

# PRESERVE AND CONTINUE TO EXPAND THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM—PASS THE JOLT ACT (S. 2091/H.R. 1401)

U.S. TRAVEL  
ASSOCIATION

The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) allows pre-screened, pre-approved travelers from participating countries to travel to the United States without obtaining a visa for stays of up to 90 days for business or leisure. The 38 countries that participate in the program are required to maintain high security standards and share information with America.



To travel to America, VWP travelers must first obtain approval through DHS's Electronic System for Travel Authorization. Through ESTA, DHS is able to identify matches to the Terrorist Screening Database maintained by the FBI and to thousands of lost and stolen passports before a traveler is allowed to board a flight to the United States.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**One in nine U.S. jobs** depend on travel and tourism.



Surveys show that international visitors to the United States are

**74% more likely** to have a favorable view of America and



**61% more likely** to support U.S. policies.

## WHY SUPPORT THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

### Strengthen U.S. Security

VWP travelers to the United States are checked against multiple law enforcement and security databases **before arrival**.

VWP participating countries are required to:

- Share information about known or suspected terrorists and criminals with U.S. authorities;
- Allow U.S. inspections of their security standards, protocols and apparatus;
- Promptly report data on all lost and stolen passports; and
- Use biometric passports that conform to stringent international security standards.

### Boost to Local Communities

Travel to the United States is America's No. 1 services export. Overseas visitors—i.e., international visitors other than those from our next-door neighbors Canada and Mexico—spend an average of nearly \$4,300 per trip and generate tax revenue without burdening local services, such as public schools and fire departments.

In 2014, 20.3 million visitors to the U.S., 60% of all overseas visitors—i.e., international visitors other than those from our next-door neighbors Canada and Mexico—arrived through the VWP. While visiting the U.S., they generated \$190 billion in total output for the U.S. economy, supporting nearly one million American jobs.

### Increase International Visitation to America

Expanding the VWP to Brazil, Poland, Israel, Croatia and other select countries worldwide would:

- Add 1 million additional visitors;
- Add nearly \$11 billion to the U.S. economy; and
- Support nearly 61,000 additional American jobs.

### Pass the JOLT Act and Enhance the VWP

- The House of Representatives reintroduced the bipartisan JOLT Act which aims to enhance the VWP and foster increased travel to the U.S.
- This legislation will further strengthen the VWP by instituting new, mandatory security requirements for participating countries including stricter airport security standards, tightened passport requirements and greater data sharing among U.S. intelligence systems.
- The bill would also grant the Secretary of Homeland Security greater flexibility to expand the VWP to countries that fully meet all of the security guidelines.

**Members of the Senate and House of Representatives are encouraged to co-sponsor the JOLT Act.**