



WHEREAS, the Power of Travel has been a consistent driver of Gaston County's economy and workforce; and,

WHEREAS, a robust local travel industry provides significant economic benefits for our county, generating more than \$200 million in visitor spending in 2020; and,

WHEREAS, travel has been the foundation of a healthy workforce, serving as one of our largest private-sector employers in the County, supporting nearly 2,000 jobs in 2020; and,

WHEREAS, spending by travelers has aided state and local governments alike, generating \$17 million in tax revenue in 2020 to support essential services and programs; and,

WHEREAS, travel and tourism-related businesses and organizations, 83% of which are small businesses, are responsible for welcoming visitors from all around the world to explore Gaston County and all we have to offer; and,

WHEREAS, Gaston County hotel room demand recovered and surpassed pre-pandemic levels in 2021, exceeding 2019 by 12% and Gaston County hotel room revenue recovered and surpassed pre-pandemic levels in 2021, exceeding 2019 by 11%; and,

WHEREAS, the travel industry cannot sustain these robust levels without the full embrace of leisure and business travel, as well as associated meetings and events, by both domestic and international visitors; and,

WHEREAS, the ongoing growth of travel will drive the recovering health of the U.S. economy and American workforce; and,

WHEREAS, the Power of Travel will build awareness of Gaston County's unique tourism experiences and revitalize the United States driving us forward to a more prosperous future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim May 1-7, 2022 as

National Travel and Tourism Week

and urges our citizens to join us in recognizing the critical role this industry plays in our Nation, the State of North Carolina and in Gaston County.

Chad Brown, Chairman

Allen R. Fraley

Kim Johnson

Bob Hovis, Vice-Chairman

Tracy L. Philbeck

Tom Keigher

Ronald E. Worley