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## **HURRICANE HARVEY TOURISM RECOVERY FUND LAUNCHED TO HELP DEVASTATED TEXAS GULF COAST COMMUNITIES**

*Tourism Cares and the Texas Travel Industry Association partner to maximize travel industry support to restore destinations, tourism nonprofits and jobs.*

Austin, TX – September 6, 2017 – The US travel and tourism industry has launched the **Hurricane Harvey Tourism Recovery Fund**, uniting the industry and its resources in support of vulnerable, devastated Gulf Coast communities that welcome millions of visitors and support 170,000 tourism jobs.

The Fund's focus on the recovery of coastal communities directly in the hurricane's path complements relief efforts and gives the tourism industry a way to leverage its resources to help the region bounce back, ideally better than before.

"The greatest benefit will be felt in destinations like Beaumont, Port Aransas, Rockport/Fulton the Houston-area and more. They are dependent on tourism and were also the hardest hit. They'll need the most help to bounce back," said David Teel, president and CEO of the Texas Travel Industry Association. "For example, we know the Port Aransas visitor center was a total loss. There will be no shortage of projects to help these special communities recover."

Fund contributions will focus on affected communities and organizations in need for:

- **The physical restoration of damaged attractions and cultural tourism nonprofits**, including historical monuments, beaches or open spaces, visitor centers, and more.
- **Capacity building and support for nonprofit organizations** and their facilities, systems and staff capabilities, to ensure that the social capital of the region recovers and gets stronger. These activities could include technical assistance and skilled volunteering programs.
- **Other investments based on need**, including trainings on volunteer management, disaster mitigation and planning, and marketing and communications support.

“This effort is a natural complement to all the wonderful giving we’ve already seen from the travel and tourism industry,” said Mike Rea, CEO of Tourism Cares. “We can make the greatest difference by giving together with our industry, for our industry -- especially in times of crisis. We will leverage not just our donations but also our expertise and influence, and we will share our stories and lessons throughout the industry.”

The Texas Travel Industry Association will work with local destinations to assess needs and identify responses, along with engaging members and partners in Texas. Tourism Cares will administer the Fund, engage the industry nationwide, and provide program expertise based on decades of philanthropic experience in disaster recovery.

**Donations may be made online ([www.tourismcares.org/harvey](http://www.tourismcares.org/harvey)), by check (payable to Hurricane Harvey Tourism Recovery Fund and sent to Tourism Cares, 20 Vernon St., Norwood, MA 02062) or by donating securities.** Questions may be addressed to [harvey@tourismcares.org](mailto:harvey@tourismcares.org).

### **About the Texas Travel Industry Association**

The Texas Travel Industry Association (TTIA) is the umbrella organization and advocate for the travel industry in Texas. TTIA strives to deliver exceptional value to its members. To that end, we offer a variety of member-driven public policy initiatives, business networking opportunities, marketing programs, and educational offerings all to help our members and our industry succeed today and in the future.

### **About Tourism Cares**

Tourism Cares, Inc., a US 501(c)(3) public charity, advances the travel industry’s social impact to help people and places thrive. We unite the industry to make a greater impact on shared priorities, and to help each company fulfill its giving goals. Our members include leading travel associations and companies, together helping destinations in need, supporting our workforce, and improving our corporate social responsibility. Learn more at [www.TourismCares.org](http://www.TourismCares.org) and [@TourismCares](https://twitter.com/TourismCares).

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