

SAMPLE OP-ED



THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL IN **DESTINATION/ORGANIZATION**: POLICIES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

As **DESTINATION / ORGANIZATION** emerges from the pandemic and welcomes back visitors, it's time to turn the page and look ahead—to imagine a future for **DESTINATION / ORGANIZATION'S** travel industry that is bold and imaginative, competitive and helps small businesses thrive.

This [National Travel and Tourism Week](#) (May 1-7), **DESTINATION / ORGANIZATION** recognizes the Future of Travel and the critical role our industry will play in rebuilding our local economy, fostering sustainability, ushering in new innovations and reconnecting Americans to each other and the world.

It is also an opportunity to remind lawmakers of the incredible value travel holds for America's future growth and success as we move beyond the pandemic.

Travel is such an important part of who we are as a community. Before the pandemic, **FIGURES THAT DEMONSTRATE TRAVEL'S LOCAL, PRE-PANDEMIC ECONOMIC IMPACT**. Nationally, travel [generated \\$2.6 trillion](#) in economic output, supported 17 million American jobs and delivered a \$51 billion trade surplus to the U.S. in 2019—proof that travel will have an outsized role to play in **DESTINATION / ORGANIZATION'S** and America's economic recovery.

However, this vital revenue source was severely diminished amid the pandemic.

International inbound travel and business travel remain depressed. International travel spending is down 78% from 2019 while business travel spending is down 56%. In **DESTINATION / ORGANIZATION, INCLUDE LOCAL LOSSES AND IMPACT**.

This uneven recovery within the travel industry will further delay America's overall economic recovery. To help return our industry to sustained growth, it is crucial that lawmakers prioritize policies to facilitate a more prosperous future for the millions of workers whose livelihoods depend on this industry.

THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL IS SUSTAINABLE

DESTINATION / ORGANIZATION attracts **ANNUAL VISITATION STATISTICS**, many of whom visit **NATURAL OR HISTORICAL SITES**. Protecting these treasures locally—and restoring other sites such as national parks, national forests, beaches and natural attractions—ensures they can be enjoyed for generations to come. Travel and sustainability can complement one another. With the right tools in place, travelers can see and experience our country—and protect it.

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THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL IS INNOVATIVE

Infrastructure investments in roads, airports, transit and passenger rail are key to making it easier to access destinations and attractions. New transportation technologies like high-speed rail, autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles and other innovative technologies can improve travel times and attract more visitors to **DESTINATION / ORGANIZATION**.

THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL IS SEAMLESS

While we've all grown accustomed to the ease of virtual meetings, travel and in-person meetings and events should be just as simple. Biometrics, improved baggage checks and ticketing services and other technological advancements make the travel process more secure and efficient. As American workers look to hit the road again, lawmakers should continue to champion these innovations as integral to restarting business travel.

THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL IS GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE

Promoting America as a premier destination for global travelers is more important than ever as we recover from steep losses. Lawmakers should continue to advocate for funding for destination marketing organizations like **YOUR LOCAL OR STATE DMO** so we can welcome back visitors from near and far.

The pandemic was a setback, but it's also an opportunity to reimagine the travel industry. If lawmakers plan for the future by prioritizing these policies today, businesses in **DESTINATION / ORGANIZATION** can recover more quickly and rebuild the travel industry to be more dynamic, innovative, sustainable and competitive than ever before.

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