

Travel Promotion Act Clears House Committee, Moves Significantly Closer to Final Passage

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Travel Community Urges Immediate House Action to Pass Legislation, Strengthen America's Economy, Create Thousands of New Jobs

The Travel Industry Association (TIA) today praised the leadership of Chairman John Dingell (D-MI), Ranking Member Joe Barton (R-TX), Representatives Bobby Rush (D-IL), Janice Schakowsky (D-IL), Edward Whitfield (R-KY), and Mike Ross (D-AR), Minority Whip Roy Blunt (R-MO), and all other members of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce for reporting H.R. 3232, the "Travel Promotion Act," to the full House of Representatives. The bill was approved by voice vote.

"In these days of economic uncertainty, leaders in Congress took an important step today to create thousands of new jobs and billions in new economic growth by passing the 'Travel Promotion Act' out of Committee," said Roger Dow, President and CEO of TIA. "Increasing international travel to the United States is one of the best stimulants to our struggling economy. It is time for Congress to pass this common sense legislation."

The "Travel Promotion Act," H.R. 3232, introduced by Representatives William Delahunt (D-MA) and Roy Blunt (R-MO) and co-sponsored by 243 additional 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.

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, an additional 340,000 jobs would have been created in 2007.

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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