

## SEPTEMBER 2025 | QUICK MESSAGING GUIDE

*The U.S. Travel monthly messaging guide delivers timely, compelling, data-driven messaging for you to use in your communications with policymakers, local leaders and industry stakeholders. We encourage you to implement this language in your efforts. Please reach out to the [U.S. Travel team](#) with any questions.*

### Travel Is Essential

- Travel contributes **\$2.9 trillion** in annual economic output, supports **15 million** jobs and generates **\$190 billion** in tax revenue—making it a top driver of growth, stability and resilience. It's a high-impact, high-return sector that delivers jobs, economic development and community investment at scale.
- Travel fuels job creation, small business growth and local investment in every state. From hospitality and transportation to retail and recreation, it supports one of the most diverse and resilient ecosystems in the U.S. economy.
- Travel keeps America healthy. Whether exploring national parks, reconnecting with loved ones, or simply stepping away from work, travel supports mental, emotional and physical well-being. It fosters connection, reduces stress and helps Americans live fuller, healthier lives.
- Travel breathes life into communities. It preserves cultural landmarks, supports regional pride and funds public services—revitalizing both urban centers and rural towns alike.

### Domestic Travel

- Labor Day air travel rose 3% from last year, following four TSA-record days in July. 94% of Americans have trips planned in the next six months—a sign of continued domestic travel momentum.
- At the same time, challenges persist as affluent travelers are spending less, business travel remains constrained and national park visitation has declined for seven straight months—down nearly 10 million visitors so far this year.

### Need Bold Federal Action

- U.S. Travel's Commission on Seamless and Secure Travel called for the biggest upgrade to aviation security since TSA PreCheck. We're already seeing progress—from momentum on One Stop Security to TSA's move to end the 'shoes-off' policy.
- The proposed Traveler Privacy Protection Act of 2025 would severely restrict the use of biometrics at TSA, reversing years of progress toward faster, safer and more secure air travel.
- 79% of air travelers support the use of biometrics at TSA security checkpoints to confirm traveler identities.

## Outdated Infrastructure Can't Meet Modern Traveler Expectations

- Without sustained investment in aviation systems, air traffic control, airports and ground transportation, the U.S. will struggle to meet traveler expectations—or demand.
- Travel strengthens the foundations of a safe, modern America. Airports, transit systems and border facilities aren't just for tourists—they are essential infrastructure.
- The recent \$12.5 billion investment in air traffic control modernization is a strong start. But more is needed—especially for mid-sized and regional airports, which remain underfunded and poorly connected to city centers.
- Unlike Europe and Asia, the U.S. lacks seamless integration across buses, trains and flights. Our airports remain behind global standards—with outdated terminals, limited amenities and growing congestion.

## The U.S. Is Predicted to be the Only Major Country in the World Experiencing a Decline in Travel

- In just over a decade, the U.S. has gone from a **\$50 billion travel trade surplus** to a projected **\$60+ billion deficit in 2025**.
- Our share of global international travelers has fallen from **16% in 2000 to just 9% today**.
- The **World Travel & Tourism Council** projects the U.S. will lose **\$12.5 billion** in international visitor spending in 2025—the only country facing a decline.
- Through July 2025, international visitation is down 3.9% year-over-year, led by sharp declines from Canada. Mexico continues to grow; overseas markets are steady.
- Overseas visitors spend an average of **\$4,000 per trip**. Every 1% drop in international spending costs the U.S. **\$1.8 billion in export revenue**.

## We Must Send a Welcoming Message to the World

- The new **\$250 Visa Integrity Fee** sends the wrong signal: “We do not want you.” This 130% increase in upfront visa costs makes the U.S. one of the most expensive destinations for visa-requiring travelers—likely deterring nearly **1 million** annual visits.
- Brand USA is a proven tool for attracting international travelers, but matching federal funds have been cut by **80%**, from \$100 million to just \$20 million annually in FY26 and FY27.
- Travel is how America shows up in the world. It promotes mutual understanding, strengthens diplomacy and invites the world to experience our people, values and culture.

## Task Forces Are in Motion for 2026, 2028 and Beyond—Let's Keep Building

- These events could bring **40 million visitors** and **\$100 billion in economic impact**—but only with proactive strategy and modern systems in place. We are calling for:
  - The biggest aviation security upgrade since TSA PreCheck
  - The most advanced border experience since Global Entry
  - A reimaged, streamlined U.S. visa process