

Springfield, Ill., May 19--Gov. Otto Kerner today received a detailed report from the Illinois Pavilion at the New York World's Fair telling of the popularity of the Illinois exhibit, in spite of poor fair attendance.

Reporting on pavilion attendance, James A. Cassin, executive director of the Illinois Commission on the New York World's Fair, said: "Illinois has more than tripled its percentage of the fair's total paid attendance and doubled the number of visitors received at the pavilion, compared with the same period last year."

As of May 15, Illinois Pavilion records show a total attendance of 244,817 since the fair reopened on April 21.

Pavilion attendance for the same number of operating days in 1964 was 118,039. In terms of percentage of World's Fair paid attendance, the Illinois Pavilion has been attracting 11.5 per cent this year against 3.8 per cent for the comparable period in 1964.

"It seems that with no waiting lines and with the fairgrounds uncrowded so far this year, visitors are able to select the pavilions of their special choice, and we are pleased that the Illinois Pavilion is attracting so many of the families at the fair," the report concluded.

With more browsing time, fair visitors also are stopping in greater numbers to get travel information from the Illinois tourism center in the pavilion's New Salem cabin. Gene Graves, executive director of the Board of Economic Development, the state agency responsible for tourist promotion, noted that fair visitors are registering for specific information about Illinois travel attractions at the rate of 750 families a day, as compared with 500 a day last year. More than 75,000 Illinois travel brochures prepared by the board have been distributed at the pavilion so far this year.

The report to the governor also reviewed the favorable publicity given the Illinois Pavilion and its feature show, "Great Moments With Mr. Lincoln." Newspaper and private polls of World's Fair pavilions again rank the Illinois Pavilion among the top 10 in popularity. The Illinois Pavilion continues to be one of the favorite stops for dignitaries and celebrities. In the first three weeks of the second season Illinois has already welcomed Mayor Willy Brandt of West Berlin, Sarah Churchill, Linda Baines Johnson and Princess Grace of Monaco.

The second season of the World's Fair has attracted many more Illinois bands and performing groups. The 1965 community events calendar has included programs honoring essay contest winners from Independence Hall Association of Chicago, York Community High School Band from Elmhurst, the Kelly High School Senior Class from Chicago, and the Lincoln Community High School Band and Choir of Lincoln.

A full schedule for the rest of the season has already been set up so that school and community groups can visit their home-state pavilion as special guests of the day.