

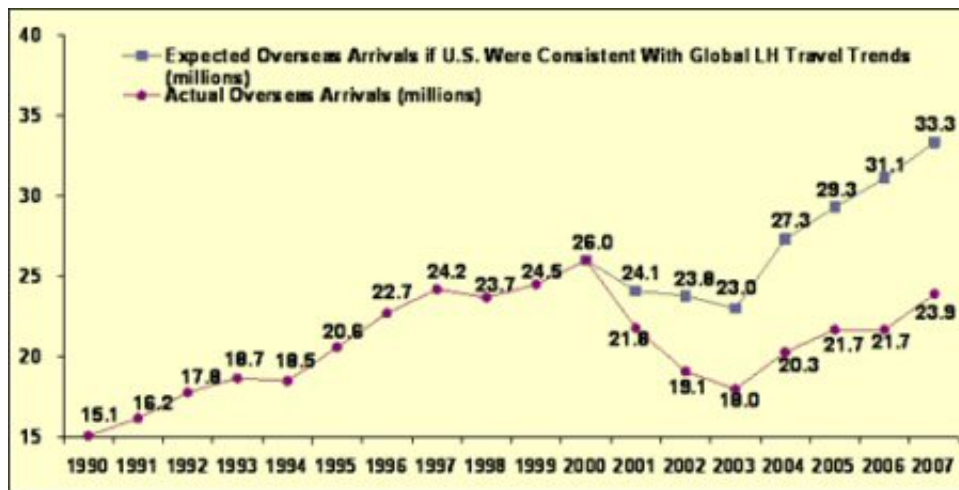
United States Welcomes Two Million Fewer Overseas Visitors in 2007 than in 2000

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Travel Community Applauds Recent Increase, Deeply Concerned that Weak U.S. Dollar Not Driving a Boom in Travel to America

New Department of Commerce data reveal that the United States continues to suffer from a decline in overseas arrivals despite a worldwide boom in international travel and an extraordinarily favorable exchange rate. According to data released today by the U.S. Department of Commerce, the United States welcomed two million fewer overseas visitors in 2007 than in 2000 (despite a 10 percent increase over 2006). More significantly, the United States welcomed nearly 10 million fewer overseas visitors in 2007 than it would have if it simply kept pace with post-9/11 worldwide long-haul travel trends.

'America is the world travel bargain, and yet two million fewer travelers visited the United States in 2007 than in 2000,' said Roger Dow, President and CEO of the Travel Industry Association. 'In the current economic environment, the United States should be setting overseas travel records rather than inching back to pre-9/11 standards.'



The difference between 'international' and 'overseas' arrivals is critical, according to the travel community. Overseas visitors (those other than Canada and Mexico) spend an average of \$4,000 per visit and hold the key to America's public diplomacy efforts.

According to the TIA, increasing overseas travel to the United States requires critical visa, entry and communication reforms. President Bush and Congress made positive strides in 2007 by passing important visa and entry reforms, but communication reform still awaits action in the House and Senate.

The 'Travel Promotion Act' would help reverse the decline in overseas travel by establishing a nationally coordinated travel promotion campaign at no cost to the American taxpayer. The program would better communicate complex travel policies and assure foreign travelers that they are welcome to visit the United States. Studies show that such a campaign could attract millions of additional overseas visitors per year, resulting in billions of dollars of new visitor spending. The legislation currently has the bipartisan support of more than 160 members of the House of Representatives and nearly 40 Senators.

The Travel Industry Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the \$740 billion travel industry. TIA's mission is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the United States. TIA is proud to be a partner in travel with American Express. For more information, visit www.tia.org.

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