

Golf's impact on South Carolina was \$2.59 billion in 2018

- By Tommy Braswell Special to The Post and Courier
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Although there are fewer golf courses than the last time the South Carolina Golf Course Owners Association initiated a study on the game's economic impact in the state, revenues have improved and golfer expenditures remain good or better.

Here are highlights from the Executive Summary of the Economic Impact of Golf in South Carolina that was presented recently to SCGOA members:

- In 2018, golf courses and off-course expenditures of visiting golfers had a total economic impact (direct, indirect and induced) in South Carolina of \$2.59 billion in output or sales. Golf accounted for 31,434 jobs and produced \$857 million in wages and income and \$309 million was generated in federal, state and local taxes. Thirty-five percent of state admissions tax collections, or \$12.4 million, came from golf. And those numbers don't reflect the impacts of real estate sales in golf communities or off-site purchases of golf equipment by local golfers.

- The average number of rounds played statewide was 27,062 per 18-hole course. It was highest in the coastal region, where the average was 35,052 rounds. Public courses averaged 32,66 rounds. The average revenue from membership dues, green fees and cart fees per paid round was \$52.78 statewide. It was highest in the coastal region (\$70.64) and at private courses (\$140.57).

- On top of the money they spent at golf courses, traveling golfers spent \$870 million at hotels, restaurants and other retail and entertainment venues. The top golf destinations were Myrtle Beach (55 percent), Hilton Head (31 percent) and Charleston (24 percent). Out-of-state visitors came from Ohio (17 percent), North Carolina (11 percent), Pennsylvania (9 percent) and Georgia (6 percent). South Carolina residents accounted for 16 percent of golf trips in the state. The median age of golf visitors was 48 with a median household income of \$100,000-\$125,000.