



January 16th, 2018

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ND Airports Accommodate 1,030,639 Airline Passenger Boardings in 2017

North Dakota's commercial service airports finished calendar year 2017 with a statewide total of 1,030,639 passenger boardings. This is a 1.8% decrease from 2016's airline passenger boarding count of 1,049,418. In 2017, the state also saw 1,033,531 passenger deplanements for a grand total of 2,082,949 passengers that have set foot inside the commercial service terminal buildings of North Dakota over the past year.

The eight commercial service airports in the state currently provide incredible value and opportunities to businesses and residents within each community. 10 non-stop destinations (of which two are seasonal) are currently available to connect North Dakota to the rest of the world. All eight of the commercial service airports also continue to provide their communities with reliable jet service. The state is currently averaging approximately 55 airline flight departures per day with an estimated 3,800 available daily seats. The top destination airline passenger markets in 2017 for North Dakota travelers were as follows:

1. Phoenix / Mesa, AZ
2. Las Vegas, NV
3. Orlando / Sanford, FL
4. Denver, CO
5. Minneapolis / St. Paul, MN

The three communities of Bismarck, Jamestown, and Devils Lake were also able to announce that they had each posted their highest airline passenger number count on record in calendar year 2017.

Statewide airline passenger boardings have now declined for a third straight year following the record setting year of 2014 where over 1.2 million passengers flew on commercial flights originating in North Dakota. A resilient economy and high oil and agricultural commodity prices had led to this 2014 record after seven years of consecutive airline passenger growth that began in 2007.

"Over the last three years, the state's airline boardings have been affected by the difficult challenges that the energy and agricultural industries in the state have been facing. Low commodity prices and the low value of the Canadian dollar have all factored into reasons that have resulted in the state's airline passenger numbers decreasing for a third straight year. Regardless of these challenges, our commercial airline service throughout the state remains strong.

This strength can be seen in the fact that the state's long-term statewide airline passenger growth has been maintained as passenger numbers are 51% higher than they were ten years ago in 2008. I am hopeful to once again see year over year statewide growth to pick up in 2018 as North Dakota continues its economic recovery," stated Kyle Wanner, Executive Director of the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission.