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Member's Statement On Benefits Of Tourism

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I rise in the House to bring attention to Tourism Awareness Week, which, because of the short sitting of this House, I will have to recognize today. That is from June 20 - 26 of this year.

Organized by the Tourism Industry Association of Canada around the theme, "Tourism Makes Canada Smile" – it is aimed at raising awareness of the tremendous economic and social benefits of a \$52 billion industry that keeps 1.6 million Canadians working, supports economic and community development, and generates significant tax revenues for all levels of government.

Tourism Week celebrates Canada's tourism industry and highlights the importance of this vital sector of the economy, our quality of life and our understanding and appreciation of other cultures. The positive economic impacts of tourism are pursued and enjoyed by Canadian communities large and small in all regions – from whale watching charters off the East Coast, to ski resorts in the West, to watching the northern lights in Canada's Arctic.

The tourism industry creates employment, supports community and economic development and generates tax revenues for all levels of government. Tourism is big business in Canada and a key driver of our economic growth and prosperity. But the benefits of tourism go far beyond the tangible return it generates year in and year out for the Canadian economy.

Tourism also contributes in significant ways to the quality of life enjoyed by all Canadians. It not only provides a variety of employment opportunities, but supports a wealth of cultural experiences, historic discovery and outdoor activities – whether we travel to them or enjoy them in our own backyards. Think of that.

They are much a part of life in our local communities, but whose very existence is ensured and vitalized by our out of town visitors. Canada's excellent tourism infrastructure, transportation, accommodations, attractions, facilities and services today enable us to access and visit more of our great country than ever before. When we do, we get to meet Canadians from other parts of the country and share their experiences. Exploring Canada gives us a greater sense of place that enhances our pride and elevates our spirit.

Perhaps it is through this kind of sharing and exchange that tourism has its most enduring impact – encouraging greater knowledge and understanding among and between people. Globally, tourism contributes to the peaceful resolutions of differences.

Tourism gives Canada a lot to smile about. Tourism Week is a time to celebrate all that tourism does for us. Canada's tourism industry makes a significant contribution to Canada's economy, to a standard of living as a nation and to the quality of life of all Canadians who have much in our territory to be proud of and support in our tourism industry. During the week of June 20 - 26, remember that tourism does make Canada smile.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause