

2026 POLICY PRIORITIES

WHO WE ARE

U.S. Travel Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the U.S. travel industry—a key contributor to America’s economic success. Our mission is to increase travel to and within the United States, and in doing so, fuel our nation’s economy and future growth. We pursue this mission by establishing travel as essential and responsible, advancing seamless and secure travel and shaping solutions to operational challenges.

CURRENT CLIMATE

America is no longer the top destination for global travel. The United States has lost 41% of its share of long-haul travelers since 2000. International visitation to the U.S. peaked in 2018 but has not returned to those levels since. When Americans and international travelers experience our nation’s aging airport infrastructure, long airport screening and customs lines and bureaucratic delays in visitor visa processing, they see a failure of government and an America in decline.

Congress has a historic opportunity to reverse this trend. With America250, the 2026 FIFA World Cup, and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games on the horizon, the U.S. could welcome millions of domestic and international visitors and generate billions in economic activity—but only if the travel system is ready to meet the moment. That means reducing friction for international visitors by supporting policies that promote lawful visitation and modernizing domestic travel by investing in screening technology, infrastructure and the travel workforce.

WHAT CONGRESS CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE U.S. TRAVEL INDUSTRY

Protect Domestic Air Travel From Future Shutdowns

- **Protect Travel From Future Shutdowns:** Cosponsor and pass the Aviation Funding Solvency Act (H.R. 6086), Keep America Flying Act (S.3031 / H.R.5851) and Aviation Funding Stability Act of 2025 (S. 1045) to ensure air traffic controllers and TSA officers are paid during funding lapses to prevent disruptions to the economy and the air travel system.

Prevent Harm to International Inbound Travel

- **Protect the Visa Waiver Program:** Urge the Administration to halt U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s (CBP) proposed changes to the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) application that would mandate disclosure of social media information and deter lawful visitation.
- **Restore Funding for Brand USA:** Cosponsor and pass the VISIT USA Act (S. 3220 / H.R. 6128) to restore full funding for Brand USA by transferring \$160 million in surplus Travel Promotion Funds previously collected and intended to support Brand USA, to Brand USA for FY26 and FY27.
- **Stop the Travel Deterrence Fee:** Develop legislation to delay or limit the proposed “Visa Integrity Fee,” which would add a minimum of \$250 to all nonimmigrant visas and make the U.S. the second most expensive country to visit.
- **Support Travel Improvements through USMCA Review:** Cosponsor and pass the USMCA Travel and Tourism Resiliency Act (S. 3787 / H.R. 7454), which would direct the United States Trade Representative to establish a Travel and Tourism Trade Working Group as part of the USMCA review to focus on enhancing competitiveness and increase visitor numbers.

WHAT CONGRESS CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE U.S. TRAVEL INDUSTRY

Advance Domestic Travel Through Modernization

- **Keep America Moving:** Ensure the timely passage of a long-term surface transportation reauthorization that prioritizes high-impact travel mobility projects and modernizes highway, transit, and passenger rail systems.
- **TSA Upgrades:** End diversion of the 9/11 Security Fee to invest in screening technology. Cosponsor and pass the SAFEGUARDS Act (S. 2378) in the Senate and upcoming House companion bill.
- **National Parks Access:** Boost park infrastructure funding by reauthorizing the Great American Outdoors Act and strengthen the Legacy Restoration Fund through the America the Beautiful Act (S. 1547) and upcoming House companion bill.
- **Increase H-2B Visas:** Support efforts to increase the cap on H-2B visas to support hospitality workers for major upcoming U.S.-hosted global events.

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