



TOGETHER
we're stronger



Talking Points and Fun Facts for Meeting with Elected Officials

What *IS* Travel?

- Travel is not just the airlines. Not just the hotels. Travel jobs encompass laborers at convention centers, restaurant workers, taxi drivers, theme park operators, travel agents, and many more.

Travel and tourism is one of America's largest industries (2010 U.S. Travel Data)

- **\$759 billion** in **DIRECT TRAVEL SPENDING** by domestic and international travelers.
- **\$118 billion** in **TAX REVENUE** for local, state and federal governments generated by direct travel expenditures.
- Each U.S. household would pay **\$1,000 MORE IN TAXES** without the tax revenue generated by the travel and tourism industry.
- Direct spending by resident and international travelers in the U.S. averaged \$2 billion a day, \$86.6 million an hour, \$1.4 million a minute and \$24,000 a second.

Travel and tourism is one of America's largest employers (2010 U.S. Travel Data)

- Supports **14 million jobs**.
- **1 out of every 9 jobs in the U.S. depends on travel and tourism.**
- Travel is among the **top 10 industries** in 48 states and D.C. in terms of employment.

The key to economic growth and job creation in travel and tourism is through smarter visa policy. Improvements to the U.S. visa process could:

- Attract 98 million more legitimate international visitors.
- Create an additional 1.3 million U.S. jobs by 2020.
- Inject \$859 billion into the U.S. economy.

Steps to increase America's share of overseas travel

- Align consular affairs with market demands.
 - Ask the President to issue a Presidential Directive to recapture 17% share of worldwide travel overseas.
 - Pilot the use of videoconferencing to conduct visa interviews.
 - Create long-term strategic plans for opening additional visa offices.
- Reduce visa interview wait times to 10 days or fewer and match Western Europe's share of international visitors in Brazil, China and India.
 - Hire an estimated 440 new consular officers between Brazil, China and India over the next five years.
 - Waive the in-person interview for certain applicants who are renewing their visas.

- Improve planning.
 - End the artificial limits on visa interview dates and develop a more accurate measure of applicant backlogs.
 - Make historical data on visa interview wait times for each consulate available to the public.
- Preserve and expand the Visa Waiver Program (VWP).
 - Direct the Departments of Homeland Security and State to develop working groups with nations like Brazil and Chile to discuss becoming eligible for the VWP.
 - Develop frameworks that specify actions that each country needs to take to be considered for VWP membership.
 - **Will you Co-sponsor S.497 & H.R. 959, the Secure Travel and Counterterrorism Partnership Program Act of 2011 which updates the VWP framework.**

There is a better way for aviation security (www.betrustednow.org)

- The TSA passenger screening process is inefficient and hurting our economy. A 2010 survey found that Americans would take an additional 2 to 3 flights per year if hassles in security screening system were improved. These additional flights would add nearly **\$85 billion** in consumer spending and **900,000 jobs** to the U.S. economy.
- In order to create an efficient and more secure passenger screening process, TSA should implement a Trusted Traveler Program. Such a program would:
 - Allow travelers to opt-in and voluntarily provide background information to qualify for expedited screening, if deemed secure.
 - Maintain security while increasing efficiency and removing hassles, encouraging more Americans to fly and improving our economy.
- **Will you help to ensure that any TSA legislation includes a provision to create a “trusted traveler” program?**
- **Will you publicly support TSA’s current efforts to conduct a “trusted traveler” pilot program?**

Benefits of traveling (statistics from a U.S. Travel survey)

- An annual vacation can cut a person’s risk of heart attack by 50%.
- 53% of employed Americans say they come back from a vacation feeling reconnected with family.
- Two out of three executives believe that vacations improved their creativity (68%).

Key Points to building a relationship

- I look forward to working together with you and your staff to promote and protect the travel and tourism industry.
- I also encourage you to work with our voice in Washington, D.C. - the U.S. Travel Association – to further policies that allow the travel industry to continue creating jobs and stimulating the economy.

State/District Fun Facts: Be sure to visit www.poweroftravel.org to access data for your state and district. Simply click on your state to view spending, tax, payroll, and employment data for your state and district, and click on the PDF or printer icon on the upper right-hand side to download a printable leave-behind.