



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Meaghan Wims  
401.278.4434, mwims@duffyshanley.com

## **Rhode Island Convention Authority Sites Continue Strong Growth**

*1.4 Million People Attend Events at RI Convention Center, Dunkin' Donuts Center and The VETS Every Year – Generating \$830M+ in Economic Impact Over Last Five Years, Supporting More than 1,800 Jobs*

**Providence, R.I. – February 19, 2018** – The three Rhode Island Convention Center Authority properties continue to be an economic engine for Providence, with their impact on the state's economy over the last five years growing 13 percent over the previous time period.

The Rhode Island Convention Center, the Dunkin' Donuts Center and The Vets generated **\$838 million** in total economic impact for the State of Rhode Island from fiscal year 2013 through 2017, according to a new analysis released today. This compares to **\$735 million** over the previous five-year period. The facilities generated more than \$12 Million in state and local tax revenue every year.

The study was conducted by Convention, Sports & Leisure International of Plano, Texas. CSL examined event types, ticket sales, attendance and spending on concessions and merchandise at each facility, among other financial data.

"Together, the Convention Center, the 'Dunk' and The VETS are at the heart of Downtown Providence," said Convention Center Authority Board Chairman Bernie Buonanno, Jr. "They attract millions of visitors to the city and help keep our local and state economy humming. We can see evidence of this with the new hotel projects being built throughout the state."

"Our analysis shows that the combined growth in economic impact generated from the Convention Authority venues has outpaced increases in the national events industry as a whole," said John Kaatz, principal in charge of CSL's study.

From the Providence College Friars Basketball and the Providence Bruins, to high-caliber conferences – such as JLC Live and Unitarian Universalist Association – and the Rhode Island Philharmonic, the three properties have had five very busy years.

Roughly **1.4 million people** visit the three public facilities each year, attending an average of 500 annual events and spending millions on tickets, concessions and merchandise.

“The study is further evidence that these state-supported sports, entertainment and hospitality venues continue to perform very well,” said Rhode Island Convention Center Executive Director James P. McCarvill.

Roughly 71 percent of the economic impact of the facilities comes from people who live outside Rhode Island, most of whom attend multi-day conferences and tradeshows at the Convention Center. Without the draw of these events, these visitors would not likely have an occasion to visit Rhode Island. While they’re in-town, these visitors channel dollars to the local economy in lodging, restaurants and bars, shopping and transportation.

“This study clearly demonstrates the extraordinary economic impact these facilities have on our state,” said Martha Sheridan, President and CEO of the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau. “But beyond the fiscal implications, we can’t overstate the benefit that the meetings, conventions, exhibitions and sporting events that take place in these buildings have on our quality of life and how they showcase Rhode Island to visitors annually as an ideal place to visit, work and live.”

Already, fiscal 2018 is proving to be another strong year for the Convention Center, highlighted by Hasbro’s HASCON and the National Governor’s Association Summer Meeting.

Employment levels have remained steady, with more than **1,800 jobs** supported by activities at the three facilities in fiscal 2017.

### **Highlights**

In fiscal year 2017, the Convention Center hosted 242 events with 704,000 visitors to the center.

The Dunk hosted 142 events, resulting in 654,000 patrons visiting the arena in fiscal year 2017.

The VETS hosted 135 events, with 118,000 attendees in fiscal year 2017.

### **About the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority**

Located in the heart of downtown Providence, the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority operates the Rhode Island Convention Center (RICC), Dunkin’ Donuts Center (DDC), Veterans Memorial Auditorium (The Vets), and two parking garages. The Authority,

governed by an eleven – member board of commissioners, works with several marketing partners to book its facilities, including SMG, which manages the DDC and RICC, Professional Facilities Management (PFM), which manages the Vets, PSE Agency (PSE), the exclusive sales and marketing agent of all three facilities, and the Providence Warwick Convention and Visitors Bureau (PWCVB).

The Authority and its staff strives to provide the community with world-class concerts and family shows, high –profile sporting events and amazing conventions and tradeshow. The staff prides itself for outstanding service for event planners and promoters, while also maintaining a safe, clean and professional environment.

###