

# U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

June 5, 2017

The Honorable Greg Walden  
Chairman, House Energy and Commerce  
Committee  
2185 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Ranking Member, House Energy and  
Commerce Committee  
237 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Diane Black  
Chairwoman, House Budget Committee  
1131 Longworth House Office Building, Room  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Yarmuth  
Ranking Member, House Budget Committee  
131 Cannon House Office Building, Room  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen  
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee  
H-305, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey  
Ranking Member, House Appropriations  
Committee  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the 15 million Americans whose jobs depend on a vibrant travel sector, we are writing in opposition to a provision in the President's fiscal year 2018 budget proposal to eliminate funding for Brand USA.

Brand USA was created by statute in 2010 to help address the post-9/11 decade of declining U.S. share in the booming global travel market, costing the U.S. economy nearly a half-million travel-related jobs. The United States was one of the few developed countries in the world without a national destination marketing organization. The Travel Promotion Act, reauthorized through 2020 with large bipartisan congressional majorities, sought to restore our leading position in the highly competitive worldwide travel marketplace.

By attracting international visitors, Brand USA enhances economic growth in all 50 states and territories, spurs job creation and advances public diplomacy – all at no expense to American taxpayers. Its activities are supported by private sector contributions and matched by a \$10 fee paid by international visitors from Visa Waiver Program nations.

Business and leisure travelers from abroad are critical to local economies across our nation. To help attract these visitors, Brand USA has forged working relationships with hundreds of communities – large and small, urban and rural – and leveraged their varied promotional efforts into a coherent, cost-effective and productive national marketing campaign.

According to Oxford Economics, over the last four years Brand USA has attracted 4.3 million incremental visitors; \$13.6 billion in related spending; and \$29.5 billion in total economic impact,

including nearly \$3.9 billion in federal, state and local taxes. This has supported 50,900 incremental jobs annually and overall yielded an astonishing 27-to-1 return on investment.

In addition to marketing the U.S. as a destination, Brand USA is charged with communicating our evolving visa and entry policies, by addressing confusion about our security protocols that can discourage potential visitors from choosing U.S. destinations. Brand USA helps ensure they get accurate explanations of our changing rules – and ultimately return home to spread the word about America’s attractions and hospitality, generating goodwill for years to come.

In short, Brand USA is an extraordinarily successful public-private partnership – the type of joint initiative advocated by the Trump administration. Its work has been particularly beneficial for small destinations with limited marketing resources that can leverage Brand USA’s coordinated outreach to market their brands in the global marketplace.

As Congress deliberates on next year’s federal budget, we urge you to examine closely the uniformly positive impact of Brand USA’s work that adds so much value to America’s economy without cost to America’s taxpayers. With so much at stake, never has the crucial work of Brand USA been more important in our communities.

Sincerely,

**Cities & States**

Alabama Tourism Department  
Albany County Tourism Board  
American Samoa Visitors Bureau  
Arizona Office of Tourism  
Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism  
Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority  
Beaumont Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Beverly Hills Conference & Visitors Bureau  
CalTravel  
Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Casper Area Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Central Oregon Visitors Association  
Charleston Area Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Charlotte Regional Visitor Authority  
Choose Chicago  
Cincinnati USA Regional Tourism Network  
Citrus Co. Visitor and Conventions Bureau

Colorado Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Colorado Tourism Office  
Destination DC  
Destination Gettysburg  
Destination Irvine  
Discover Lancaster  
Durham Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Dutchess County Tourism  
Experience Columbia SC  
Experience Columbus  
Experience Kissimmee  
Fort Worth Convention & Visitors Bureau  
FRISCO Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Georgia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus  
Glacier County Regional Tourism Commission  
Great Lakes Bay Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau

Greater Des Moines Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Greater Ontario California Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Greater Palm Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Greater Portsmouth (NH) Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism  
Hawai'i Department of Transportation  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
Heritage Corridor Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Illinois Office of Tourism  
Indiana Office of Tourism Development  
Iowa Tourism Office  
Irving Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism  
Kentucky Travel Industry Association  
Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission  
Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Lake Erie Shores & Islands  
Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority  
Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority  
Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board  
Louisiana Travel Promotion Association  
Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism  
Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Louisiana Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus  
Louisiana Office of Tourism  
Mammoth Lakes Tourism  
Memphis Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Minneapolis Northwest Tourism  
Monroe-West Monroe Convention & Visitors Bureau

Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Monterey County Hospitality Association  
Mt. Hood Territory  
Naples, Marco Island, Everglades Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp.  
Nebraska Tourism Commission  
Nevada Commission on Tourism  
New Orleans Convention & Visitors Bureau  
New Smyrna Beach Area Visitors Bureau  
North Dakota Department of Commerce  
NYC & Company, Inc.  
Oklahoma City Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Oklahoma Travel Industry Association  
Oneida County Tourism  
Orange County Visitors Association  
Oxnard Convention & Visitors Bureau-California Welcome Center  
Park City Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Pasadena Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Plymouth County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Rancho Cordova Travel & Tourism  
Richmond Region Tourism  
San Diego Tourism Authority  
San Francisco Travel  
San Mateo County Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Santa Monica Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Sheridan Travel & Tourism  
Shreveport-Bossier Convention & Tourist Bureau  
Sioux Falls Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Snohomish County Tourism Bureau  
Sonoma County Tourism  
South Carolina Parks, Recreation & Tourism  
South Dakota Department of Tourism  
Southeast Tourism Society

St. Tammany Parish Tourist and Convention  
Commission  
Tennessee Department of Tourist  
Development  
Texas Travel Industry Association  
The Greater MIAMI Convention & Visitors  
Bureau  
The Oklahoma City Convention and Visitors  
Bureau  
The Peachtree City Convention and Visitors  
Bureau  
Travel Michigan, MI Economic  
Development Corp.  
Travel Oregon  
Travel Portland  
Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau  
Visit Anaheim  
Visit Anchorage  
Visit Baltimore  
Visit Buffalo Niagara  
Visit Charlotte  
VISIT DENVER  
Visit Duluth  
Visit Fairfax  
Visit Frederick  
Visit Huntington Beach  
Visit Jacksonville  
Visit Lafayette-West Lafayette  
Visit Laguna Beach  
Visit Mesa  
Visit Myrtle Beach  
Visit NC  
Visit Oakland  
Visit Oceanside Conference & Visitors  
Bureau  
Visit Panama City Beach  
Visit Pensacola  
VISIT PHILADELPHIA  
Visit Phoenix  
Visit Rapid City  
Visit Redondo Beach  
Visit Santa Barbara  
Visit Santa Cruz County

Visit Sarasota  
Visit Seattle  
Visit SLO CAL  
Visit St. Pete/Clearwater  
Visit Tampa Bay  
Visit Temecula Valley  
Visit Tri-Valley  
Visit Tucson  
Visit Vallejo  
Visit Vancouver USA  
Visit WeHo  
Visit Wichita  
VisitDallas  
VisitLEX  
VisitPITTSBURGH  
Wild, Wonderful West Virginia  
Wyoming Office of Tourism

#### **Business Leaders**

A Chateau on the Bayou Bed & Breakfast  
ADARA  
Adventure Photo Tours, Inc.  
Alaska Latin Tours, LLC  
Alaska Railroad  
ALON Marketing Group  
Amadeo Travel Solutions  
AMC Institute  
American Alliance of Museums  
American Executive International  
Corporation  
American Gaming Association  
American Hotel & Lodging Association  
American Resort Development Association  
(ARDA)  
American Society of Association Executives  
American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA)  
Aquarium of the Bay  
American Tours International (ATI)  
Backwards Distilling Company  
Bayou Belle Plantation Home  
Best Western Clocktower Inn Billings

Best Western Plus/Dragon Gate Inn/Royal  
Pagoda Motel  
Best Western Pony Soldier Inn & Suites  
B-FOR International  
Bike and Roll DC  
Bike and Roll NYC  
Broadway Inbound  
Broadway Life: Student Group Travel  
Business Travel Coalition  
Caesars Entertainment  
Café Beignet  
California Association of Boutique &  
Breakfast Inns  
California Hotel & Lodging Association  
California Lodging Industry Association  
California Ski Industry Association  
Caribe Royale Orlando  
Carpe DC Food Tours  
Casper KOA Kampground  
Cat Pear Consulting  
Certified Folder Display Service, Inc.  
Chicago Architecture Foundation  
Chicago Helicopter Experience  
Chicago's First Lady Cruises  
Choice Hotels International, Inc.  
Circle Wisconsin  
Citadel Outlets  
CityPASS  
CoCo Key Hotel & Water Resort  
Cornet Restaurant  
Cruise Lines International Association  
Destination Marketing Association  
International (DMAI)  
DogTrekker  
DoubleTree by Hilton Orlando at SeaWorld  
East West Marketing  
Enterprise Holdings Inc.  
Entertainment Cruises  
EuroUSA Seva Global Destination  
Management  
Events Industry Council  
Expedia, Inc.  
FestiGals

Financial & Insurance Conference Planners  
Florida Association of Destination Marketing  
Organizations  
General Growth Properties (GGP)  
Global Business Travel Association  
Global Hospitality Marketing Link  
Goulding's Lodge & Tours  
Grand Teton Lodge Company  
Gray Line New Orleans  
Greater Orlando Aviation Authority  
HAT Tourism Marketing  
HelmsBriscoe  
Hilton Los Angeles Airport  
Hilton Worldwide  
Hornblower Cruises & Events  
Hospitality Management Services  
Host Hotels & Resorts  
Hostelling International USA  
Hotel Beacon NYC  
Hotel Council of San Francisco  
Hotel Whitcomb  
Houston First Corp.  
HSMAI- Greater New York Chapter  
Independent Lodging Industry Association  
InterConnect-USA  
InterContinental Hotels Group  
International Association of Amusement  
Parks and Attractions  
International Association of Exhibitions and  
Events (IAEE)  
International Franchise Association (IFA)  
International Inbound Travel Association  
International Spy Museum  
Interstate Hotels & Resorts  
Irvine Company Retail Properties  
John G. Shedd Aquarium  
Kimpton Shorebreak Hotel and Pacific  
Hideaway  
Knott's Berry Farm  
Knott's Soak City Waterpark  
LA City Tours  
Lakeside Shopping Center  
Longwoods International USA Inc.

M&R Hotel Management  
Macerich Shopping Centers & Fashion  
Outlets  
Macy's  
Mall of America  
MapWest Publications  
Mardi Gras Hotel & Casino  
Marriott International, Inc.  
Marshall Hotels & Resorts  
Martiz Global Events  
Meredith Travel Marketing  
Merlin Entertainments  
Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority  
MGM Resorts International  
Miles Partnership  
Mise en Place  
National Aquarium  
National Restaurant Association  
National Tour Association  
New Orleans Steamboat Company  
New World Travel  
Northstar Travel Group, LLC  
Palm Springs Aerial Tramway  
Papillon Group  
Paradise Cove Luau  
Paramount Hospitality Management  
PIER 39  
Professional Convention Management  
Association (PCMA)  
Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center  
Randy A. Garfield & Advisors LLC.  
Real Racine  
Rezdy  
Ripley's Believe It or Not! Times Square  
Roaring Camp Railroad  
Rock Springs Holiday Inn, Express and  
Quality Inn  
Rocky Mountain Holiday Tours, LLC.  
Rocky Mountain International  
Sabre  
San Francisco Electric Tour Company  
San Francisco Travel Media Relations  
SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment

Sirata Beach Resort  
Smart Destinations, Inc.  
Society for Incentive Travel Excellence  
(SITE)  
South Coast Plaza  
STR, Inc.  
SYTA and SYTA Youth Foundation  
Temple University-School of Sport, Tourism  
and Hospitality Management  
The Best Hotels & Ranches in the West  
The Hiltons of Union Square  
The Midtown Hotel  
The Shops Buckhead Atlanta/River Oaks  
District Houston  
The Travel Technology Association  
Tour America, LLC.  
Tourism Economics  
Transdev On Demand, Inc.  
TRAVALCO  
Travel Lane County  
Travel Tech  
Trek America Travel Ltd  
Twin America LLC d/b/a Gray  
Line/CitySightseeing New York  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
U.S. Travel Association  
U.S. Travel Association Experience Network  
UnCruise Adventures  
Unique New England  
United States Tour Operators Association  
Urban AdvenTours  
USA Luxury Shopping  
Consortium/Anderson Retail Tourism  
Marketing  
Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin  
Resort  
Wellington Hotel  
Wendoming Food Service d/b/a Wendy's  
Where New Orleans  
Xanterra Parks & Resorts  
Yankee Leisure Group  
Young Strategies, Inc.  
Zimple Rentals, Inc.

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June 5, 2017

The Honorable John Thune  
Chairman, Commerce, Science, and  
Transportation Committee  
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson  
Ranking Member, Commerce, Science, and  
Transportation Committee  
716 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Enzi  
Chairman, Senate Budget Committee  
379A- Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bernard Sanders  
Ranking Member, Senate Budget Committee  
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee  
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman, Senate Appropriations  
Committee  
437 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

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Citrus Co. Visitor and Conventions Bureau

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Colorado Tourism Office  
Destination DC  
Destination Gettysburg  
Destination Irvine  
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Durham Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Dutchess County Tourism  
Experience Columbia SC  
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Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau

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Travel Oregon  
Travel Portland  
Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau  
Visit Anaheim  
Visit Anchorage  
Visit Baltimore  
Visit Buffalo Niagara  
Visit Charlotte  
VISIT DENVER  
Visit Duluth  
Visit Fairfax  
Visit Frederick  
Visit Huntington Beach  
Visit Jacksonville  
Visit Lafayette-West Lafayette  
Visit Laguna Beach  
Visit Mesa  
Visit Myrtle Beach  
Visit NC  
Visit Oakland  
Visit Oceanside Conference & Visitors  
Bureau  
Visit Panama City Beach  
Visit Pensacola  
VISIT PHILADELPHIA  
Visit Phoenix  
Visit Rapid City  
Visit Redondo Beach  
Visit Santa Barbara  
Visit Santa Cruz County

Visit Sarasota  
Visit Seattle  
Visit SLO CAL  
Visit St. Pete/Clearwater  
Visit Tampa Bay  
Visit Temecula Valley  
Visit Tri-Valley  
Visit Tucson  
Visit Vallejo  
Visit Vancouver USA  
Visit WeHo  
Visit Wichita  
VisitDallas  
VisitLEX  
VisitPITTSBURGH  
Wild, Wonderful West Virginia  
Wyoming Office of Tourism

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Aquarium of the Bay  
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Backwards Distilling Company  
Bayou Belle Plantation Home  
Best Western Clocktower Inn Billings  
Best Western Plus/Dragon Gate Inn/Royal  
Pagoda Motel

Best Western Pony Soldier Inn & Suites  
B-FOR International  
Bike and Roll DC  
Bike and Roll NYC  
Broadway Inbound  
Broadway Life: Student Group Travel  
Business Travel Coalition  
Caesars Entertainment  
Café Beignet  
California Association of Boutique &  
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California Hotel & Lodging Association  
California Lodging Industry Association  
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Caribe Royale Orlando  
Carpe DC Food Tours  
Casper KOA Kampground  
Cat Pear Consulting  
Certified Folder Display Service, Inc.  
Chicago Architecture Foundation  
Chicago Helicopter Experience  
Chicago's First Lady Cruises  
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Circle Wisconsin  
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CityPASS  
CoCo Key Hotel & Water Resort  
Cornet Restaurant  
Cruise Lines International Association  
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EuroUSA Seva Global Destination  
Management  
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FestiGals  
Financial & Insurance Conference Planners  
Florida Association of Destination Marketing  
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Global Business Travel Association  
Global Hospitality Marketing Link  
Goulding's Lodge & Tours  
Grand Teton Lodge Company  
Gray Line New Orleans  
Greater Orlando Aviation Authority  
HAT Tourism Marketing  
HelmsBriscoe  
Hilton Los Angeles Airport  
Hilton Worldwide  
Hornblower Cruises & Events  
Hospitality Management Services  
Host Hotels & Resorts  
Hostelling International USA  
Hotel Beacon NYC  
Hotel Council of San Francisco  
Hotel Whitcomb  
Houston First Corp.  
HSMIA- Greater New York Chapter  
Independent Lodging Industry Association  
InterConnect-USA  
InterContinental Hotels Group  
International Association of Amusement  
Parks and Attractions  
International Association of Exhibitions and  
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International Franchise Association (IFA)  
International Inbound Travel Association  
International Spy Museum  
Interstate Hotels & Resorts  
Irvine Company Retail Properties  
John G. Shedd Aquarium  
Kimpton Shorebreak Hotel and Pacific  
Hideaway  
Knott's Berry Farm  
Knott's Soak City Waterpark  
LA City Tours  
Lakeside Shopping Center  
Longwoods International USA Inc.  
M&R Hotel Management

Macerich Shopping Centers & Fashion Outlets  
Macy's  
Mall of America  
MapWest Publications  
Mardi Gras Hotel & Casino  
Marriott International, Inc.  
Marshall Hotels & Resorts  
Martiz Global Events  
Meredith Travel Marketing  
Merlin Entertainments  
Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority  
MGM Resorts International  
Miles Partnership  
Mise en Place  
National Aquarium  
National Restaurant Association  
National Tour Association  
New Orleans Steamboat Company  
New World Travel  
Northstar Travel Group, LLC  
Palm Springs Aerial Tramway  
Papillon Group  
Paradise Cove Luau  
Paramount Hospitality Management  
PIER 39  
Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA)  
Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center  
Randy A. Garfield & Advisors LLC.  
Real Racine  
Rezdy  
Ripley's Believe It or Not! Times Square  
Roaring Camp Railroad  
Rock Springs Holiday Inn, Express and Quality Inn  
Rocky Mountain Holiday Tours, LLC.  
Rocky Mountain International  
Sabre  
San Francisco Electric Tour Company  
San Francisco Travel Media Relations  
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Smart Destinations, Inc.  
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South Coast Plaza  
STR, Inc.  
SYTA and SYTA Youth Foundation  
Temple University-School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management  
The Best Hotels & Ranches in the West  
The Hiltons of Union Square  
The Midtown Hotel  
The Shops Buckhead Atlanta/River Oaks District Houston  
The Travel Technology Association  
Tour America, LLC.  
Tourism Economics  
Transdev On Demand, Inc.  
TRAVALCO  
Travel Lane County  
Travel Tech  
Trek America Travel Ltd  
Twin America LLC d/b/a Gray Line/CitySightseeing New York  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
U.S. Travel Association  
U.S. Travel Association Experience Network  
UnCruise Adventures  
Unique New England  
United States Tour Operators Association  
Urban AdvenTours  
USA Luxury Shopping Consortium/Anderson Retail Tourism Marketing  
Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort  
Wellington Hotel  
Wendoming Food Service d/b/a Wendy's  
Where New Orleans  
Xanterra Parks & Resorts  
Yankee Leisure Group  
Young Strategies, Inc.  
Zimple Rentals, Inc.

