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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND CHOOSE CHICAGO ANNOUNCE CITY OF CHICAGO HOTEL OCCUPANCY
UP FIVE PERCENT SO FAR THIS YEAR**

Huge Gains Made in September; For the Year All Factors Up Significantly

Mayor Emanuel and Choose Chicago today announced that the city's hotel occupancy numbers are way up for 2012, coming off of a great month of September. The occupancy rate for the year has seen a staggering 4.9 percent increase.

"We have reached new heights in our tourism industry, which is expanding our economy and driving the creation of new jobs," said Mayor Emanuel. "More and more visitors are coming to Chicago, enjoying our world class hotels, restaurants, arts and culture. We welcome them and are focused on continuing this growth.

For the year to date, occupancy is up 4.9 percent, while the average daily rate is up \$10.19 per hotel room, from \$173.02 to \$183.21, a 5.9 percent increase. Additionally, revenue per available room (REVPAR) is up 11 percent, and more than \$13 per night.

"These stellar results are great news for the tourism industry and evidence that our strategies and effort are working. The positive response to the important and lasting labor enhancements as well as the proactive marketing outreach our team is engaged in will continue to pay dividends for Chicago." said Don Welsh President and CEO of Choose Chicago.

September was an exciting month for the industry, and one that saw enormous gains year over year. Occupancy was up to 86.2 percent in September 2012, compared with 79.7% in September 2011 (a 8.1% increase). Average daily rate was up more than \$22 a night, an 11.6% increase. The greatest increase, however, came in REVPAR, which is up a staggering \$31.68 per room night, a 20.6 percent increase. This figure is particularly notable given the fact that Chicago's total number of hotel rooms is increasing year over year – so there is a dramatic growth in rooms and revenues.

“The excellent September and year-to-date increases in RevPAR, ADR and occupancy for downtown Chicago hotels are indicative of Chicago’s growing presence as an international destination for business and leisure travelers,” said Laurence Geller, Strategic Hotels and Resorts’ president and chief executive officer. “The double digit RevPAR increase means people are spending more money when they visit Chicago, which has positive implications for a range of services and attractions as well as the city’s tax revenues. Whether hosting an international sporting event such as the Ryder Cup or a large scale trade show at McCormick Place, there’s no question we have the resources and infrastructure to support travelers from all over the world.”

The growth for the year can be attributed to an increase in major conventions and the return of new shows, as a result of labor deals negotiated by Mayor Emanuel late in 2011. For example, September saw the return of long standing customers including the International Manufacturing Technology Show (IMTS), which brings more than \$100 million in economic impact to the city and over 100,000 visitors as well as the National Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show, which also has approximately \$100 million in annual economic impact. These two shows recently re-signed with the city and are part of nearly \$4 billion in new or recommitted shows as a result of recent labor deals.

“Organized labor is proud to play an integral role in maintaining Chicago’s status as a premiere destination for visitors and convention business from around the world,” said Jorge Ramirez, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor. “A large part of our status as a world-class city has to do with our world-class workforce. We are committed to keeping Chicago a competitive and attractive location, creating additional jobs and revenue for our economy.”

Additionally, Choose Chicago embarked on a winter and summer regional advertising campaign in major feeder markets including, Detroit, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Milwaukee and Cincinnati. The winter campaign generated \$119 million in economic impact and the summer campaign results will be released in early November. Chicago has also had a great year in terms of attracting tourists and business visitors, hosting some world-wide events, such as the successful NATO summit in May and the Ryder Cup in September. Additionally, the combination of multiple tourism agencies into one organization, Choose Chicago, has allowed additional resources to be devoted to attracting visitors to the city.

“Our restaurant group saw business up 15 percent over the same period last year. Not only was business up but we saw an increase in business and convention travelers who appreciate our sophisticated offerings and like to spend,” said Billy Lawless Proprietor of The Gage and Henri restaurants.

Initial reports indicate that October will see a large year over year increase in hotel rates and occupancy as well.

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