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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the travel and tourism industry is a vital component of North Carolina's economic stability as benefits of tourism touch each of the state's 100 counties, and

WHEREAS, direct tourism employment continues to grow in lodging, transportation, food service and retail employment sectors to help serve visitors that spend more than \$55 million per day in North Carolina, and

WHEREAS, in 2013, domestic travelers spent a record \$20.2 billion, up from \$19.4 billion in 2012, an increase of 4.1 percent, and

WHEREAS, this record visitor spending supported more than 40,000 North Carolina businesses and directly supported nearly 200,000 jobs all across the state, and

WHEREAS, the state's 2013 total visitor volume was 52.5 million, up nearly 16 percent from 2012, and

WHEREAS, studies show that starting school in late August produces as much as \$1 billion each year in economic growth through increased tourism-related sales, and

WHEREAS, a majority of other states have late August start dates, with no discernable impact on student learning or test scores.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the North Carolina Travel and Tourism Board supports the existing North Carolina law requiring schools to begin in late August, the traditional time for back-to-school.

ADOPTED, this 10th day of February, 2015.

Tammy O'Kelley, Chairperson
North Carolina Travel & Tourism Board