August 12, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

Brand USA is a unique public-private partnership established by Congress to promote and market the United States as a destination for international travelers. We write to respectfully and urgently request that you work with us to reauthorize Brand USA and ensure that it has a reliable funding source for fiscal year 2020 and beyond.

Travel and tourism are key drivers of the American economy, fueling one in every ten American jobs. According to the U.S. Travel Association, traveler spending in the United States generated $2.5 trillion in economic output in 2018 and supported 15.7 million jobs.

Brand USA serves as the destination marketing organization for the United States. Created by the Travel Promotion Act of 2009, Brand USA’s chief mission is to encourage visitation to the United States. The program provides multiple platforms to promote all 50 states, the five territories, and the District of Columbia, from our national parks and iconic cities to our smaller, rural and lesser known communities across the country.

Importantly, Brand USA operates at no cost to the American taxpayer. It is funded through a fee paid by international visitors to the United States traveling under the Visa Waiver Program as well as through voluntary private sector contributions. Since fiscal year 2013, Brand USA’s marketing efforts are responsible for a total of 6.6 million additional international visitors to the United States. These visitors spent $21.8 billion over this time, which has generated a total economic impact of $47.7 billion and supported an average of nearly 52,000 jobs per year. In 2018 alone, Brand USA marketing brought an additional 1.13 million international visitors to the United States, generating an economic impact of $8.9 billion.

Though the program has been a proven success in boosting tourism to the United States and driving economic growth, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 diverted Brand USA’s user fees to general revenue. We strongly support protecting and renewing Brand USA’s funding while upholding its original intent that no taxpayer dollars be used to fund it.

Congress should unite on this bipartisan issue as it has done in the past. We ask for your support and leadership to provide a solution for Brand USA’s funding as well as its reauthorization. We are committed to working with you to do so, either as stand-alone legislation or as part of a larger legislative package.

Sincerely,

PETER WELCH  
Member of Congress

GUS M. BILIRAXIS  
Member of Congress

DINA TITUS  
Member of Congress

GREG WALDEN  
Member of Congress
BOBBY L. RUSH  
Member of Congress

DIANA DEGETTE  
Member of Congress

KATHY CASTOR  
Member of Congress

SCOTT PETERS  
Member of Congress

YVETTE CLARKE  
Member of Congress

TONY CÁRDENAS  
Member of Congress

DARREN SOTO  
Member of Congress

ANN MCLANE KUSTER  
Member of Congress

DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.  
Member of Congress

BILLY LONG  
Member of Congress

FRED UPTON  
Member of Congress

ADAM KINZINGER  
Member of Congress

DAVID B. MCKINLEY, P.E.  
Member of Congress

BILL JOHNSON  
Member of Congress

PETE OLSON  
Member of Congress

SUSAN W. BROOKS  
Member of Congress

LARRY BUCSHON, M.D.  
Member of Congress

BILL FLORES  
Member of Congress
DAVID N. CICILLINE
Member of Congress

GRACE F. NAPOLITANO
Member of Congress

VAL DEMINGS
Member of Congress

GILBERT R. CISNEROS, JR.
Member of Congress

SUZANNE BONAMICI
Member of Congress

KENDRA S. HORN
Member of Congress

JOAQUIN CASTRO
Member of Congress

JOE CUNNINGHAM
Member of Congress

ANTHONY BRINDISI
Member of Congress

GREG STANTON
Member of Congress

TED LIEU
Member of Congress

STEVEN HORSFORD
Member of Congress

STEPHANIE MURPHY
Member of Congress

SHAKICE L. DAVIDS
Member of Congress

JULIA BROWNLEY
Member of Congress

JIMMY GOMEZ
Member of Congress

DAVID TRONE
Member of Congress

SUSIE LEE
Member of Congress
HARLEY ROUDA  
Member of Congress

BILL PASCRELL, JR.  
Member of Congress

ANN KIRKPATRICK  
Member of Congress

TOM RICE  
Member of Congress

BRIAN HIGGINS  
Member of Congress

CAROL D. MILLER  
Member of Congress

WILL HURD  
Member of Congress

RON WRIGHT  
Member of Congress

JASON SMITH  
Member of Congress