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**SURVEY SHOWS TAX FREE SHOPPING BENEFITS STATE ECONOMY**

Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne is announcing another positive initiative for Louisiana tourism. Louisiana Tax Free Shopping, a program administered by the Louisiana Office of Tourism, encourages international visitation by refunding sales tax in certain situations. Louisiana received almost \$2.7 million in tax revenue as a result of the program. An October survey of the program found the total economic impact produced by LTFS to be \$73.7 million in 2011.

“Louisiana Tax Free Shopping allows visitors from across the world to take advantage of our unique retail experiences while enjoying Louisiana’s culture,” Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne said. “And such positive feedback from consumers show that the limited resources we invested in this program are paying off exponentially.”

LTFS refunds state, and sometimes local, sales tax to international visitors at participating retail locations. The Louisiana Office of Tourism and The University of New Orleans Hospitality Research Center measured the impact of the program on visitor’s spending habits and the increased transactions’ impact on the state throughout the 2010-11 fiscal year. The purpose of the survey was to create a picture of the typical Louisiana tourist in order to develop better marketing strategies.

Sixty-three percent of visitors were satisfied with the LTFS program and 38 percent consider the program to be a major reason to return to Louisiana, according to the study. Almost two-thirds would recommend LTFS to friends interested in visiting the state.

To view the entire study and to learn more about LTFS visit [www.LouisianaTaxFree.com](http://www.LouisianaTaxFree.com).

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