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Michigan Tourism Drives \$54.8 Billion in Economic Impact, Highlighted During National Travel & Tourism Week Event

Leaders emphasize more than 350,000 jobs supported statewide

SOUTH HAVEN, Mich. (May 4, 2026) — Tourism leaders from across Michigan gathered Monday at the Michigan Maritime Museum in South Haven to kick off National Travel and Tourism Week (May 3–9, 2026), highlighting the industry’s critical role in driving the state’s economy and supporting communities statewide.

The event, hosted by the Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan (TICOM) in partnership with Pure Michigan and Visit South Haven, brought together industry leaders, media, and stakeholders to recognize the impact of travel across the state.

This year’s National Travel and Tourism Week theme, “Postmarked: Essential,” highlights that travel is not optional. It is fundamental to economic growth, workforce development, and community vitality. Nationally, travel generates \$3 trillion in economic output and supports 15 million jobs. In Michigan, tourism generates \$54.8 billion in total economic impact, including more than \$30 billion in visitor spending, and supports over 350,000 jobs statewide.

“From downtown Detroit to the Porcupine Mountains, Michigan has so much to offer,” said Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist II. “Tourism keeps our small businesses growing, our communities thriving, and our economy strong. This week, and every week, we are proud to celebrate the beauty and opportunity found all across our great state.”

Speakers also highlighted the importance of the upcoming travel season and Michigan’s continued appeal as a destination.

“Travel moves Michigan’s economy, and National Travel and Tourism Week is an opportunity to highlight the significant impact of our state’s thriving tourism industry,” said Kelly Wolgamott, Vice President of Pure Michigan. “As we celebrate 20 years of Pure Michigan this year, we’re proud to join our tourism partners across the state in showcasing the authentic destinations, cultural attractions and vibrant communities that make Michigan the ultimate four-season destination.”

Held along the Lake Michigan shoreline, the event reinforced the importance of the Great Lakes to Michigan’s identity and tourism economy.

“South Haven is proud to host this year’s National Travel and Tourism Week press conference,” said Jen Sistrunk, Executive Director of Visit South Haven. “Tourism plays an important role in communities like ours, supporting local businesses, creating jobs, and inviting visitors to experience the beauty and culture of Michigan’s Great Lakes.”



Media attending the event had the opportunity to connect with destinations and tourism partners from across the state, participate in interviews, and explore the Michigan Maritime Museum, which highlights the region's rich connection to the Great Lakes.

The museum will debut its new Harris Commercial Fishing Exhibit later this month, offering an in-depth look at Lake Michigan's commercial fishing heritage.

About the Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan (TICOM)

TICOM unites Michigan's tourism industry through advocacy, collaboration, and education, promoting awareness and providing essential resources to elevate and support our diverse travel community.

About National Travel and Tourism Week:

National Travel and Tourism Week (May 3-9, 2026) is an annual tradition established by the U.S. Travel Association to celebrate the power of travel to drive economic growth, support workforce development, and enhance quality of life.

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