

Travel Promotion Act Advances in U.S. House of Representatives

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Travel Community Praises Representatives Rush, Whitfield, and Ross for Moving Legislation to Strengthen Economy, America's Image Overseas

The Travel Industry Association (TIA), today applauded the leadership of Chairman Bobby Rush (D-IL), Ranking Member Edward Whitfield (R-KY), Representative Mike Ross (D-AR) and other members of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce for reporting H.R. 3232, the "Travel Promotion Act," to the full committee. The bill was approved by voice vote.

"In the waning days of the 110th Congress, leaders are stepping forward to strengthen America's economy by passing the Travel Promotion Act," said Roger Dow, President and CEO of TIA. "Chairman Rush, Ranking Member Whitfield and Representative Ross (D-AR) have moved the United States one step closer to creating thousands of new jobs and billions in new spending."

The "Travel Promotion Act," H.R. 3232, introduced by Representatives William Delahunt (D-MA) and Roy Blunt (R-MO) and co-sponsored by 244 members of the House of Representatives, establishes a public-private partnership to promote the United States as a premier international travel destination and communicate U.S. security and entry policies. The bill specifies that travel promotion would be paid for - at no cost to U.S. taxpayers - by private sector contributions and a modest fee on foreign travelers that do not pay \$131 for a visa to enter the United States. Nearly every developed nation in the world spends millions of dollars to attract visitors.

"We strongly urge Congress to pass the 'Travel Promotion Act' before it adjourns for the year," said Dow.

Two million fewer overseas travelers visited the United States in 2007 than in 2000. The decline in overseas travel since 9/11 has cost America 46 million visitors, \$140 billion in lost visitor spending and \$23 billion in lost tax revenue. If the United States had simply kept pace with global travel trends in 2007, an additional 340,000 jobs would have been created in 2007.

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