies, and other organizations for whom travel and tourism advocacy is important.