



**Hearing on “Leading the Way: Adapting to South Florida’s Changing Coastline”**  
**Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation**  
**Tuesday, April 22, 2014 at 10:00 a.m.**

Mr. William D. Talbert, III, President & Chief Executive Officer  
Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Travel and Tourism is Greater Miami’s #1 Industry**

For the past four years Greater Miami has experienced record numbers of visitors.

In 2013, a record 14.2 million visitors spent one or more nights in Greater Miami and spent a record \$22.8 billion dollars in our community.

In 2013, for the first time in our history, Greater Miami was visited by more international visitors than domestic. For the past 4 years and 3 months the hospitality sector in Greater Miami has added jobs each month...a record 114,700 jobs. 75% plus of Greater Miami’s \Overnight Visitors come to the community for a ‘vacation.’

Greater Miami is blessed with approximately 25 miles of world class beaches. The Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau [GMCVB] collects this information from independent third parties. Approximately 400 interviews of visitors are conducted each month by GMCVB independent contractors. The GMCVB’s most recent surveys show the following:

- 45% of the Overnight Visitors stayed on Miami Beach
- 56% of Overnight Visitors said their ‘Most Liked Feature(s)’ of Greater Miami was: Weather (multiple answers permitted)
- 42% said: South Beach/Ocean Drive
- 39% said: Beaches
- 32% said: Sun Bathing

During the recent BP Oil Spill we learned the importance of the global perception of the condition of our beaches. While no oil from the BP Oil Spill made it to Greater Miami’s beaches the perception of ‘oil on Florida’s beaches had the potential to negatively affect tourism to Greater Miami. In fact, because of this potential, BP provided grant assistance to the GMCVB to deal with this issue. Largely because no oil made it to Miami’s beaches, there was no negative impact from the BP Oil Spill.

Greater Miami travel and tourism continues to prosper. Greater Miami has evolved to become a great global community. Greater Miami is now one of the top tourist destinations in the world. Great weather, great access, international ambiance, heritage neighborhood, thriving arts and culture, world class shopping, world class dining and, of course, pristine beaches.