**Contact**: *Your name here*

**Why Travel Matters in *DESTINATION***

We pass popular tourist sites like *LOCAL ATTRACTION* every day; we may not even think of how it supports our community. But *SAME LOCAL ATTRACTION* and others like *MORE EXAMPLES*, *LIKE RESTAURANTS OR HISTORICAL SITES* are the backbone of *DESTINATION*. These places define our community, provide our families with jobs and have played a part in hosting 14.1 million visitors in South Dakota in 2018.

Travel matters, and it improves *DESTINATION* in ways that have a wide-reaching impact on *LOCAL RESIDENTS*. Travel supports 54,723 jobs in South Dakota and it also has an impact that we do not always see: travel can strengthen families, foster hometown pride, and build bridges that connect us with one another.

Travel Matters to America at the national level, travel is critical to the U.S. economy and American jobs. As a leader in workforce development and career advancement, travel creates and supports 15.6 million jobs across the U.S., making it the seventh-largest private sector employer.

Visitor spending in South Dakota totaled $3.98 billion in 2018, an increase of 2.5 percent over the previous year. Visitation to the state grew to 14.1 million visitors, an increase of 1.4 percent over 2017. These dollars flowed through the economy and contributed $2.66 billion in GDP, an increase of 2.5 percent. The bottom line is, travel matters in South Dakota.

This is also displayed on the local level. In *DESTINATION*, *INSERT CITY/STATE-SPECIFIC ECONOMIC IMPACT NUMBERS, I.E. JOBS SUPPORTED, SMALL BUSINESS STATS.*

Think back to your first job. Maybe you worked at *LOCAL BUSINESSES OR ATTRACTION THAT HAS BEEN AROUND A WHILE*, or maybe your kids work there now. For many–one third of Americans to be exact–travel is the front door to a promising career. Americans whose first job in travel have an average career salary of $81,900, and two in 5 of those whose first job was in travel are now earning more than $100,000.

Think about how travel matters to *LOCAL, WELL-LOVED SMALL BUSINESS IN DESTINATION*: travel dependent leisure and hospitality is the largest small business employer in the U.S.

Those are only a few reasons why it’s so important to keep welcoming visitors to *DESTINATION*—and why our industry is elevating the message of “Travel Matters” during National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW) May 5-11. We encourage you to join us in observing NTTW this year, and celebrate all that travel does for *DESTINATION*, for South Dakota, and for our country as a whole.

Here are a few ways to get involved:
• *Join our travel celebration event on DATE/TIME at LOCATION.*
• Contact our member of Congress and tell them why travel is important to *DESTINATION*.

• Get social and engage with the #nttw19 hashtag on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Share how travel matters in your community. Let’s celebrate the travel industry as a primary driver in the U.S. economy, and as an important part of our daily lives in *CITY/STATE.*