

Exhibitions Day 2019: Issues Brief



Overarching Messaging: Create National Economic Prosperity by Enabling Business Deals

- The ability to conduct business, whether in boardrooms or in exhibit halls, is vital to the health of our country and is a critical element to achieving our nation's economic goals.
- The \$91 billion exhibitions industry plays an important role in facilitating these valuable business deals. Issues such as security concerns, decaying infrastructure and hotel booking fraud can impede the success of these imperative face-to-face gatherings.
- Not addressing these challenges will cost the nation and your constituents money over time. The ability to attract and sustain both international and domestic business visitors leads to tax revenue for cities and tax savings for residents.
- As the backbone of the U.S. GDP, fair and free trade is only possible if business travel to the U.S. is properly facilitated and if the U.S. is presented as a suitable and desirable destination.
- At the same time, we must ensure that we properly balance the promotion of the U.S. as a desired destination with proper security measures to keep business travelers safe.
- In facilitating safety and ease of travel to the U.S., we aid access of face-to-face business meetings, exhibitions and events, thereby attracting additional investment in the U.S. from domestic and international entities.

Call to Action: *When issues that affect business travel facilitation, fair and free trade, and domestic security come across your desk, we urge you to think about how they also impact the ability of your constituents in [location] to conduct business – their ability to buy and sell goods, their access to goods and services, and the opening of new opportunities for their small businesses.*

Supporting Messaging

1. Safety and Security: measures that ensure the safety and security of exhibitions and event attendees

A. Stop Online Booking Scams

Overview: Upwards of 15 million fraudulent bookings are caused by these scams, resulting in more than \$1.3 billion in lost revenue for hotels and money from consumers.

Our message: The growing use of online travel reservation sites is only making this market more of a target for cyber criminals. There needs to be stronger policy in place to protect consumers from these scams.

- In 2017, the House and Senate introduced **H.R. 2495 and S. 1164 – Stop Online Booking Scams Act**, which would stop hotel booking scams and allow state attorneys general to pursue restitution and refunds on behalf of the victims.
- There is currently no bill supporting this cause, but it is extremely important to the safety and security of exhibitions and event attendees. We need the help of our legislators to advance these measures and help us battle this practice of digital theft.

Call to Action: *Please encourage your fellow Congressmen and women to reintroduce this bill, so the FTC is empowered to investigate and penalize this growing issue.*

2. Travel Facilitation: measures that promote business travel, generating U.S. economic growth and job creation

A. Secure Travel Partnership

Overview: In 2017, 23 million travelers arrived in the U.S. from Visa Waiver Program countries and generated \$190 billion in economic activity. Visitors from the 38 countries that participate help generate a \$77 billion trade surplus for the U.S.

Our message: We believe it's important to rename the program to more accurately depict its security enhancements and demonstrate strong support for secure and better travel for international travelers who have already been highly vetted. Embracing policies that enhance the global travel market will enable growth that is crucial to achieving nation's economic goals.

- Travel is a top 10 employer in 49 states, and international travel is the U.S.' #1 service export and #2 export overall.
- In 2019, the House introduced **H.R. 1996** to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to rename the Visa Waiver Program to Secure Travel Partnership.
- The Visa Waiver Program is the gold standard in travel security because it requires heightened security operations, increased information sharing and travelers from all 38 participating countries are prescreened before boarding their inbound flights.

Call to Action: *We urge Congress to sign on to the Rename the Visa Waiver Program bill to demonstrate support for secure and better travel for international travelers and to oppose any measures that could further erode America's market share of international travelers.*

B. JOLT Act

Overview: Over 1.2 million jobs across America are directly supported by international inbound travel. For the U.S. to grow that number as well as regain and increase our share of the global travel market, it is important to improve and expand the programs we currently have in place.

Our message: The JOLT Act will update and strengthen numerous programs related to the efficiency and volume of international inbound travel and help the U.S. regain its share of the global travel market.

- In 2019, the House introduced **H.R. 2187 - To amend the Immigration and Nationality Act** to stimulate international tourism to the United States, and for other purposes.
- U.S. airports have nearly \$128 billion in infrastructure needs through 2021 to accommodate tremendous growth in passenger volume.

Call to Action: *We urge Congress to support the vital role travel plays in supporting American job growth and the economy by signing the JOLT Act.*

C. Investing in America's Infrastructure

Overview: According to the World Economic Forum, the U.S. ranks ninth in the world in infrastructure quality. Inadequate supply of infrastructure is one of our top 10 most problematic factors for doing business.

Our message: The lack of infrastructure investment is costing the U.S. economy millions in revenue.

- Without proper travel infrastructure, it is extremely challenging to accommodate trade shows to [your state]. To compete with other countries for business travel, significant improvements are needed.
- U.S. airports have nearly \$128 billion in infrastructure needs through 2021 to accommodate tremendous growth in passenger volume.

Call to Action: *We urge Congress to support measures that close all infrastructure investment gaps.*

D. Protecting Brand USA

Overview: President Trump's FY2018 budget proposal calls for the elimination of funding for Brand USA, a federally supported organization that promotes the country overseas as a business and tourist destination.

Our message: Brand USA is a bipartisan program funded by inbound airline passenger fees and private industry, so there is no impact on U.S. taxpayer money. The program's efforts are crucial to attracting international tourism, investment and fair and free trade.

A 2019 study by Oxford Economics shows Brand USA's marketing efforts are generating a high return on investment (ROI) and driving significant incremental international visitation and spend, which is helping to fuel the nation's economy. The report shows Brand USA has consistently driven strong results over the past six years, including record results in Fiscal Year 2018 (FY2018) for incremental international visitor spending, tax revenues generated, and total economic impact.

Highlights of the study show Brand USA's marketing efforts in FY2018 alone (October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018) helped drive:

- 1.13 million incremental international visitors to the USA who spent
- \$4.1 billion on travel and fare receipts with U.S. carriers, and generated
- \$1.17 billion in federal, state, and local taxes and
- \$8.9 billion in total economic impact, and supported
- 52,305 incremental U.S. jobs

The resulting FY2018 marketing ROI was 32:1—meaning that every \$1 Brand USA spent on marketing generated \$32 in spend by international visitors.

The study also shows that the cumulative results of Brand USA's marketing efforts over the past six years (FY2013 through FY2018) has helped bring:

- 6.6 million incremental visitors to the USA who spent
- \$21.8 billion on travel and fare receipts with U.S. carriers, and generated
- \$6.2 billion in federal, state, and local taxes, and
- \$47.7 billion in total economic impact, which has supported, on average,
- Nearly 52,000 incremental U.S. jobs each year

The six-year results equate to an average marketing ROI of 28:1.

Call to Action: *We urge Congress to oppose any measures to defund Brand USA and recognize reduced funding as a measure that would hurt the health of our economy.*

https://www.thebrandusa.com/media-events/news/new-study-shows-brand-usa%E2%80%99s-marketing-initiatives-drove-record-international?utm_source=social&utm_campaign=ROI_FY18