

WTTC opposes passport legislation for Caribbean Tourism

2006-10-14

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) strongly opposes the decision of the United States Congress to grant an extension for implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) exclusively to land-based tourism and cruise line passengers while leaving air passengers to carry the burden of a January 8, 2007 deadline.

With looming implementation of WHTI for Caribbean air passengers, the United States Congress has effectively laid off 188,300 Caribbean workers.

Last year WTTC worked closely with the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) to measure the impact implementation of the WHTI would have on the countries within the region, whose economies largely depend on Travel & Tourism. According to the report, WTTC estimated that the region could lose US\$2.6 bn in visitor exports and more than 188,300 Travel & Tourism jobs as a result of the WHTI. The same study found that some 80 per cent of US visitors to Jamaica do not use a passport, while in St. Vincent, The Bahamas and Antigua, the figures are 50 per cent, 30 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. Only around 27 per cent of Americans have current, valid passports.

WTTC President Jean-Claude Baumgarten said 'These forecasts are extremely alarming and it is discriminative that airlines do not share a similar level of support to that given to cruise and land-based tourism. The economic contribution of Travel & Tourism to Caribbean economies is significant and the airlines are pivotal to this area of the economy.'

WTTC will continue to support CHA in its mission to address this urgent matter in Washington DC.

This article comes from Hotel News Resource

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com>

The URL for this story is:

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/article24620.html>

© 1998 - 2007 Nevistas and the author.

Brought to you by Hotel News Resource

Distribute your news on our Network

See what all the buzz is about at:

http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/Info-news_account_info.html