

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

Thank you for your continued commitment to address the economic challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. As leading organizations in America's travel and tourism industry, we respectfully urge Congress to swiftly enact federal policies that will increase demand for business and international travel and help stabilize the broader travel economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the travel industry, costing the industry over \$720 billion in lost revenue since the start of the pandemic. According to Tourism Economics, domestic business travel spending will be 50% below 2019 levels in 2021 and 24% below 2019 levels in 2022. Similarly, international travel spending will be 78% below 2019 levels in 2021 and 28% below 2019 levels in 2022. Tourism Economics forecasts that without targeted federal policies to accelerate the return of business and international travel demand, both of these vital segments will not fully recover to 2019 levels until at least 2024.

To support the thousands of communities that rely on travel as a vital source of economic activity, we urge Congress to quickly take the following steps this year:

- **Pass the Restoring Brand USA Act (S. 2424 / H.R. 4594)**, which transfers \$250 million in surplus revenue from the Travel Promotion Fund to restore Brand USA's budget and support its efforts to bring back international visitors to all regions of the United States. Brand USA's budget reached historic lows in 2021 due to the steep decline in international travel fees that are used to fund the program.
- **Provide targeted tax stimulus to restore spending on business travel, live entertainment, and in-person events.** Domestic business travel spending was down 50% in 2021 compared to 2019 and recovery in the live events and entertainment sectors lag behind other areas of the economy. Temporary tax credits and deductions, such as those proposed in Sections 2 and 4 of the Hospitality and Commerce Jobs Recovery Act (S.477 / H.R.1346), would stimulate spending and quicken the pace of recovery for business travel, conferences, live entertainment, the arts, minor league sports, and other in-person events.
- **Provide additional funding for relief grants to severely impacted travel businesses** by expanding eligibility for the Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF), the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Program, or enacting a new relief program with a similar structure to RRF for travel-dependent businesses severely impaired by COVID-19 restrictions—including hotels, event planners, group tour operators, attractions, travel advisors and many others.

A full list of the near-term steps that Congress and the Biden Administration can take to fully restore the travel community can be found [here](#).

Thank you for your continued support of our industry and the millions of workers that rely on a strong and enduring travel recovery. We look forward to working with you in this effort.