

Economic Impact Study of Kentucky State Fair Board Events Points to Strong Returns for the Commonwealth

Louisville, KY... A new economic impact study of Kentucky State Fair Board events posted growth in key economic measures, generating \$453 million annually in fiscal impact on local and state economies. The 2005 study, conducted by Paul Coomes and Barry Kornstein of the University of Louisville's economics department, shows a 6.4 percent increase in economic activity since 2001. The Kentucky State Fair Board operates the Kentucky Exposition Center (KEC) and the Kentucky International Convention Center (KICC).

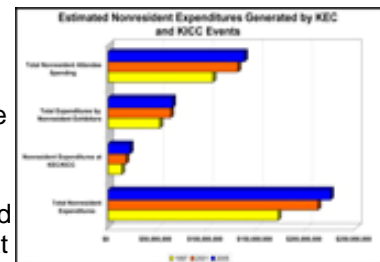
"In an increasingly competitive environment among cities for convention and trade show business, the Kentucky State Fair Board made a huge leap forward at the beginning of the decade and has held its own since then," said Coomes. "While some of the totals dipped a bit from 2001, in terms of economic impact the KEC and KICC had their best mixes of events yet in 2005."



While total attendance at the Kentucky State Fair Board's facilities dipped by three percent from the numbers released in the 2001 study, growth was the common denominator of several other economic aspects that are typically linked to attendance.

Out of town attendees and exhibitors rented nearly 778,000 room nights at area hotels, and total spending by those same non-residents (including lodging, food, shopping, business and entertainment expenses) was just over \$224 million.

The Commonwealth also benefited from these increases as the business and activities of the Kentucky State Fair Board in 2005 generated \$26.1 million in state and local government tax revenues, while an additional \$6.9 million was reported in local occupational and room taxes. These are increases of more than eight and 20 percent, respectively.



In 2005, KEC and KICC hosted 16 national conventions, trade shows, and competitions - events that routinely change their locations each year. That was up from 11 major events in 2001. "The fact that we are competing well against such cities as New Orleans, Dallas, Denver, Kansas City, Orlando, Minneapolis, Anaheim, and Austin is very good news," noted Coomes.

Activity at the Kentucky International Convention Center increased markedly after its expansion and renovation was completed in 2000. Highlighting that growth has been the number of sporting events held at the convention center. Jumping from just seven events in 2001 to 16 events in 2005, including four national competitions, these sporting events also attracted 30,000 more people - almost a 400 percent increase in attendance.

Total receipts collected by the Kentucky State Fair Board amounted to \$40.3 million - an increase of 17 percent from 2001. Non-residents accounted for 54 percent of those receipts. Those new dollars supported approximately 7,165 local jobs with an annual payroll of about \$146 million.