

U.S. TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD

Room 4830
DOC Building
14th & Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC

Tuesday,
June 9, 2009

The meeting was convened, pursuant to notice,
at 9:36 a.m., MS. MARILYN CARLSON NELSON, Chairman,
presiding.

APPEARANCES:

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

CHAIRMAN MARILYN CARLSON NELSON
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Carlson Companies

VICE CHAIRMAN WILLIAM DeCOTA
Director of Aviation
Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

MS. DAWN DREW
Vice President and Publisher
National Geographic Traveler

MR. ADAM SACKS
Managing Director
Tourism Economics

MR. JEREMY JACOBS, SR.
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Delaware North Companies

MS. NOEL IRWIN-HENTSCHEL
Chairman
Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer
American Tours International

MR. DAVID KONG
President and Chief Executive Officer
Best-Western International

U.S. GOVERNMENT

HON. GARY LOCKE
Secretary of Commerce

MR. DAVID DONAHUE
U.S. Department of State

MR. BRIDGER MCGAW
Department of Homeland Security

MS. TRACEY HANNAH
Department of Homeland Security

MS. KATHLEEN KRANINGER
Department of Homeland Security

MS. MARY SAUNDERS
U.S. Department of Commerce

MR. CARLOS MONTOULIEU
U.S. Department of Commerce

MR. J. MARC CHITTUM
U.S. Department of Commerce

ALSO PRESENT:

MR. CHRIS MEYER, CEM, CMP
Vice President
Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority

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P R O C E E D I N G S

OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION

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3 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Well, good morning
4 everyone, and welcome to the meeting of the U.S. Travel
5 and Tourism Advisory Board. I'd like to officially
6 call the meeting to order.

7 We have the great honor -- actually, Mr.
8 Secretary, your reputation as an advocate for our
9 industry has preceded you. Quotations from Pow-Wow
10 have been circulating, and nothing pleased us more than
11 to realize that, as a governor, you had actually
12 experienced the extraordinary job creation that results
13 from our industry.

14 So we're all looking forward to an opportunity
15 to partner together and to address what, at the present
16 time, is a very serious issue. We consider our travel
17 and tourism to be more than "an industry". We consider
18 it actually to be a sort of collection of industries.

19 As you yourself have quoted, the impact is far
20 and wide, and right now we are almost desperately in
21 need of some collective action not only to deal with
22 the issues that we face today, but in fact to prepare
23 for what could be a future that, with new travelers
24 coming who we'll reference later from the middle class
25 that is developing around the world, and certainly we

1 want to be able to welcome them to this beautiful
2 country with open arms and facilitate and expedite
3 their travel.

4 But I do not want to get ahead of ourselves.
5 I want to begin by asking our committee to introduce
6 themselves to you, and then perhaps you will honor us
7 by saying a few words to introduce yourself to us.
8 After that, we're going to go through our
9 recommendations for the record, and then we'll have a
10 bit of conversation where some of our committee members
11 will give you a little color on the particular areas of
12 the recommendation that they feel particularly strong
13 about. But I hope it can be very interactive.

14 I think we found at our last committee meeting
15 that it was quite satisfying for all of us, in that we
16 had a real exchange and we feel very comfortable to
17 have you ask questions, and we may ask, if we may, of
18 you as well. Collectively, we would like to actually
19 continue to make a difference.

20 So let me begin. I'll ask Bill DeCota to
21 begin. If everybody would introduce themselves--I
22 think you've just done it briefly, but you might do it
23 again, your affiliation--and then perhaps just briefly,
24 what the greatest concern you have relative to your own
25 particular area of activity. Later we'll talk more

1 broadly about the industry in general, but you might
2 express some of the concerns that your particular
3 operation is facing.

4 Would you begin, Bill?

5 MR. DeCOTA: Thank you, Marilyn and Secretary.
6 It's wonderful to be here. I am Bill DeCota. I am
7 Director of Aviation for the Port Authority of New York
8 and New Jersey, and I believe it is probably the
9 largest airport system in the world. There are
10 approximately 110 million passengers, about 3 million
11 tons of cargo. We truly believe we are where America
12 greets the world.

13 I run Newark Airport, Kennedy Airport,
14 LaGuardia Airport, Teterboro Airport in New Jersey,
15 which is one of the premier business airports, which is
16 one of the missed opportunities, I think, that we have
17 described in the briefing paper that we've given you in
18 terms of business aviation.

19 I also have recently purchased, about a year
20 and a half ago, Stuart Airport up in Newburg, New York
21 because it's a very under-utilized asset 65 miles north
22 of New York. Clearly, capacity of airport
23 infrastructure is central to what I do; fundamentally,
24 airports just exist to get people and cargo out of land
25 vehicles into air vehicles, and vice versa, but they

1 are enormously important to trade, travel, commerce,
2 and tourism in this country.

3 I was very thrilled when I found out that I
4 could be the Vice Chair to Marilyn Carlson Nelson,
5 because there's no person that I know of who's a bigger
6 advocate for travel, but even more important, commerce,
7 in the United States than Marilyn and the Carlson
8 Companies and the things that they do.

9 This is really another very prime example of
10 what I try to do. I try to really make businesses
11 successful, make sure that people get employed, that
12 people can go and visit. The state of our country's
13 airport infrastructure is an issue, but also air
14 traffic control, one of the biggest things, most
15 important things.

16 The port authorities created a coalition
17 called NextGen Now. It's basically the National
18 Alliance to Advance NextGen, and it's looking for
19 multi-year commitments of significant funding in order
20 to revolutionize the air traffic control systems and to
21 evolve from land-based radar beacons to satellites. So
22 that's a big piece of it.

23 Of course, on another level, the second
24 subcommittee's work that's going on in terms of travel
25 facilitation is vitally important to us, to be able to

1 process international visitors, to remove barriers, to
2 be able to get people visas, to have processing
3 capabilities, to bring people in, to have security that
4 serves as a fortress, but at the same time brings down
5 the barriers.

6 The economic sustainability issues, we cannot
7 understate, because since the deregulation of the
8 airline industry in 1978, airports have had to really
9 manage, do an awful lot of evolution of who carriers
10 are; carriers that once existed no longer exist, many
11 new ones were formed, they didn't have a very long
12 shelf life.

13 So all of these issues are really of
14 importance to me, but if I had to advocate very loudly
15 on behalf of anything, NextGen is at the top of my
16 agenda. I just appreciate the Commerce Department's
17 focus on all of these issues today and appreciate all
18 of the work of the committees that Marilyn has chaired,
19 because I think they have done some very good work that
20 you will be very interested in.

21 SECRETARY LOCKE: Thank you. Thank you.

22 MS. IRWIN-HENTSCHEL: Hi. My name is Noel
23 Irwin-Hentschel, with American Tours International.
24 Thank you for this opportunity to share with you some
25 of our concerns relating to our industry. I just

1 returned from China and southeast Asia. Our image in
2 Asia is a major concern for tourism because we have an
3 opportunity there with the MOU signing that took place
4 for many more tourists to come from China to the United
5 States.

6 But the concern for safety in America, first
7 with the bus accidents that have been happening because
8 of the underground industry that has been operating
9 here for the Chinese traveler which resulted in the
10 death of a 16-year-old girl, amongst others, is one of
11 the concerns and we're working with NTA on rules of the
12 road to try to prevent it from happening again. But
13 then the second part of a safety issue is the swine flu
14 and the opinion there that America is the place not to
15 come because of the concerns that they will get the
16 swine flu.

17 So it's really very important, we believe,
18 that there be a strategic plan for how to counteract
19 the negative media. From what we have seen, in
20 discussing with your commercial service officers, by
21 the way, which I want to really say that they are
22 fantastic in China and also in Vietnam, they've made
23 great introductions.

24 I would recommend that if there's more budget
25 or where there's more budget, that the more Commercial

1 Service Officers could really help the tourism industry
2 because they already have the infrastructure in place
3 to be able to just add resources there for doing
4 training and promotion.

5 That is the other part of our concern, is this
6 Travel Promotion Act that is in the process of
7 potentially passed, that has left out a great part of
8 the industry. All the small business owners, all the
9 medium business owners have not been brought into the
10 discussions of it, and yet there's potential for them
11 to be assessed so there is major concern as to why they
12 have not had a say, unless they are going to be exempt
13 from assessment like the airlines have been.

14 But the other part of the Travel Promotion Act
15 that is of concern is the funding to go to
16 discoveramerica.com, which really is focused on
17 Expedia, Travelocities, and the OTAs who have had the
18 resources to pay to play, but who also have not been
19 paying their taxes. So that, again, is from the medium
20 and small business owners in the tourism industry,
21 which we hope to be able to have a voice and to share
22 that.

23 We need travel promotion for sure, but the
24 Department of Commerce, with their Commercial Service
25 Officers and the international tour operators playing a

1 part in that, is very critical because that's the other
2 part of it. The plan right now of the business going
3 to these companies like Expedia and Travelocity is that
4 it will cut out the international tour operators who
5 have been supporting the United States of America and
6 all the money that's coming in has been coming from
7 those tour operators from around the world who now also
8 do not have a voice in this.

9 But that and the need for government-to-
10 government -- as I shared before, in China, it was
11 brought to our attention that perhaps by America
12 participating in the Shanghai World Expo, that perhaps
13 that could have a bearing on the Chinese government
14 right now telling people not to come to America.
15 Especially students have been advised not to come here
16 because of the flu. We know America is safe. We just
17 need for the Chinese people to know that it's safe to
18 come here. We believe that it would be really helpful,
19 when you have an opportunity to speak government-to-
20 government, for that to happen.

21 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Thanks, Noel. We
22 should move on.

23 MS. IRWIN-HENTSCHEL: That's it. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Jeremy?

25 MR. JACOBS: I will keep this brief. I'm

1 Jeremy Jacobs. I am Chairman and CEO of Delaware North
2 Companies. I'm the owner of the Boston Bruins hockey
3 team. I'm Chairman of the National Hockey League. I'm
4 also Chairman of the University of Buffalo Council.

5 Virtually every business in the company's
6 portfolio touches travel. We have about 50,000
7 employees around the world, with the majority in the
8 U.S. operations. The company operations include global
9 sports stadia, arenas, worldwide airports, destination
10 resorts, national and state parks, and
11 gaming/entertainment venues. The company's locations
12 range from the south here, the Kennedy Space Center, to
13 Yosemite National Park out in California.

14 I own and built the TD Bank North Garden in
15 Boston. We run such places such as London Wembley
16 Stadium or the Australian Open. I caught your remarks
17 on CNBC. I thought they were very helpful and very
18 constructive, and I want to thank you for them, Mr.
19 Secretary.

20 SECRETARY LOCKE: Thank you.

21 MR. DONAHUE: I'm Dave Donahue with the State
22 Department. Our biggest concern would be, how do we
23 serve those growing new classes we're seeing are future
24 travelers to the United States.

25 MS. DREW: Good morning. I'm Dawn Drew, Vice

1 President of Travel at the National Geographic Society.
2 My job has recently changed. Through our Global Media
3 Group we reach, through television, magazines, dot-com,
4 and other publications, about 40 million people
5 worldwide a day. We are principally content
6 developers.

7 One of the reasons I am so happy to be part of
8 this advisory board is because most of our content that
9 we develop is about travel. Many people will tell you
10 that the first inspiration they have to go anywhere
11 started when they were reading National Geographic. I
12 spend about a third of my time -- they'll tell you
13 other things, too.

14 (Laughter)

15 MS. DREW: But I spend about a third of my
16 time traveling out of the country. I work a lot, as
17 Noel said, government-to-government, our group with
18 other governments. I just came back on Friday from
19 India. It was my fifth trip there in the last nine
20 months.

21 The things that are top-of-mind for me, and
22 one of the reasons that I like being on this, is that I
23 really hope that we can address sustainability with
24 regard to travel, not just environmental
25 sustainability, but cultural sustainability. It's a

1 message that we don't get out enough about our country.
2 People wonder what the culture really is here, because
3 we're known as a melting pot.

4 Furthermore, I would like to start to do some
5 things here where we develop tourism inbound and
6 outbound, on a two-way basis, not just inbound tourism
7 to the United States. Working with other countries
8 like China, India, Vietnam, Brazil, there are some
9 pretty extraordinary things going on there and they
10 would like to partner with us, as opposed to just hear
11 from us about one-way inbound travel. I think that
12 there are some ways that we could do some pretty
13 extraordinary things together. It would benefit the
14 cruise lines and the airlines, as well as everyone else
15 here.

16 Third of all that is top-of-mind for me, is
17 State Department warnings and the news media. It seems
18 that the more negative we get, the more negative they
19 get overseas, which is why there's this growing
20 perception that we're not a safe place to come. I
21 think that the swine flu episodes have really come back
22 to hurt us, and I think that there have got to be ways
23 that we can, as a committee, collaborate and figure out
24 how to start to control the news media. For my part,
25 I'm trying to keep positive at National Geographic and

1 make sure that what we do is continue to tell people to
2 travel. Thank you.

3 MR. SACKS: My name is Adam Sacks. I'm the
4 Managing Director of Tourism Economics. I think for
5 us--and I could speak on behalf of our clients,
6 particularly destinations and hotel chains--there are
7 two things of greatest concern that we're hearing. The
8 first is on the meetings side. Where business has been
9 the weakest is on meetings, conventions, and certainly
10 incentive travel.

11 I think a big part of changing the landscape
12 there -- of course, there are economic fundamentals
13 that are driving this, but part of it is making the
14 case that these are essential to business operations--
15 indeed, business performance. I think there's actually
16 research that's coming out to support that, but I think
17 that's part of our message. It's a big part of the
18 industry. To continue to reinforce that, it's
19 essential that these meetings, bringing people
20 together, is a big part of what makes companies work
21 and what makes them perform well.

22 The other thing that we are interacting about
23 quite a bit does relate to travel promotion. Yesterday
24 I was with a group of ministers, tourism ministers,
25 from an association, about 30 of them together. They

1 were aware of the Travel Promotion Act. I was
2 moderating the sessions. They said, should we be
3 scared that the U.S. is going to fund this--and they're
4 not U.S. destinations, they're international--and that
5 all of the market is now going to go to the U.S. and
6 we're going to lose market share?

7 (Laughter)

8 MR. SACKS: Actually, Helen Marano was in the
9 group and she said "yes, be afraid. Be very afraid".
10 I think there's a positive thing to glean from that,
11 which is that from a competitive standpoint, we've been
12 at a disadvantage because we haven't had that central
13 marketing function.

14 To be able to bring that, and hopefully to
15 bring together not just large companies, but mid-sized,
16 and all the destinations and the diversity under a
17 single umbrella could have a major, major impact.
18 Indeed, from the analysis that we have done for the
19 U.S. Travel Association, as indicated, it would be a
20 game-changer. To be able to fund this the way that
21 it's been envisioned to be funded would truly change
22 the market position of the U.S. and have tremendous,
23 tremendous economic implications. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Thank you.

25 David Kong?

1 MR. KONG: Good morning, everyone. I'm David
2 Kong, the President and CEO for Best-Western
3 International. And since Bill Marriott is not here, I
4 can say we're the world's largest hotel chain.

5 (Laughter)

6 MR. KONG: I'm also the incoming chair for the
7 American Hotel Lodging Association.

8 Mr. Secretary, I have three points I'd like to
9 start with. Number one, is the economy, obviously,
10 weighs heavily on our minds. We need to try to improve
11 the rhetoric and encourage travel and encourage
12 business meetings.

13 Number two, credit is still a huge issue. We
14 have a lot of hotels that would like to renovate and
15 there are lots of developers that want to build hotels
16 and create jobs, and the money is simply not available.

17 The third point is what has been said already.
18 I think international travel, inbound travel, is
19 extremely important for our country. If you look at
20 the statistics, the fact that we lose 668 million, I
21 think, travelers from 2000 to 2008, and the fact that
22 they spent about \$4,500 each person, that is a pretty
23 sizeable loss from our economy. So I want to echo
24 what's been said about the Travel Promotion Act, and
25 certainly appreciate all the support that you have

1 extended to the industry. I appreciate all the
2 comments you've made and want to count on your
3 continued leadership. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Thank you.

5 MS. KRANINGER: Good morning, Mr. Secretary.
6 It's a pleasure to be here. I'm Kathy Kraninger, with
7 the Department of Trans-- Transportation? That would
8 be five years ago.

9 (Laughter)

10 MS. KRANINGER: I'm with Department of
11 Homeland Security. I'm here with two of my colleagues
12 who are in the Private Sector Office, and we are able
13 to present to you today some of the programs that DHS
14 has launched in the last year and the progress that
15 we've made with those. I think it's important from our
16 standpoint to recognize the partnership that we have,
17 certainly with the Department of State and with the
18 travel and tourism industry.

19 We've had some very successful implementations
20 recently and I think we must add to the clarity for
21 travelers as to what is required to come to the United
22 States, what they can expect certainly from processing,
23 particularly at the borders, at airports, and we are
24 certainly working hard to make sure our operations
25 reflect that flow and are welcoming to visitors and

1 travelers to the United States. So, we'll continue to
2 do that.

3 MS. HANNAH: I'm Tracey Hannah, as Kathy said,
4 from the Private Sector Office at Department of
5 Homeland Security.

6 Mr. Secretary, I worked with the former
7 Governor of Arizona's Policy Advisor of Regulatory
8 Affairs, and she gets the tourism thing--Arizona being
9 a major tourism state--and understands the implications
10 of regulations and policies on businesses and trade and
11 tourism. So we have a Secretary of Homeland Security
12 that is very sensitive to the issues that travel and
13 tourism present. Thank you.

14 MR. MCGAW: Good morning, Mr. Secretary, Madam
15 Chair, members of the board. My name's Bridger McGaw.
16 I'm the Acting Assistant Secretary for the Private
17 Sector Office. I appreciate the opportunity for us to
18 all be here today. As we saw with the H1N1 response,
19 the most appropriate and effective messaging we can do
20 as a group is to better communicate what we want to see
21 as the outcomes for our operations, whether they be
22 promoting tourism or informing the traveling public on
23 what they can do to better protect themselves.

24 The Department of Homeland Security continues
25 to be committed to promoting the open and secure travel

1 and the transfer of goods and services, but we also are
2 looking forward to a more robust participation and
3 coordination with the travel industry on how to best
4 communicate with the traveling public in advance of,
5 and during, various crises. So, thanks for having us.

6 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Thank you all. I
7 think, Mr. Secretary, we're looking forward to fall
8 when you're going to be convening the Travel Policy
9 Group. One of the great advances that we feel has been
10 made in the last couple of years is this close
11 collaboration between Homeland Security, State
12 Department, Commerce, and the recognition that we have
13 to work in really lock-step, and also between Federal
14 Government and state, which I think is another area
15 that you're going to bring real expertise, because this
16 issue has such a broad impact.

17 In businesses we do reengineering and we try
18 to be seamless from the beginning of the experience all
19 the way through the feedback that we get at the end of
20 the experience. I think that there's no way for this
21 to happen across our businesses and our industry
22 without the collaboration, and we look forward to your
23 intensely driving that so we can be even more
24 successful.

25 We have seemed to have the sun, the moon, and

1 the stars aligned because we have a President who cares
2 deeply about having the world acknowledge that this is
3 a warm, collaborative people who would like to reach
4 out across the world. We have you now in this position
5 and we have an industry, with the possibility of this
6 Travel Promotion Act, that if we find the right way to
7 communicate it, can really enable not only this
8 industry, but the diplomatic initiatives of the
9 country, as well as the badly needed economic impact.
10 So that said, we look forward to hearing from you, if
11 we may, as to what your thoughts are. We were
12 delighted to see your appointment, and we look forward
13 to hearing from you.

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1 Best-Western. When I was a legislator, one of the
2 places I stayed at when I was in the state legislature
3 is now a Best-Western facility. On the campaign, and
4 even as Commerce Secretary, as we travel from city to
5 city, we've used Radisson, we've used Best-Western.
6 So, keep up the great work.

7 And everyone knows *National Geographic*
8 magazine, and everybody sees those great pictures and
9 says, oh, we've got to go there, we've got to go there.
10 So I just appreciate the great, great work that you do.
11 And everybody, of course, has flown through JFK and
12 LaGuardia.

13 (Laughter)

14 SECRETARY LOCKE: And wondering, how come
15 we're still on the tarmac?

16 (Laughter)

17 SECRETARY LOCKE: And, of course,
18 international travel is so very, very important, so I
19 thank you all for being here.

20 We, of course, know how important travel and
21 tourism in the hospitality industry is to our economy,
22 contributing almost \$1.3 trillion a year to our
23 economy, thousands and thousands--tens of thousands--of
24 jobs. Tens of thousands of jobs. And, of course, we
25 know that those who work in the travel/tourism/

1 hospitality industry support many other jobs. They eat
2 in restaurants, they shop in malls, they remodel their
3 homes, they purchase automobiles, they just support so
4 many other jobs throughout the economy.

5 And so these are tough times and we need to
6 try and help the industry get through them, but we know
7 that there will be better times. In fact, you all have
8 been one of our greatest contributors to redressing the
9 balance of trade issues. In preparation for the Pow-
10 Wow conference down in Miami, I realized that the
11 tourism and travel sector is considered a service.
12 It's part of the services industry and is considered
13 part of the export business.

14 Because while foreign travelers coming into
15 America spend money here, we actually call it an export
16 because it's actually American jobs supporting people
17 in other countries, even though they consume that
18 product here and we're not actually sending that
19 product out. But it's really foreign money, foreign
20 currency coming into the United States, the same way
21 that if we were to send goods, manufactured goods, to,
22 let's say, Australia, or to France.

23 Those French companies, Australian companies
24 would pay and that money comes back into the United
25 States and to companies here in the United States. It

1 is not different in terms of travel, where visitors
2 from Australia or France are contributing to our
3 economy, but actually making the transaction here in
4 the United States and consuming the product here in the
5 United States.

6 So we know that perhaps by the end of 2010,
7 growth will start picking up again, perhaps at 3
8 percent. We'd like to make it--obviously all of you
9 would like to make it--even stronger and more robust.
10 But in the meantime, we need to figure out how we can
11 prepare for that brighter future in terms of airport
12 congestion, airport capacity, visas, clear rules,
13 expectations of foreign visitors when they come, issues
14 in terms of Homeland Security, just clarifying the
15 requirements as, Canadians, for instance, have traveled
16 across the border into the United States.

17 We know that a lot of Canadians do come down
18 for shopping, for visits, for tourism, and for
19 recreation, and even for business. So we need to
20 really have clear guidelines and clear procedures, and
21 people need to know what they can expect when they come
22 to the United States.

23 With respect to visas, it's been an issue long
24 of concern for me, not just in terms of visitors, but
25 also business travel. We know that the more business

1 travel coming to the United States, the more that
2 they're exposed to the United States, that supports the
3 tourism and travel industry. They may want to come
4 back strictly for recreation in the future, but we need
5 to figure out how we can streamline the visa processing
6 procedures, make it very clear, but also make it much
7 more customer-friendly. I know that the State
8 Department is concerned about this as well.

9 So I look forward to all of your comments and
10 your feedback on what we can do together, working
11 between the public and private sector, and then
12 obviously getting ideas that the Federal agencies can
13 share. Obviously we have to address the issues of
14 security. We need to address the issues of policy and
15 the Federal agencies will be talking and hopefully
16 taking your recommendations, your ideas to heart to
17 improve our system, to make us more seamless, to make
18 us more efficient, while addressing very legitimate and
19 paramount government objectives.

20 So I want to thank you all for inviting me,
21 and I look forward, in the remaining time that we have,
22 to talk about some of your recommendations. I know
23 that, for instance, you're working very hard on the
24 Travel Promotion Act that's been talked about here. I
25 very much support the concept and need to try to get

1 the Federal agencies together on board so that we can
2 figure out if there's a way to raise some additional
3 funds to promote tourism, to help market the United
4 States.

5 We see advertisements in our publications, on
6 television, promoting Hong Kong, Macau, Paris, other
7 parts around the world, and it would be great if the
8 United States could do the same. I think, quite
9 frankly, we have so much to offer.

10 We have such great things to offer, scenic
11 wonders, great recreational opportunities, beautiful,
12 gleaming cities and a really vibrant culture, music,
13 arts. Quite frankly, America is not monolithic. We
14 have incredible diversity of people, cultures, and
15 lifestyles in every part of the United States. Having
16 all of us who have just experienced the 4:00 or 5:00
17 thunderstorms here, we have great diversity of weather.

18 (Laughter)

19 SECRETARY LOCKE: I can put in a plug for
20 Seattle. You've all seen it now. It rains a heck of a
21 lot less in Seattle than it does here in Washington,
22 DC.

23 (Laughter)

24 SECRETARY LOCKE: So with that, Madam Chair,
25 I'll turn it over to you.

1 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Thank you. Thank
2 you, Mr. Secretary. Well, we really appreciate your
3 observations.

4 I might add that unless there's any new data,
5 the data that I have been quoting for a couple of years
6 is that, of the top 40 industrialized countries, we are
7 the only one who has not had a national promotion
8 welcoming travelers. This really has had, without
9 question, an impact on the yield that we have gotten
10 from the growing travel market. So we are determined
11 to collectively redress that.

12 We've been working on it for many years now
13 and the moment has come where we really must get it
14 passed, we must execute. We must work out whatever the
15 differences are, because it's just too important for
16 us. It's not anything that any one of us can do
17 individually, it's something we have to do
18 collectively. We certainly appreciate your sensitivity
19 to that.

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1 POLICY REVIEW BRIEF

2 Marilyn Carlson Nelson

3 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Now what we'd like
4 to do, since this is our inaugural meeting with you,
5 Mr. Secretary, we're going to present you a policy
6 review brief. I'm sure you've been briefed about our
7 brief.

8 (Laughter)

9 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: But we would like to
10 officially present that to you. I'm going to quickly
11 move through our recommendations.

12 We intend, in September, to fill this out in a
13 little bit more granular way, and also there are
14 several of these things that are works in progress that
15 may actually be moving forward through the summer
16 before the August recess. So in September it would be
17 wonderful if we could have our meeting before you
18 convene your policy group, because that would allow you
19 to utilize any new insights we might have at that point
20 to inform any of those discussions.

21 But I'm going to quickly run through the
22 recommendations and then we'll have a discussion.
23 First with respect to airport congestion
24 infrastructure, we're seeking the Commerce Department's
25 support for passage of the FAA reauthorization

1 legislation for full funding of NextGen initiatives in
2 the appropriation bills for compatible technologies
3 with our international partners.

4 I think any of us in business are realizing
5 that without compatible technologies, that it just can
6 confound the kind of global communication that we need.
7 For permanent removal of the Alternative Minimum Tax
8 penalty for airport private activity bonds and the
9 ability to advance refund bonds, it sound a bit arcane,
10 but progress was made there and it was really a
11 deterrent to getting the kind of investment that we
12 need, and I think Bill will speak to that a little bit
13 later.

14 With respect to travel facilitation, several
15 of the committee members are here. We're seeking the
16 Commerce Department's support for certainly passage of
17 the Travel Promotion Act of 2009, with considerations
18 for the funding mechanism.

19 Continued advocacy for the visa waiver
20 program. We've made progress. We're going to hear
21 more about that here, but we need real intensity and
22 advocacy. We added eight countries in 2008. They
23 actually generate the preponderance of travel to the
24 country, so that if we're able to extend that we have
25 several countries that are certainly, we feel,

1 justified for consideration there, and that perhaps you
2 could help us to drive that initiative.

3 Encouraging the DHS to develop a plan to
4 increase the ESTA compliance rates by identifying which
5 groups of travelers are still unaware of the
6 requirement. That also may be helped by the Travel
7 Promotion Act, which may clarify some of the
8 information that needs to be shared.

9 We'd like policies to ensure that those who
10 arrive at an airport who are yet unaware of ESTA
11 requirements, that we can provide an opportunity for
12 them to apply for an ESTA authorization on site in
13 order to board a U.S.-bound plane. That clearly makes
14 sense.

15 We'd like support for timely actions in using
16 appropriated funds for the Model Ports of Entry
17 Program. This is an excellent program, but we need to
18 accelerate the execution and implementation. We need
19 to encourage the Customs & Border Protection to develop
20 and operate within a set of best practices and
21 performance standards that could be shared nationally,
22 because the point of model ports was ultimately to roll
23 this out nationally. So one of the keys is to develop
24 best practices and performance standards so, in fact,
25 we can accelerate that roll-out.

1 The appropriate staffing of resources to the
2 CBP for the operation of airports and seaports, the
3 elimination of duplicate screening of passengers on
4 both connecting and originating flights in the United
5 States. This is something we should be able to work
6 with security on because it's just clearly a
7 duplication of cost, time, and an inconvenience to
8 travelers.

9 Finally, with respect to our third area of
10 focus, which was economic sustainability, we certainly
11 intend to work with the Department to support the U.S.
12 Travel Association's Meetings Mean Business campaign.
13 I think Adam spoke eloquently to that, but it's
14 unfortunate that what happened has actually had such a
15 profound impact on important meetings and events across
16 the country. It was an unintended consequence, but
17 indeed it was a really dramatic consequence.

18 So, we would like the proactive adoption of
19 the industry guidelines for meetings and events for the
20 TARP recipients and somehow we've got to get it back
21 that it's not politically incorrect to have business
22 travel and meetings and events. In fact, it's a
23 facilitator of business.

24 Implementation of NextGen technologies, which
25 Bill spoke about and will speak again, to ensure

1 greater efficiencies, safety, and capacity for the
2 industry. Sometimes the airlines are blamed when
3 people are sitting on the tarmac.

4 In fact, we've got to get this Next Generation
5 technology. Right now when we're considering
6 infrastructure, if there's ever been a time that the
7 nation should be able to embrace this idea without
8 undermining the impression of safety, we need to at the
9 same time make sure that we ensure going forward that
10 we have the right technologies to assure safety.

11 Research and development in alternative fuels.
12 Of course, this is related to the energy policy
13 initiatives, but it really relates again to the fact
14 that if we move to any kind of carbon emission cap and
15 trade, that we want to be absolutely sure that the
16 industry does not get unfairly penalized, which would
17 be unfortunate.

18 I think the industry accounts for somewhere
19 around 2 percent of the emissions, but between looking
20 at alternative fuels and looking at the facilitation
21 from the industry, we have to be very careful that an
22 industry that is set to lose \$9 billion this year does
23 not bear an unequal weight of that very important
24 initiative.

25 So I think that according to the protocol,

1 that the next thing I should do is ask for the
2 committee -- I need a motion to approve the briefing as
3 has been developed by all of you.

4 MR. DeCOTA: So moved.

5 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Is there a second?

6 MR. KONG: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: All in favor?

8 (Chorus of Ayes)

9 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Then we officially
10 submit to you the briefing that we have prepared.

11 I think that allows us then to open the
12 discussion for further discussion and any input. We
13 have committee members here, and we'll move through
14 this. Then we will come back to our guests and
15 hopefully have time for the Secretary to hear your
16 comments as well.

17 But maybe -- Bill, you did your previous
18 introduction on one breath.

19 MR. DeCOTA: Yes, I did.

20 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: I'm not sure anybody
21 taking notes could accurately do that. You must have
22 been able to read a bedtime story on one breath.

23 (Laughter)

24 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: But I think if you
25 could underscore, you really are the most eloquent and

1 knowledge person on NextGen. It's just something that
2 if we had to say one forward-looking recommendation of
3 this committee when we were constituted, it was that
4 the longer term has got to be addressed, and it relates
5 to NextGen.

6 So, Bill?

7 SECRETARY LOCKE: Well, actually, if I could
8 just interrupt for a moment.

9 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Please.

10 SECRETARY LOCKE: I'm very familiar with Next
11 Generation and air traffic control systems. In fact, I
12 had dinner with Secretary of Transportation LaHood, and
13 I can tell you that he is absolutely committed. That's
14 one of his top priorities, is the implementation and
15 the installation and moving forward on NextGen.

16 I have also interacted with some companies
17 that are involved in NextGen and have some very
18 interesting proposals and are pioneers in NextGen air
19 traffic systems, and have actually been installing
20 NextGen in some of the very mountainous airports around
21 the world where NextGen is so critical to air safety,
22 as well as reducing air fuel consumption. So, it's a
23 very, very exciting prospect and so we just need to
24 support Secretary LaHood's initiatives in trying to get
25 that implemented.

1 MR. DeCOTA: And the only thing I would add,
2 because that's wonderful news, Mr. Secretary, and we
3 appreciate your awareness and your strong support of
4 this, clearly there is the debate right now that is
5 going on in Congress over the FAA Reauthorization Act,
6 getting the House and Senate to agree that funding
7 needs to be provided in significant amounts over a
8 multi-year period. There is always a debate about who
9 pays.

10 One of the points that this group addressed
11 was that even if this is a \$20 to \$25 billion multi-
12 year effort, that the economic benefits are enormous
13 when you consider that trade, travel, commerce, and
14 tourism are about \$1.9 trillion of the U.S. economy.
15 So, we think that that is an issue that can be
16 surmounted.

17 There needs to be very strong management
18 structure put in place at the FAA level, with the DOT,
19 with the Joint Program Development Office, to make sure
20 it can get put in place in a very timely way. We're
21 looking to see if discrete elements can be implemented
22 quickly that have benefits.

23 Your point about sitting on the tarmac at my
24 airports is unfortunately something that's repeated,
25 but you know, delays are unfortunately a nationwide

1 problem. Even if you go to the best on-time
2 performance airport in the country of any major
3 airport, there's still a 20 percent chance you're going
4 to be delayed on the ground. So, that's going to be an
5 issue. So I think if all of those issues can get tied
6 together, and we just need to continue to push.

7 Our National Alliance to Support NextGen now
8 has 378 grassroots members, from small community
9 colleges in California, to multiple states. There are
10 places like Birmingham, Alabama and Bangor, Maine that
11 know that they're not going to get air service in
12 places like Newark if this doesn't happen. So, we
13 appreciate your support.

14 The other piece is the airport infrastructure.
15 Under the economic stimulus program, airports were
16 only given additional money out of what is called the
17 Airport Improvement Program, which is a pot of money
18 aviation funds for itself. My own airport system only
19 got \$20 billion. So, Marilyn mentioned permanent
20 exemptions from the Alternative Minimum Tax. There are
21 discussions right now about pass-through facility
22 charges which are used to fund airport investment.

23 Figuring out ways to keep pace with airport
24 investment that's happening in other countries, which
25 is simply astounding. Take a look at what Beijing did

1 for the Olympics, and what they're now doing as phase
2 two as just an example, what India is doing with
3 airports. Our airports need to keep pace and they just
4 can't in this kind of an economic environment without
5 Federal support of financing programs.

6 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Are you familiar
7 with the National Alliance to Support NextGen? Maybe
8 you could make sure -- I'm sure Helen probably is, but
9 why don't you send the detail? Because as these things
10 move through, the broader the support that we can help
11 to generate. We just hope you will utilize these
12 relationships when you need them, and we'd like to make
13 sure that we are on call to be at your service in order
14 to help when needed.

15 SECRETARY LOCKE: Great.

16 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Why don't we go to
17 Jeremy? Unless anyone else has anything on that
18 subject that you want to add, we'll go to Jeremy for
19 any comments he might have from travel facilitation.
20 Christopher is here. Christopher Meyer.
21 Unfortunately, one of our committee members was on an
22 up escalator and somebody had a travel roller bag that
23 rolled down and actually crushed his vertebrae and he's
24 in the hospital, so we're going to do something a
25 little out of order, and that is ask Christopher, who's

1 not on the committee, to come sit for the moment. It
2 would be fine, and we feel it's the least we can do to
3 help.

4 So Jeremy, do you want to make some comments
5 in terms of travel facilitation? Then Christopher is
6 on that committee, or is representing that committee,
7 and also Noel.

8 MR. JACOBS: Forgive me. I'm going to digress
9 just a little bit, Marilyn. I want to make this point
10 familiar to you. I had an experience recently. I am
11 part owner of Pebble Beach, and one of the experiences
12 we had, we had a financial institution that had a \$1
13 million deposit. Everything was totally paid for up
14 front. It was not a participant in TARP, but walked
15 away from that deposit, leaving it there because of the
16 implied stigma about corporate spending.

17 What we have seen across the country, one of
18 our greatest losses has been in conferences, as Adam
19 spoke to, and only because there has been this stigma,
20 and very much generated from government insofar as
21 corporate spending. We've never seen anybody react
22 faster than we've seen corporations react. It's easy
23 to send out a memo and say, we're going to stop this
24 kind of travel, and everybody stops it. We've seen a
25 30 percent drop in that in this country here. These

1 are healthy companies that can afford it, but are not
2 doing it.

3 I just left the National Hockey League
4 yesterday. They said, should we have a conference this
5 year? It's going to cost us X dollars. I made the
6 observation, I'm paying one player \$7.5 million. I
7 think I can afford to go there. But they said, what's
8 the perception going to be? I think that's what we're
9 going to have to be aware of, is that healthy companies
10 should be encouraged to spend. We aren't going to save
11 our way into prosperity, we're going to spend our way
12 into it by developing business. I want to make that
13 observation and have it shared with you.

14 Marilyn has done a yeoman's job in developing
15 the prospects of where we're going, and if you want to
16 take over from there I can take the next step.

17 MR. MEYER: Good morning. My name is Chris
18 Meyer.

19 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: One second.
20 Perhaps, Mr. Secretary, you and all of us, when we're
21 meeting with people who are CEOs of other industries,
22 could mention that one of the ways to get the consumer
23 going again is actually to step up and make it public
24 that you're going to have meetings. Everybody's
25 looking for green shoots. I think that there is some

1 pent-up demand. If a few people were to actually step
2 out and say we see this moving, we want to have a
3 meeting, we want to have the travel, there is demand
4 because we know how important the meetings are. It's
5 just being sort of contained by this unusual
6 perception.

7 Sorry, Chris. Please go ahead.

8 MR. MEYER: No problem.

9 Good morning, Mr. Secretary. My name is Chris
10 Meyer. I'm with the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors
11 Authority. I'm also the incoming chairman for the
12 International Association of Exhibits and Events, which
13 represents more than 11,000 trade shows across North
14 America.

15 I'm here to add some clarity about what the
16 meaning of "face-to-face" is. No industry is more
17 reliant upon face-to-face meetings than ours, and that
18 includes everybody in the travel industry. The
19 economic benefit of people having face-to-face meetings
20 is immeasurable: it encourages commerce, it encourages
21 interaction, and it gets down to the basic human factor
22 that we are all humans and we like to have that
23 interaction. Staring at a computer screen for eight
24 hours of a day is not going to create commerce. Yes,
25 you can do on-line ordering and all that other good

1 stuff, but at the bottom line it's all about us getting
2 together, just like we're doing today.

3 We were in the crux of the storm that began in
4 the fourth quarter of 2008 and continued through the
5 first two quarters of this year, and 30 percent is
6 probably minuscule to some communities; others have
7 been hit less severe, some have been hit far more
8 severe. We have about 22,000 meetings and events a
9 year that come to Las Vegas. Just in the first quarter
10 of this year we saw over 402 of those cancel. That
11 cost us \$160 million in direct economic spending that
12 we'll never recover from in Las Vegas.

13 But we're here to talk about the more global
14 aspect of the meetings and event industry. We want to
15 encourage the visas. There is some low-hanging fruit
16 out there. If you look at the way we issue business
17 visas, for example, there are countries that we give
18 five-year business visas for and other countries we
19 only give a year.

20 If we're going to go to the trouble of
21 screening a person to come on a business visa to the
22 United States, why would we only give them a year pass?

23 I mean, that's low-hanging fruit. If you did two
24 years, at least they would have the chance to come back
25 a couple of times and be able to create commerce for

1 the United States. As you well stated, it's an export.

2 If we go to the face-to-face and what we've
3 done, we've talked about meetings in a lot of global
4 terms. We've talked about them. In my career I never
5 thought I'd have to talk to the press so much about
6 what the value of face-to-face meetings were, but
7 unfortunately that's had to happen. But if we look at
8 all the global stuff that you read out there, oh, most
9 important events in human history have happened because
10 of a meeting.

11 Well, that's all well and good. But what I
12 found resonates the best, is when you look at, every
13 single community in the United States holds a job fair,
14 and a job fair is really a basic and a classic example
15 of a trade show. You have a buyer and seller
16 relationship. In this particular case it's an employee
17 and an employer. They're sitting across a desk from
18 one another, interviewing.

19 It's being held in a conference room,
20 typically in a hotel. It's being organized by
21 somebody, so that's your event planner. Somebody has
22 to set it up, somebody has to tear it down, and
23 somebody has to market it. So every community is
24 impacted by meetings in some way, some shape, and some
25 form, and it's providing a benefit to that particular

1 community. I think those are some of the things that
2 we need to look at when we try to vilify what business
3 meetings are about.

4 It is as simple as calling out that, hey, I'm
5 on my way to attend a business meeting in this
6 particular destination. I mean, all of us are looking
7 for the green shoots and we can't "unring" the bell,
8 but the value of face-to-face, I think, is where we all
9 need to be and talk about that, promote that concept
10 and allow people to digest how this benefits the entire
11 -- it benefits them directly by having job fairs.
12 Obviously that's a benefit to your community.

13 We engage the Commercial Service. We work
14 with the Department of Commerce, but we engage the
15 Commercial Service around the world. We run a program
16 called the Trade Show Trade Missions. We've done that
17 actually nine times all around the world, where we go
18 out and we hire Department of Commerce--actually,
19 Commercial Service in this particular case--and we
20 bring our trade show organizers out into the field to
21 have them talk to the business people in-country so
22 that they come to our trade shows in Las Vegas in
23 particular, but to the United States so that they can
24 look at buying goods and services from us. It's a
25 very simple program.

1 One thing I've got to comment on is, your
2 folks out in the field are absolutely wonderful. We
3 have had such a great relationship with the Commercial
4 Service and we are looking forward to continuing that.
5 As a matter of fact, we'll be running another Trade
6 Show Trade Mission in the fall to promote some new
7 service that we've got coming into Las Vegas.

8 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Thanks, Chris.

9 I think what we're going to do, is quickly go
10 to the final committee, and then anyone who hasn't
11 spoken. But I'm sensitive to the Secretary's time.

12 Dawn or Adam, do you want to speak on your
13 committee's work?

14 MS. DREW: Sure.

15 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: This is economic
16 sustainability.

17 MS. DREW: Right. I definitely support an
18 effort to establish some guidelines for the meetings
19 and events business. I mean, our business is down,
20 which is why we're not having meetings. It's not
21 because of the way it looks. We've decided that when
22 our business goes back up and we're healthier, we will
23 have meetings. However, I think that some policies or
24 some guidelines for the companies that are not healthy
25 certainly are in order at this point from this office.

1 It will allow meetings to happen without the media and
2 the public scrutiny that I think would occur.

3 Also, we haven't mentioned research of the
4 fuel alternatives because I think that's going to be
5 really important in getting people to travel. People
6 are not traveling as much because it's more expensive.
7 We just did a survey of readers of one of our magazines
8 and we found that they will travel any way they can,
9 except to fly, which is not good this summer because of
10 the perceptions are that flights are going up because
11 fuel costs more, gas has just gone up. So any type of
12 research that we can do to provide some alternative
13 fuel options are going to be really important, I think,
14 to keeping the consumer on the road.

15 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Adam?

16 MR. SACKS: I think keeping in context -- I
17 think, Bill, you stated to us that the airline industry
18 in particular contributes a very small percentage to
19 carbon emissions when we consider some of the larger
20 energy landscape, when we think about energy
21 alternatives for utility generation and coal versus
22 alternatives. I think there we have a much more
23 significant impact that we can make, with a lesser
24 negative impact that what the transportation sector
25 might face.

1 Then the only other thing that I would add is
2 also related to meetings because I think what we're
3 finding more and more is that meetings are a part of
4 the sustainability of commerce. I thought, just to
5 play on one thing that you said, you said, "the value
6 of face-to-face meetings is immeasurable". We had the
7 ignoble task of measuring that over the recent months
8 for the U.S. Travel Association, and that study will be
9 coming out next month.

10 But as a sneak preview to that, there's a lot
11 of details behind this, a lot of surveys and
12 econometric analysis, but apparently it's measurable.

13 (Laughter)

14 MR. SACKS: For every dollar that a business
15 invests in business travel--and this is the average
16 across all kinds of business travel--businesses are
17 experiencing a return of \$12.50 in revenue and about
18 \$3.50 in profits. This is according to executives,
19 it's also according to econometric analysis of industry
20 performance.

21 So I think that's where we have a compelling
22 case to make. There are obviously policy
23 considerations, but fundamentally we want businesses to
24 perform well and we need to help equip them to make the
25 right decisions.

1 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: I really look
2 forward to that particular survey.

3 Noel, the Secretary has to leave. Can you, in
4 two sentences--you're the last one to speak--on
5 facilitation specifically?

6 MS. IRWIN-HENTSCHEL: Well, I'd like to thank
7 Helen and Isabel and Julie here from the travel
8 industry for what they do, and to ask that we could
9 work together on a strategic plan for the travel
10 facilitation and for the training that needs to happen
11 internationally and how to best maximize your
12 Commercial Service Offices throughout the world for
13 doing the training, because the money that comes from
14 the Travel Promotion Act is not only money for TV
15 commercials or that kind of promotion, but really what
16 can be allocated to training the market about the U.S.
17 I would just add, from all the comments made, that it
18 seems like our image abroad and internally is key to
19 our strategic plan for travel facilitation.

20 SECRETARY LOCKE: David, did you have a
21 comment?

22 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: David? Sorry. We
23 have so many people at that end.

24 MR. KONG: I wasn't on any subcommittee, but I
25 want to use the opportunity to thank Homeland Security

1 and the Department of State also. They've seen a
2 dramatic improvement in the Customs offices, the TSAs,
3 and how we welcome international travelers, because
4 that was a problem a few years ago. There's been a
5 marked improvement, and I want to compliment the hard
6 work that's been done. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: I think we all do.
8 Mr. Secretary, do you have any final comments
9 for us?

10 SECRETARY LOCKE: Well, again, Marilyn, I want
11 to thank you for chairing this very important committee
12 featuring such very distinguished people. I can tell
13 you that, first of all, I know firsthand the importance
14 of international travel into the United States and how
15 many jobs it supports, and even sports promotes tourism
16 into the United States, whether people from Canada
17 coming to watch a Seattle Seahawks game, or I mentioned
18 this in Miami, people who come from Japan just for a
19 weekend to watch Ichiro play for the Seattle Mariners.
20 I've actually been in restaurants where I've overheard
21 people commenting that they just flew in and they're
22 having dinner on Friday night and they're getting ready
23 to go to the Mariner's game on Friday, Saturday, and
24 they watch the Sunday game, then they have a flight
25 back to Japan.

1 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: We need more of
2 them.

3 (Laughter)

4 SECRETARY LOCKE: So, I mean, that is
5 incredible of tourism. But we also have a great deal
6 of Americans who are interested in visiting the sites
7 and wonders and cultures around the world, thanks to
8 publications like National Geographic and others. So
9 while we're focused on trying to bring more tourism
10 into the United States, we also know the value of
11 tourism to U.S. companies all around the world.

12 Clearly the issue of travel and trade shows
13 and marketing shows have taken a hit. When we've heard
14 of proposals by distressed companies, companies
15 receiving Federal money, engaged in planning very
16 lavish travel and meetings, et cetera, et cetera -- and
17 I have to tell you, I served on the board of a company,
18 until I took this job, that was going through some
19 tough economic times.

20 When you're laying off employees, when you're
21 cutting back on salaries, when you're furloughing
22 people, the board of directors have to be very, very
23 careful in terms of the type of meetings they have and
24 not engaging in activities that seem insensitive, that
25 are indeed insensitive, to rank-and-file employees. So

1 you have to be measured.

2 And yet, as Chris said, and many others have
3 said here, there is no substitute for face-to-face
4 meetings and for even distressed auto companies. They
5 have to have these marketing efforts where they are
6 showcasing their next line-up of vehicles and trying to
7 reward their dealers and helping to encourage those
8 dealers to stay in the fold and to redouble their
9 efforts to sell their products. So, it all has to be
10 done with balance.

11 I know that the President has met with many of
12 the leaders of the tourism industry, and you all have
13 indicated to him just how important your industry is to
14 the economy and how some statements from the
15 administration and the White House, perhaps, have had a
16 dampening effect on things like events at Pebble Beach,
17 and so forth.

18 So I do know that the President and
19 administration are very concerned, are very caring
20 about the travel industry, the hospitality industry,
21 from the restaurant workers, to the people who work in
22 the hotels, to people in the airlines, and to the tour
23 operators. So I know that the President has tried to
24 now promote reasonable activities, especially among
25 companies that are in distressed financial situations,

1 and especially if they're receiving Federal help.

2 The American taxpayer just says, how can
3 companies that are almost bankrupt, receiving our
4 Federal funds, when we are struggling as a taxpayer,
5 how can those corporations use those funds for very
6 lavish, lavish, over-the-top type activities? So it
7 all has to be done with reason and all activities must
8 be measured. But again, non-TARP recipients should be
9 encouraged to continue with normal activities. And, of
10 course, let me just say, we've always enjoyed Las
11 Vegas, too.

12 (Laughter)

13 MR. MEYER: An endorsement.

14 (Laughter)

15 SECRETARY LOCKE: But I would be more than
16 happy to continue, to go on the air and talk to the
17 press about the need for keeping up with business
18 travel, promotions, and conferences and conventions,
19 how they are so important to the economies of cities
20 and towns all across America, and obviously to the
21 travel/tourism/hospitality industry.

22 I also think that the more that the industry
23 can promote their environmentalism, that will be a
24 selling feature. That will be a selling feature,
25 whether it's the fuel efficiency of airlines and

1 airplanes, to the practices of the tour boats or the
2 tour ships docking up and hooking up to shoreside power
3 and not running their diesel engines.

4 For instance, we in the Port of Seattle have
5 engaged in a project where the tour operators, the
6 cruise ships, actually dock in. When they dock,
7 instead of idling on diesel power for however long
8 they're there before they take off for Alaska, they're
9 actually plugging into shore power and all of our
10 electricity is by hydro, so it's very clean, renewable
11 electricity.

12 But even eventually some day, as we get into
13 technology, diesel buses, and if they're perhaps on bio
14 fuels that's even better, but if they're still using
15 diesel, if they're plugging in to electricity instead
16 of running on idle and creating emissions, that's even
17 better. I know the practices in many of the hotels are
18 saying, leave your towels hanging and they won't be
19 washed. Although I sometimes wonder why it is we leave
20 our towels hanging and they still wash them, you know?

21 (Laughter)

22 SECRETARY LOCKE: I thought I was trying to
23 help save the environment and they're still washing
24 them and changing them every single day. But anyway, I
25 appreciate a lot of the efforts that you have. And

1 these are good marketing efforts, but they also appeal
2 to the consciousness of the American public because
3 people enjoy travel. People really enjoy traveling and
4 we need to encourage more travel within the United
5 States, as well as travel from outside the United
6 States. It's important for people to understand the
7 history of the United States, the culture, the natural
8 beauty of our country.

9 So to all of you involved in this industry, I
10 thank you. I thank you for your work. You've come up
11 with some great ideas on improvements, whether on
12 Homeland Security, State Department, and for us in the
13 Department of Commerce. So, keep up the great work.
14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Thank you.

16 (Applause)

17 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Well, it is
18 wonderful to have a voice and a face that is really as
19 close to an ambassador as we've had in Washington for a
20 long time. I think any ways that we can individually
21 or collectively help, we need to do that.

22 Why don't I ask -- let's see. I was going to
23 say, Kathleen, can you be seen well enough? Why don't
24 you move to the end. I was going to have you move over
25 here, but we'll have you move there. And David, maybe

1 why don't you step around or switch with Chris, because
2 we're really looking forward to being able to see and
3 hear you. We're sorry that the Secretary had to leave.

4 It looks like if each of you could take maybe
5 eight or nine minutes, and that will give us a couple
6 of minutes for questions and comments. But I was
7 appreciative that David was thoughtful enough to
8 acknowledge the progress that's been made because this
9 is an area that we've all been concerned about and we
10 still know there's much left to do.

11 But Kathleen, would you like to begin?
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1 DHS PRESENTATION - ESTA, WHTL, U.S. VISIT EXIT PROGRAM

2 Kathleen Kraninger

3 Department of Homeland Security

4 MS. KRANINGER: Sure. Thank you for the
5 opportunity again to be here, and thank you again for
6 the support that all of you have given us, both
7 individually and certainly collectively as a board.
8 The Department of Homeland Security, of course, has
9 only been with us for six years, so the progress that
10 we continue to make towards a more mature organization
11 is also helping in our operations, and the TSA in
12 particular certainly was a new agency. Customs and
13 Border Protection was also a newly merged agency,
14 bringing together different skill sets.

15 So again, we had a lot of change, particularly
16 in the post-9/11 era up until the last couple of years
17 in really forming identity, shaping operations,
18 maturing organization, and understanding how we should
19 do our business to certainly then support your
20 businesses. We recognize the important relationship
21 between the travel and tourism industry, really, and
22 particularly CBP and TSA operations, because we spend a
23 lot of time with the traveling public.

24 The perception that the traveling public has
25 as they go through our processes, of course, affects

1 the way that the United States is seen by travelers.
2 We recognize that and hopefully have met some of the
3 recommendations that you have made over the years, and
4 will continue to work with you on those things.

5 So as I've said, I'm happy to be here today
6 really to talk about successes that we have had, and
7 the first one to start with really, I think, helps in
8 both the security facilitation and partnership theme,
9 and that's the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative.
10 We of course instituted that in the aviation
11 environment in 2007 and it was without incident,
12 frankly.

13 We had 99 percent compliance the day that we
14 actually instituted what was essentially a passport
15 requirement, because those traveling internationally--
16 on an airplane in particular--expect to have to carry
17 their passports and are generally people who have a
18 passport. So that particular change was not that
19 dramatic. Approaching the land and sea environment, we
20 knew, posed different challenges.

21 The Secretary knows very well, and we spend a
22 lot of time in border communities, you are really
23 talking about cross-border communities where grocery
24 stores, hockey games, businesses, where the banks are,
25 where you live, you're crossing the border on a very

1 regular basis. So from that standpoint we again
2 recognize that border operations have an impact on
3 people's daily lives.

4 So institution of a document requirement at
5 the borders, while essential for security from our
6 standpoint, knowing who is entering the country, that
7 they are in fact eligible to enter, and from a
8 facilitation standpoint, again, knowing who should
9 legitimately be allowed to enter allows us to speed
10 those individuals through quickly, focus on individuals
11 who deserve more scrutiny and attention, and enables us
12 to more effectively do our job on both fronts.

13 So it was essential to ensure successful
14 implementation on June 1st of this year, so we really
15 have spent the last several years working with you,
16 working with the State Department, to ensure that we
17 had three things going for us.

18 One, is that documents were available. There
19 are alternatives to people to service their needs,
20 whether it's partnering with the states, or the
21 government of Canada, the provinces, and certainly our
22 own documents from State and from DHS. State has
23 issued 1.3 million passport cards.

24 The states and provinces have issued 200,000
25 enhanced driver's licenses. So we have four states and

1 four provinces issuing those documents. We have about
2 550,000 Trusted Traveler cards out there. All of those
3 options, again, provided people with the opportunity to
4 get what makes sense for them in terms of how
5 frequently they travel across the border and what's
6 most convenient for them.

7 We certainly worked very closely, again, with
8 all of you to get construction out there of the RFID
9 infrastructure. The WHTI-compliant documents designed
10 for the land border were specifically looking at how to
11 facilitate that trade and travel. The top 39 ports of
12 entry have RFID readers in every lane, and that was
13 done in advance of June 1st. We are already seeing
14 pretty dramatic improvements in our processing times
15 that will only increase.

16 So we hope that the tourism and travel
17 industry continues to encourage individuals to get the
18 RFID-enabled documents because it really will help us
19 with border processing times, as we've already seen.
20 And then the third thing really is the communications
21 effort. This has been a true partnership, whether it
22 is the states, or the government of Canada, or DHS, or
23 State, or tourism entities directly, we're certainly
24 talking about AAA, the airlines, and really the hotel
25 industry, everyone who is putting little tags on their

1 web sites to say, have you gotten your WHTI-compliant
2 document? Do you need to go do that? That's been
3 extremely helpful and it's important to know, a week
4 into this, including weekend traffic, we have over 95
5 percent compliance. That is the national average.

6 That is tremendous. Northern border
7 compliance is higher than southern border compliance,
8 as we would have expected, but over 95 percent. So,
9 again, that is a huge testament to all the work that
10 everyone put into this over the last five years and
11 it's fantastic. So that has been a great success and
12 we'll continue obviously to consider individuals who
13 are not compliant, figure out why that is, assist them
14 in this period as we move through the summer to ensure
15 that people again are aware of what's required of them
16 and they move forward and get the documents that they
17 need.

18 We are allowing, and will continue to allow,
19 U.S. and Canadian citizens who are not compliant into
20 the country if there are no other issues associated
21 with them than not knowing about the requirement or not
22 having compliant documents for various reasons. Many
23 of those who are non-compliant actually indicated they
24 applied for their documents, they just didn't have it
25 yet. So, tremendous progress on this front to close a

1 huge security vulnerability and to help us actually
2 facilitate legitimate travel from Canadian and Mexican
3 borders, and certainly at sea.

4 The other key program to talk about was ESTA,
5 the Electronic System for Travel Authorization. It was
6 actually a system that was put in place to enable visa
7 waiver program modernization and to enable us to expand
8 the membership, as you noted, Marilyn, to eight
9 additional countries. We have been very excited by our
10 partnership with those countries.

11 There were several other authorities provided
12 in that Act that allowed us to create a greater
13 information sharing relationship, both with existing
14 BWP countries and with the new entry countries. So
15 that's been a continuing effort among us, but
16 compliance with the ESTA system in particular has been
17 very high.

18 Again, we're very happy with the progress and
19 the uptake of this. It is a web-based system that was
20 put in place in August of last year, required of VWP
21 travelers as of January of this year, and over the last
22 six months we've had a very steady compliance rate of
23 about 87 percent. What we are doing, pointedly to the
24 recommendation of this board, is examining who exactly
25 is compliant and who is not, and why, and what are the

1 barriers to ensure that we can continue to raise the
2 compliance rates.

3 The airlines, again, have been, to varying
4 degrees of success, I suppose, in partnership in that
5 effort and we are continuing to encourage them and the
6 travel agencies in the world, the international tourist
7 agencies, to help get the message out there and figure
8 out where we go from here.

9 It's important to note that 47 of the airlines
10 are already able to electronically verify the ESTA for
11 their travelers in advance of boarding. And while
12 we're not requiring that as part of a boarding process,
13 so individuals, again, who are not compliant with ESTA
14 can still come to the United States today and we're
15 still allowing them through this, what we call informed
16 compliance posture, we're allowing them to enter the
17 United States and ensure again that they know about
18 ESTA, that they're moving to be compliant, and that
19 they have some time to get to that compliance and not
20 interrupt their travel as they're planning it today.
21 But having the airlines to assist us in that, to be
22 able to tell people before they board, and frankly
23 before they even make reservations about the ESTA, is
24 an important outreach tool, as well as, obviously, the
25 foreign governments.

1 The State Department, consulates, DHS itself,
2 we have also had a paid media campaign associated with
3 ESTA and we have seen tremendous success as a result of
4 that, whether it's in newspapers or magazines overseas,
5 or again, publications associated with trade and
6 travel. That's been extremely helpful, as has the
7 international media. So we've done a lot of outreach
8 on ESTA in particular, and we'll be working with you to
9 continue to try to raise the compliance rates and
10 ensure we address any weaknesses in particular areas.

11 You wanted me to talk about U.S. Visit Exit,
12 so let me do that, just very briefly. We obviously do
13 have a congressional mandate to institute biometric
14 exit collection. It is certainly, from a business
15 process standpoint, very complicated. It gets more so
16 when you look at the land border and how we would
17 actually facilitate that at the land borders. So we
18 have had a process of looking at these things. We have
19 two pilots that are operational right now, in Atlanta
20 and in Detroit.

21 The biometric collection is being done by TSA
22 at the checkpoint in Atlanta and by CBP officers on the
23 jetway in Detroit. We're going to be gathering the
24 statistics as a result of that, putting out a report on
25 that, and the Secretary will have the opportunity to

1 weigh in and determine the path forward. We very much
2 want to work with the airlines and the airports on how
3 to institute this program and we'll be looking very
4 closely at that later in the summer.

5 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Thank you. Any
6 questions for Kathleen? Adam?

7 MR. SACKS: Kathleen, that's great. Just two
8 questions. One, it's kind of the same question on two
9 different fronts. The effects of some of these
10 programs on demand. You said 95 percent compliance at
11 the borders for land crossings now. Are you getting
12 any early indications that that's limiting the pool of
13 who's even attempting to cross? Then with ESTA, you
14 said full implementation in January. That does
15 coincide with the acceleration of decline in inbound
16 travel. I'm just wondering, do you have any sense that
17 there's any relationship? Are you hearing anything
18 that is resistance on the ESTA front?

19 MS. KRANINGER: We actually have not. I think
20 it really gets to clarify in what is required, both in
21 terms of ESTA and WHTI, and particularly WHTI, to pause
22 a moment on that. Most travelers actually coming
23 across the border said, thank God, finally I know
24 what's required of me, because the officers were asking
25 me for this anyway. They have a very difficult job

1 from that standpoint, trying to figure out who should
2 enter and who shouldn't, and what proof is acceptable
3 to make that determination and the pressure not to
4 allow someone in who would end up causing harm and
5 great destruction in this country.

6 So it's a tough job. From that standpoint,
7 there were officers that were reacting in various ways
8 as a result of that. We spent a lot of time on
9 training to make sure we balance the seriousness of the
10 job and the security posture with a welcoming attitude,
11 but needless to say it was concerning to them. There
12 were travelers who complained--and all of you heard
13 this--about what the officers would ask of them and
14 what they expected. There's no document requirement,
15 but they're asking me if I have my passport and asking
16 me why I don't.

17 So, those kinds of things were really what's
18 been balanced against with very clear, what is required
19 of people and understanding that, and knowing that when
20 you have the proper documents you're going to move
21 faster. So the impact of WHTI, from our standpoint,
22 has really been demonstrating that attitude and that
23 concern, and reduction of that concern.

24 When you talk about ESTA, there was a huge
25 facilitation aspect in this because we're talking about

1 eight countries that no longer require visa processing,
2 and that is a very powerful, both in terms of welcoming
3 and in terms of relationship with those countries and
4 the partnerships and things we've been able to achieve
5 on the information sharing front, whether it is
6 information about known and suspected terrorists,
7 information about criminals who have committed serious
8 crimes in those countries. They are not eligible to
9 enter the United States, and we never would know that.
10 So that's a very serious gain in terms of our security
11 posture of facilitation.

12 Is it difficult for those who have been used
13 to just getting on a plane and not having to do
14 anything? Yes. But from that standpoint we really
15 have seen a balance. The feedback from people who have
16 used the system is how easy it is to use. That's been
17 really the general feedback, and we've been very
18 excited about that and glad that the web-based system
19 is working and is facilitating.

20 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: I think I'm going to
21 turn to David because I don't want us to run out of
22 time, and I want us to hear David Donahue as well.

23 He's the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Visa
24 Services in the Bureau of Consular Affairs.

25

1 STATE DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION

2 VISAS, CONSULAR OFFICERS/CONSULATES, TECHNOLOGY

3 David Donahue

4 MR. DONAHUE: Well, thank you very much. I'm
5 really pleased to be here this morning.

6 The State Department, like the Department of
7 Homeland Security, understands that travel and tourism
8 is a vital industry for the United States and we hope
9 we are supporting you in your work, while protecting
10 our borders.

11 As you know, we have about 230 embassies and
12 consulates around the world that work on promoting your
13 work, both through our Commercial Services, the Foreign
14 Commercial Service, to our public diplomacy and in the
15 consular sections themselves.

16 Our first thing, as Kathy was talking about,
17 to facilitate travel has been the expansion of the visa
18 waiver program. Someone mentioned earlier the interest
19 in expanding it further, and it's certainly something
20 that we've worked with our DHS partners to find
21 countries that are appropriate for that right now.
22 We're focusing on bringing all of the countries that
23 are currently in the program into full compliance with
24 all of our information sharing, but we certainly are at
25 the same time talking with other countries that may be

1 future members. We see that as a good facilitation,
2 and also a resource issue certainly for our visa
3 sections.

4 Korea was our largest visa section until
5 January 8th, or actually November of last year, and
6 it's saved us a lot of resources now. Their visa
7 applications are way, way down.

8 For those who need visas, what we're focusing
9 on is an efficient system. We issued 6.6 million visas
10 last year. We look at where we need more resources.
11 We had, as you know, great success with India, which
12 used to have long wait times for appointments. We've
13 just recently also eliminated wait times, or reduced
14 them greatly, in Brazil.

15 Ninety percent of our posts have wait times
16 for appointments of 20 days or less, and we monitor
17 that constantly. Our goal is to have all visa
18 application posts at well under 20 days. In many posts
19 you can get an appointment within several days.

20 On the idea of reciprocity and the length of
21 time the visas can be issued, our goal has always been
22 at the State Department to issue the maximum
23 reciprocity whenever possible. India is a good
24 example, with 10-year visa reciprocity. We think
25 that's a great thing for your travelers. Most

1 qualified travelers get a 10-year visa and can travel
2 any time during those 10 years on the visa.

3 China is probably the most difficult one. It
4 is a one-year reciprocity for tourists. It would be a
5 difficult one to grow, both because of China's
6 resistance on reciprocity, but there are also other
7 technical issues. But it's something that we are
8 interested in, concerned about, and we understand the
9 great market out in China.

10 We're looking for other ways to make this
11 system more friendly for your travelers, including
12 those now that we have 10-print visas. We are going to
13 those who have good travel records. We have a lot more
14 information from Department of Homeland Security, and
15 those who have good travel records, we will not need to
16 actually have them come in for an interview because we
17 now know who they are, thanks to the 10-print visa.
18 So, we'll be renewing those without interviews and
19 that's already started in China and some other posts.

20 About 97 percent of our applicants receive
21 their visas within days of when they have their
22 interview. There's a small percentage that you may
23 hear of that have the administrative processing that
24 takes a little bit longer, but that is a relatively
25 small percentage, and a very small percentage of your

1 customer base.

2 We are moving people as necessary. For
3 instance, this summer we had people that were in Korea
4 that we've moved down to some of the posts in China to
5 be sure that we have enough staffing to meet the
6 demand, but we have a long-term challenge as China
7 brings maybe 100 million or 200 million more into the
8 middle class over the next 5, 10, 15 years, and we're
9 going to have to figure out how we can continue to
10 protect our borders, while making sure that those who
11 want to come and spend money with your companies are
12 able to do so.

13 Finally, we're going to use technology in
14 every way we can. We have an all-electronic visa
15 application form so that when people do come in for
16 their visa applications we will have done as many
17 checks as possible. We will be ready for them and
18 they'll spend the least amount of time in our visa
19 sections with the interview and everything else will be
20 done before they ever arrive. We've already introduced
21 that in a few places, and we'll be introducing that
22 worldwide by 2011.

23 I know that time is short. I don't want to
24 take any more, but if you have questions --

25 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: David, on that last

1 point, one of the recommendations that we've had, or I
2 know that TIA has had, is that where we don't have a
3 consulate, that people can remotely somehow access the
4 services and without traveling long distances.

5 Is this part of the final discussion --

6 MR. DONAHUE: This is not part of this
7 particular program but it is something that we've
8 already done some pilot -- some testing of remote
9 adjudication. There are some security issues.
10 Obviously, the whole point of the visa process is to be
11 sure that we're securing our borders. But we're
12 looking at that as a possibility. We do need to find a
13 way, especially with a country the size of China, to
14 get to this large group and that's one possibility.

15 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Very good.

16 Well, we're a couple of minutes over. Does
17 anyone have a compelling, burning issue that they'd
18 like to either ask or address at this point?

19 MS. IRWIN-HENTSCHEL: I just would like to
20 come back a moment to the swine flu issue, because in
21 Asia it is major, that we're seeing business just
22 basically -- totally cancellations coming out of Asia
23 because of it.

24 In Mexico, they've taken an approach now of
25 offering, in Cancun, that anyone that gets swine flu

1 when they come to Mexico gets unlimited free stays in
2 Cancun for the rest of their lives. That's a promotion
3 they're doing. It's kind of a bold promotion. But I
4 think that they're showing that they believe the risk
5 is so low. So we've talked about this in China. Is
6 there anything that we can do here that would be bold
7 like that? We even talked about paying for somebody to
8 come back, in other words, like a money-back guarantee
9 if they come to the United States, because it is safe
10 to be here.

11 You can't even imagine right now that when you
12 get off a plane in China, that they have all the white
13 -- it looks like out of "Outbreak", because that's how
14 they -- and it's only the flights from America. So
15 it's really focused on the United States, that we are
16 completely unsafe. And I'm talking about business
17 people, the business travelers that would be coming
18 here.

19 I was sitting with the business people, that
20 they bring incentive groups. They just said, well, we
21 might be endangering the people if we bring them to
22 America. So I really think that we've got to do
23 something bold. I'm just going to put that out there
24 for us to think of, like what Mexico did.

25 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: We could be having a

1 little backlash from when we all decided not to go to
2 China as well.

3 MS. DREW: We sent people to Peru last week,
4 about 30, and they all had to wear a mask. There's a
5 lot of backlash.

6 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Right. I do think
7 that it's certainly relevant for this group going
8 forward to give thought to, also because, for those of
9 us who have been really trying to study this, that it
10 isn't exactly clear what we'll have once the summer is
11 over. So I think that we have both the issue of, how
12 safe is it now, but we also may have the issue of how
13 we're going to deal collectively with our clients if
14 indeed we have any change in the disease in the fall or
15 the winter. So I think there's a lot of work going on
16 in terms --

17 MR. McGAW: May I interject?

18 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Yes, please.

19 MR. McGAW: I think what's important to note,
20 is the flu is coming back. It might not be H1N1, but
21 the flu comes every year.

22 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Exactly.

23 MR. McGAW: So part of this is helping people
24 take advantage of the summer, to talk to all the
25 companies and the communications teams and the

1 organizations to educate them about what it is and is
2 not, because what we found was the spike in
3 understanding in our communications between the
4 Department, CDC, and HHS, was very steep. So it went
5 from 100, to 500, to 1,000, to 1,200 to 300 in a week
6 and a half.

7 So that's trade associations, major companies,
8 everyone getting all the information they need and then
9 recognizing they need to implement the information and
10 not continue to ask for more information because you
11 eventually reach a baseline level of actionable steps.

12 So as far as we can tell right now, the
13 guidance is still in place. The CDC guidance on, like,
14 wash your hands, these steps are still in place and we
15 have the opportunity now to baseline that understanding
16 of things that we can make people aware of. I know
17 that the travel and tourism boards in the different
18 cities are doing a lot of this. I know I'm preaching
19 to the converted in a lot of ways, but it's incumbent
20 upon us who have already recognized that some of these
21 things are very simple educational messages, to just
22 keep pushing through the summer on this because we
23 don't know what's going to happen.

24 CHAIRMAN CARLSON NELSON: Well, with that
25 said, I want to thank everyone.

1 We do have some dates. First of all, let me
2 say to all the people sitting around the room, thank
3 you. I know you've been on the phone, you've been
4 working, many of you, hours and hours, helping us to
5 put forth this policy document that we have prepared,
6 the briefing document. To both the Department, to
7 Helen, and all of the people at the Department of
8 Commerce and to those of you on the staff who have been
9 working with us, thank you. We appreciate all that
10 work.

11 I think the best thing that we can do to
12 return the favor is to continue to get the story out,
13 and ultimately it feels like we are actually close to
14 success on some of these initiatives, I think, for many
15 of us who have been at this for many years. They say
16 it's not the final blow that breaks the rock, it's all
17 that's gone before. We hope we can maybe have some
18 real breakthroughs with your support and the
19 Secretary's support, and I think the President's
20 support as well.

21 So, thank you all for being here. The dates
22 that we have been holding -- I know that I'd love to
23 see September be as full as possible. We have about
24 half the committee here and it's partly because it's
25 hard to schedule in advance. The closer to the date

1 that we announce our meeting, the harder it is for
2 people to make change.

3 Right now, we have got people holding the
4 14th, the 15th, the 16th, the 22nd, and the 23rd. So I
5 think, Helen, if anyone -- or Marc, even if there's
6 days we can eliminate, that would facilitate our
7 scheduling. I have suggested, even if for the
8 convenience of those here, if we focus on a date, but
9 also have a back-up date, then understanding that, the
10 Secretary and some of you who bring us news from the
11 other Departments may have scheduling issues, then we
12 would have a back-up.

13 At least we could increase the probability of
14 not only people being able to attend, but also now
15 there's been a request that any members of the advisory
16 committee who are interested in continuing to serve
17 would let that be known. I think one of the keys again
18 would be the ease of scheduling so that people feel
19 really the reward of the work that they're putting in.
20 So, thank you all for being here. I hope you have a
21 wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you in the
22 fall. Thank you.

23 (Whereupon, at 11:10 a.m. the meeting was
24 recessed.)

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

1
2 This is to certify that the foregoing
3 proceedings of a meeting of the U.S. Travel and Tourism
4 Advisory Board, held on Tuesday, June 9, 2009, were
5 transcribed as herein appears, and this is the original
6 transcript thereof.

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8
9 LISA L. DENNIS, CVR

10 Court Reporter
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