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**Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce Receives  
\$10,000 Grant from Virginia Tourism Corporation  
"Crush Friday" Program Marketing Fund**

**Chincoteague, VA (January 23, 2018):** Today, Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce & Certified Visitor Center announced that it has received a \$10,000 grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) "Crush Friday Program" grant fund. "Crush Friday" is part of VTC's ongoing efforts to support U.S. Travel's "Project: Time Off" initiative, encouraging citizens to utilize unused vacation days. In total, VTC awarded \$250,000 to 25 tourism marketing projects across the Commonwealth to help increase visitation and revenue for Virginia's localities through tourism. More than 155 partners will participate in this cross-state marketing program effort.

"We are thrilled to be supporting U.S. Travel's Project: Time Off with our brand new Crush Friday campaign. The Crush Friday initiative is an engaging, creative, and collaborative way for Virginia localities to leverage critical marketing dollars to attract more visitors to the Commonwealth, increasing the economic impact of tourism," said Rita McClenny, president and CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation. "This program will also help to change the way millennials think about vacation and the importance of time off not only to their quality of life, but quality of work."

"We are delighted to promote our 'Beautiful Land Across the Water' to hard-working individuals desperately needing a change of scenery", said Evelyn Shotwell, executive director of the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce. "Our wide open marshes, abundant wildlife, pristine beaches, hiking and biking trails, fresh coastal cuisine, and unique shopping experiences are just a few of the treats that await you. Did I mention we also have wild ponies?"

The Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce received a \$10,000 grant for its Crush Friday project. The chamber partnered with Chincoteague Cultural Alliance, Chincoteague Island Arts Organization, Christmas By the Sea, Historic Main Street Merchants Association, Toms Cove Aqua Farms, Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission and local restaurants and lodging industries to supply matched marketing efforts for the project. This innovative project will allow us to promote shoulder season visitation more aggressively with added funds to reach our target drive markets who can capitalize on a long weekend. The economic impact will be felt across all industry sectors as visitors shop, dine, take nature cruises and explore all that Chincoteague and Assateague Islands have to offer. You might even get to see a rocket launch from Wallops Flight Facility!

American workers left 662 million vacation days on the table last year. Of these workers, the millennial sub-set is the most likely to want to be seen as work martyrs. In an effort to be seen as valuable to the company a work martyr is the most likely to forego taking vacation days. The VTC Crush Friday Program is designed to encourage the millennial work martyr to give vacation a try. VTC and its industry partners aim to change that mindset and show the benefit that even one day of vacation can have. Virginia and Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce offer a call to millennials to take a well-deserved Friday and crush it in Chincoteague Island.

Tourism is an instant revenue generator for Virginia. In 2016, tourism generated \$24 billion in revenue, supported nearly 230,000 jobs and provided \$1.7 billion in state and local taxes. Dollars invested in tourism are proven to provide a 7:1 return in tax revenue for Virginia, and the grant awards and matching funds provide a stimulus to localities seeking to increase tourism visitation and revenue.

**SPEND YOUR FRIDAY  
LIKE THIS ON  
CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND**



**CRUSH FRIDAY**  
VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS

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