



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 13, 2018

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TOURISM IS CRITICAL TO CORTLAND COUNTY'S ECONOMY ***Providing Revenue, Jobs and Opportunity for Tourists and Residents***

(CORTLAND, NY): Tourism remains a critical component to the Cortland County economy and New York State's recently released tourism data backs it up with encouraging numbers. The Cortland County Convention & Visitors Bureau's tourism program continues to build on previous year successes by reaching out to more visitors with new promotions, targeted marketing, and strong partnerships.

According to the state's recently released data from Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics Company, New York State's tourism economy expanded in 2017 with 4.4% growth in traveler spending, reaching a new high of nearly \$67.6 billion – 27% above the state's pre-recession peak set in 2008. Tourism in the Finger Lakes Region, where Cortland County is located, is a \$3 billion industry, increasing 2.4% over last year and supporting 58,242 jobs.

"Tourism is economic development," said Meghan Lawton, Executive Director of the Cortland County Convention & Visitors Bureau. "I would like to recognize all the tourism businesses and the owners across Cortland County who have invested their time and efforts and who work tirelessly to continue growing their businesses. I would also like to recognize the efforts of the CVB staff, including retired Executive Director Jim Dempsey, and the Board of Directors who put together a very strong tourism program for our county. We also acknowledge Governor Cuomo and state leaders for the continued investment in a statewide tourism program that is a real economic driver, and thank the Cortland County Legislature for continuing to support our efforts to strengthen this critical sector of the Cortland County economy."

The latest Tourism Economics report shows that Cortland County's tourism impact is up 0.7% over 2016 levels, representing \$71.9 million in traveler spending. Travelers are spending in several categories with Food and Beverage leading the way at \$31.7 million, Lodging at \$14.4 million, Retail Sales at \$13.7 million, Recreation at \$5.6 million, Second Homes at \$5.2 million, and Transportation at \$1.3 million.

"This is all excellent news for Cortland County," Lawton states. "The continued efforts of the CVB to promote our tourism partners is reflected in the results of this study. Because of the hard work that all of our attractions, accommodations, and county partner organizations do in developing such interesting and engaging destinations, we are able to offer experiences for visitors and tourists from all over the

world. I applaud the work that the CVB has done thus far and look forward to continuing this work into the future. Cortland County has great story to tell, and we are happy to be able to tell it.”

The report also details the effect of tourism employment on the county and shows that between direct, indirect and induced, Cortland County’s total labor income is \$34 million. Further, the impact of tourism on the Cortland County tax base is very important. Between state and local taxes generated from tourism, Cortland County is collecting \$8.6 million, which translates to savings for county taxpayers. Were it not for tourism generated state and local taxes, the average household in Cortland County would have to pay an additional \$486 per year to maintain the same level of government revenue.

Tourism Economics, headquartered in Philadelphia, is an Oxford Economics company dedicated to providing high value, robust, and relevant analyses of the tourism sector that reflects the dynamics of local and global economies. By combining quantitative methods with industry knowledge, Tourism Economics designs custom market strategies, project feasibility analysis, tourism forecasting models, tourism policy analysis, and economic impact studies. Oxford Economics is one of the world's leading providers of economic analysis, forecasts and consulting advice. For more information email: info@tourismeconomics.com.

The Cortland County Convention & Visitors Bureau’s purpose is to enhance the general economy of Cortland County, its cities, towns and villages, through promotion of tourist activities, conventions, trade shows, special events and other directly related and supporting activities.

The CVB office is located at 37 Church Street, Cortland, NY. For more information on the Cortland County Convention & Visitors Bureau, please call (607) 753-8463, visit us on the web at www.experiencecortland.com, or follow us on our social media channels.

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