

Deteriorating Air Travel Process Leads Travel Industry to Make Pledge to Travelers, Call on Presidential Candidates to Do the Same

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In the wake of the cancellation of more than 1,000 flights and growing dismay among travelers, the Travel Industry Association (TIA) today called on the three remaining presidential candidates to issue detailed plans to improve the air travel process during their term in office. On behalf of millions of frustrated travelers and an increasingly concerned private sector, TIA pledged to lead a broader discussion on the need for comprehensive reforms and detail the profound consequences of inaction.

"The entire travel community - including hotels, rental cars, destinations, theme parks and, most importantly, travelers - is dependent on a safe, secure and efficient air travel system," said Roger Dow, President and CEO of the Travel Industry Association. "With respect to efficiency, today's air travel system is broken. We pledge to travelers that we will work with them to break the logjam in Washington and make meaningful reforms to the air travel process."

TIA called on Senators Clinton, McCain and Obama to:

Issue comprehensive plans by Memorial Day to fix major elements of the air travel system during their term in office,

Demonstrate on the campaign trail an understanding of the challenges that millions of American travelers are confronting each and every day,

Ensure that an improved transportation infrastructure is a major element of their party platform to be adopted at this summer's conventions, and

Respond to a brief questionnaire that will enable voters to determine which candidate is the greatest champion of the traveler.

"Travelers are voters - and approximately two million take to the skies each day," said Dow. "They are looking for a candidate that champions the needs of travelers and promises to build a travel infrastructure that our country can be proud of."

TIA is committed to an aggressive campaign on behalf of travelers and to assist the candidates by:

Conducting research among air travelers to determine their greatest concerns with the current system, the changes they would like to see and the consequences of inaction,

Convening a forum of the entire travel community to discuss where the air travel process is breaking down, the consequences to the American economy and what can be done in the short term to improve the air travel system, and

Developing a blueprint for air travel reform to be provided to the next President of the United States.

These efforts supplement TIA's ongoing "Change the Debate" campaign designed to raise the visibility of critical travel issues among presidential candidates. According to a 2007 survey of primary voters in South Carolina and Florida, a majority of Democrats and Republicans believe that government should do more to build an effective travel system.

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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