

# 2019 Travel Federation of Iowa Legislative Priorities

## STRENGTHEN AND ENFORCE the Lodging Tax

Contingent on Iowa Lodging Association Board approval at their meeting, the Travel Federation of Iowa supports the following changes to the lodging tax:

- ▶ Monitor (through the Iowa Department of Revenue-IDR) the new enforcement language that ALL lodging/transient properties pay the applicable tax (Airbnb, VRBO, etc.) with penalties for noncompliance.
- ▶ Extend the length of stay from 31 days to 90 days for when hotel/motel tax is collected. Currently NO lodging tax is collected from anyone that stays longer than 30 days in a lodging facility including the first 30 days of their stay.

## INVEST in funding to the Iowa Economic Development Authority – specifically for the Iowa Tourism office and tourism marketing

- ▶ Iowa's tourism industry grows the economy and generates jobs.
- ▶ In 2017, visitors to Iowa spent \$8.5 billion and generated \$507.1 million in state tax revenues.
- ▶ Traveler spending reduces the tax burden on Iowans and subsidizes important public programs on which Iowans rely such as education.

## SUPPORT Iowa's current earliest school start date of August 23

- ▶ Tourism does not compete with education – it helps pay for it.
- ▶ Earlier school start dates reduce the number of domestic travelers to attractions during the month of August. This, in turn, leads to a decrease in consumer spending and less state tax revenues.
- ▶ Across the state, schools struggle to find additional revenue. Millions in state sales tax revenue will be lost each day school starts earlier – including the local option sales tax for schools.

## Travel Federation of Iowa also supports the following issues:

- ▶ **IWILL (Iowa Land and Legacy) or Water Quality Initiatives** that include funding for tourism and quality of life components that showcase Iowa's beauty and improves Iowa workforce efforts.
- ▶ **Enhance Iowa efforts** to invest in programs that enhance Iowa's quality of life such as trails funding, sports tourism marketing, and the Community Attraction and Tourism Program.
- ▶ **Workforce Development efforts** to increase Iowa's workforce. For the first time in U.S. history, quality of life is leading economic development and jobs are now going where the talent wants to be. Tourism marketing brings people to Iowa to live, work and visit, encouraging people to come to Iowa to boost our workforce.