

January 15, 2013

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the U.S. travel industry, we are writing in strong support of the Rogers Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute and the Frelinghuysen Amendment to H.R. 152, the “Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013.” These amendments provide much-needed emergency relief funding for states and local governments, as well as businesses and families affected by the devastation of Hurricane Sandy. This funding will also benefit travel destinations throughout the United States that rely on the region’s travel infrastructure as their gateway for business and leisure travel.


The U.S. Travel Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the American travel industry. Our industry generates \$1.9 trillion in economic output, supports 14.4 million American jobs and ranks as one of the top 10 industries in 48 states. In the states of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, travel supports a combined \$74 billion in direct spending and 480,000 jobs.

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) is the largest international trade association for permanently situated amusement facilities and attractions. IAAPA represents nearly 4,500 facility, supplier, and individual members worldwide. The more than 400 amusement parks and attractions in the United States provide jobs for approximately 500,000 full-time and seasonal employees. It is estimated that travelers spend \$47.8 billion annually visiting amusement parks and attractions, which generates approximately \$8 billion in payroll and tax revenue.


Natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods can have a disproportionate impact on the travel industry. A 2010 study conducted by Oxford Economics found that hurricane-impacted regions experience below normal traveler levels for an average of 10-27 months, which leads to sustained job and revenue loss for the travel businesses.¹ The Oxford study also found that investments and assistance for the travel industry can produce a 15:1 return on investment (ROI) in increased traveler spending for disaster impacted economies. This high ROI can accelerate a region’s economic recovery and quickly help communities get back on their feet.

By providing adequate funding to rebuild travel businesses, historic attractions, environmental sanctuaries and vital travel infrastructure, the amendments to H.R. 125 offered by Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers and Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen will help hundreds of thousands of middle class families and travel businesses restore their communities and way of life. We strongly urge you to support these important amendments.

Sincerely,



Roger J. Dow
President and CEO
U.S. Travel Association



R. Paul Noland
President and CEO
International Association of
Amusement Parks and Attractions

¹ http://www.ustravel.org/sites/default/files/page/2009/11/Gulf_Oil_Spill_Analysis_Oxford_Economics_710.pdf