

## U.S. House of Representatives Passes 'Travel Promotion Act of 2008'

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Legislation Will Create Jobs and Strengthen American Economy, Historic Achievement for Travel Community

### **Legislation Will End Multi-Billion Loss in Visitor Spending, Recapture \$23 Billion in Lost Tax Revenue**

The U.S. House of Representatives today passed H.R. 3232, the "Travel Promotion Act of 2008," by voice vote. The legislation will create thousands of new jobs and spur economic growth nationwide by attracting millions of additional international travelers to the United States who, since 9/11, have found ever-changing security policies and negative foreign press coverage to be a deterrent to visiting the United States.

"The U.S. House of Representatives took decisive action today to jump-start America's struggling economy and create thousands of new jobs by passing the 'Travel Promotion Act,'" said Roger Dow, President and CEO of the Travel Industry Association. "We now call on the U.S. Senate to act quickly to reverse the decline in overseas visitation to the United States and utilize the power of travel to strengthen the American economy."

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 who 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.

"This is a historic, unprecedented achievement for the travel community," said Dow. "In response to the tragic events of 9/11, the government put in place needed security measures. This legislation creates a public-private partnership to ensure proper communication of those measures and attract millions of additional international 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, the U.S. economy would have created an additional 340,000 jobs in 2007 and the total U.S. unemployment rate would have dropped from 4.6 to 4.4 percent.

*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](http://www.tia.org).*

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