



STATE OF GEORGIA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
ATLANTA 30334-0900

Nathan Deal  
GOVERNOR

September 11, 2011

To: 2011 Governor's Conference on Tourism

GREETINGS:

I am pleased to extend my warmest regards to the 2011 Governor's Conference on Tourism. On behalf of the State of Georgia, it is an honor to be a part of this event highlighting tourism efforts in our state.

Allow me to welcome all our guests and special attendees to Macon. The Governor's Conference on Tourism provides a unique opportunity for participants to experience tourism education, industry innovation, and new trends in marketing promotion. I encourage you to take advantage of the forum offered at this year's conference, including participating in sessions, networking with your colleagues, and learning about the exciting new prospects in the tourism industry. This year's theme is "Get Centered," which serves as the central focus of the conference. Not only does this theme recognize the fact that we are in Macon, the center of our great state, but it also reminds us to focus our energy on promoting Georgia's tourism resources.

As you well know, tourism is a main driver of economic development for our state, with direct tourism expenditures reaching \$21 billion in 2010, and a total economic impact of \$33.67 billion. The tourism industry employs over 233,000 Georgia residents, and generates \$1.5 billion in state and local taxes. The continued growth of tourism is instrumental in providing a better quality of life and economic prosperity for all Georgia residents. Together, we can meet the challenges of a changing economy, build on Georgia's strengths, and focus on a brighter economic future.

I commend the Georgia Department of Economic Development, the Georgia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, and the Tourism Development Alliance of Georgia for organizing this conference. I send my best wishes for an exciting and successful event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nathan Deal".

Nathan Deal

ND:ph