

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 1, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House of Representatives
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker and Madam Leader:

We write in support of Brand USA, a public-private partnership established by Congress to promote and market the United States as a destination for international travelers. For 6 years Brand USA has worked with local communities across the country to attract millions of international visitors, and the billions of dollars they spend here in the United States. Despite its success, Brand USA's future was recently and inadvertently put at risk. We respectfully urge you to work with us to identify a legislative solution this year that will support re-authorization and funding for this important program.

There has been very strong, broad bipartisan support of Brand USA because of the positive economic impact it creates across the United States. Working with 800 partners, Brand USA's efforts have brought 5.4 million incremental international visitors to the United States since fiscal year 2013. During this timeframe, Brand USA generated \$17.7 billion in visitor spending and \$5 billion in tax revenue, supporting an average of 51,000 jobs. The *Travel Promotion Act of 2009*, which created Brand USA, passed the Senate 79-19 and was approved by the House of Representatives by a unanimous voice vote. The 2014 bill reauthorizing Brand USA passed the House 347-57 and was approved as part of a broader bill in the Senate.

Under both original enactment and reauthorization, Brand USA was funded by a portion of a small ESTA fee assessed on international visitors to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program, and then matched by private sector funds 1:1. Brand USA receives NO federal taxpayer funds. However, a provision of the 2018 congressional budget caps agreement diverted this fee revenue to other uses. We recognize that this change was not intended to harm Brand USA, but the resulting uncertainty leaves the progress and planning of tourism promotion strategies for scores of communities throughout the nation, small and large, rural and urban, in jeopardy.

From a national policy perspective, the need to market America globally has never been more important. While travel is up throughout the world as much as 8-10%, for the first time in a decade, we are seeing a decline in the United States' share of global travel. Countries like France, China, and Spain are outpacing America's growth. Brand USA is the only entity focused solely on marketing all of the United States internationally and can help the U.S. regain billions of dollars in visitor spending that comes with international travel. Quite frankly, we need Brand USA now more than ever.

We respectfully and urgently request that you work with us this year to ensure a reliable funding source is available to Brand USA and that the program is reauthorized so it can continue to attract international visitors, and the revenue they generate with each trip to the United States.

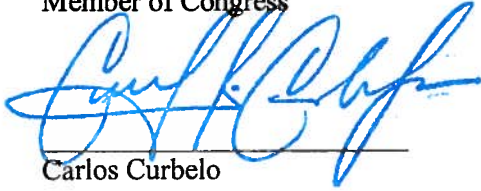
Sincerely,



Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress



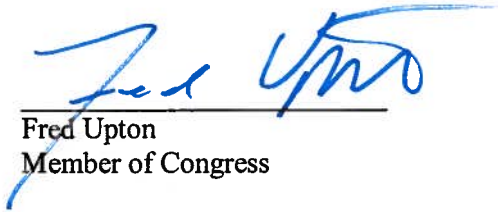
Peter Welch
Member of Congress



Carlos Curbelo
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Fred Upton
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Billy Long
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Adam Kinzinger
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Leonard Lance
Member of Congress



Scott Peters
Member of Congress



Pete Olson
Member of Congress



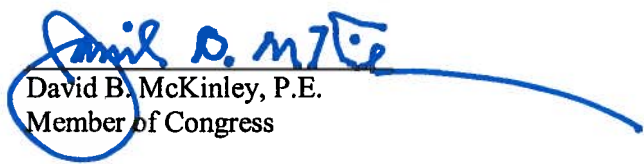
David Price
Member of Congress



Susan W. Brooks
Member of Congress

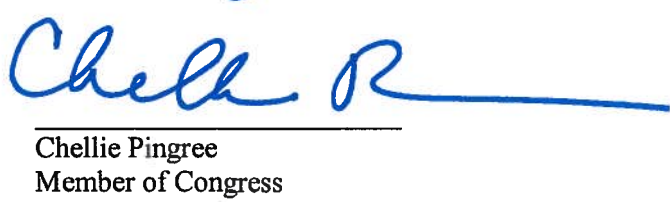


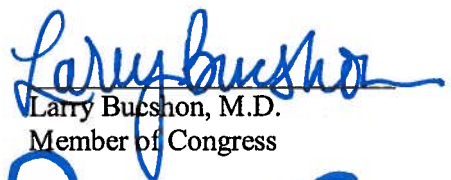
Grace Meng
Member of Congress


David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress

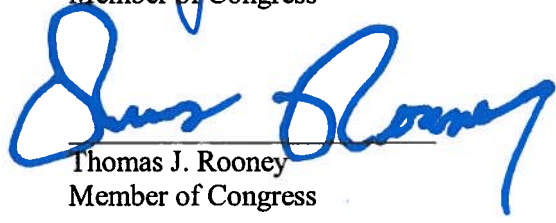

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress


Bill Johnson
Member of Congress


Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress


Larry Bucshon, M.D.
Member of Congress

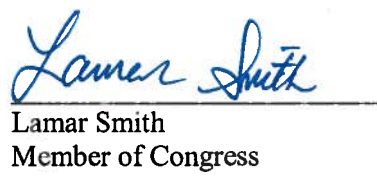

J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress

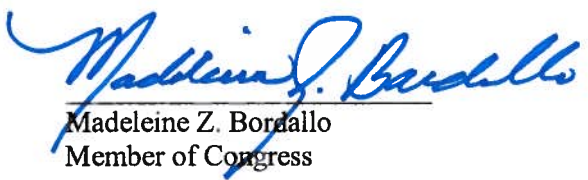

Thomas J. Rooney
Member of Congress

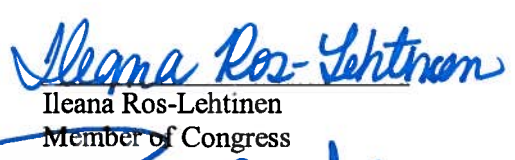

William R. Keating
Member of Congress


Chuck Fleischmann
Member of Congress

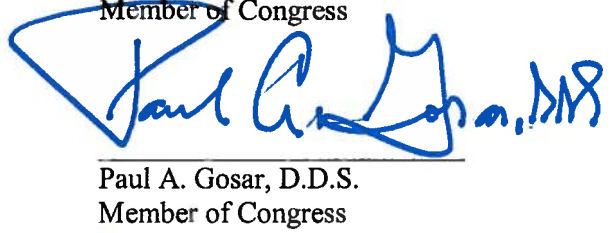

Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress

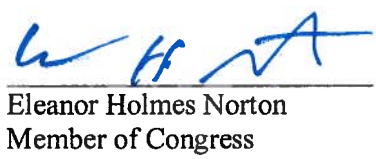

Lamar Smith
Member of Congress

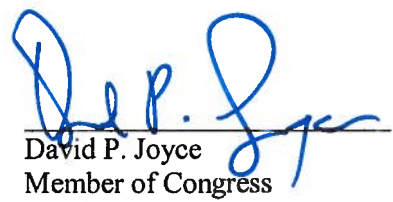

Madeleine Z. Bordallo
Member of Congress

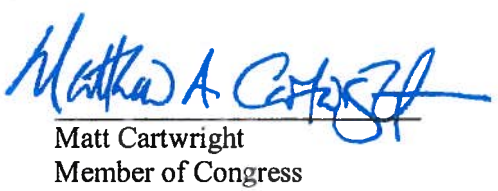

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress


Henry C. "Hank" Johnson Jr.
Member of Congress


Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress


Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress


David P. Joyce
Member of Congress


Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress



David G. Valadao
Member of Congress



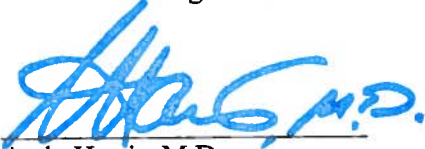
Katherine Clark
Member of Congress



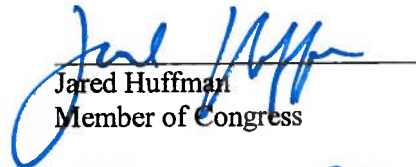
Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Andy Harris, M.D.
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



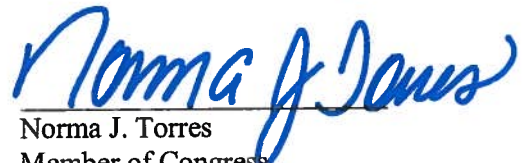
Jenniffer González-Colon
Member of Congress



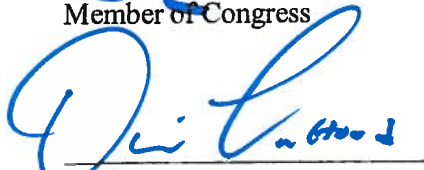
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Darin LaHood
Member of Congress



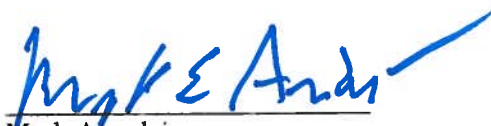
Kyrsten Sinema
Member of Congress



John Katko
Member of Congress



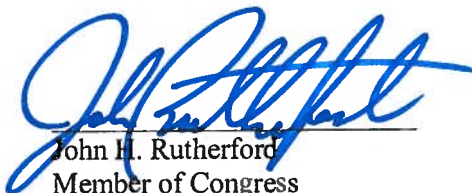
Jacky Rosen
Member of Congress



Mark Amodei
Member of Congress



Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress



John H. Rutherford
Member of Congress



Charlie Crist
Member of Congress

Francis Rooney

Francis Rooney
Member of Congress

Scott R. Tipton

Scott R. Tipton
Member of Congress

Ryan Costello

Ryan Costello
Member of Congress

Earl L. 'Buddy' Carter

Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress

Jackie Walorski

Jackie Walorski
Member of Congress

Peter King

Peter King
Member of Congress

Bradley Byrne

Bradley Byrne
Member of Congress

Elise Stefanik

Elise Stefanik
Member of Congress

Marsha Blackburn

Marsha Blackburn
Member of Congress

Josh Gottheimer

Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress

Raja Krishnamoorthi

Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Colleen Hanabusa

Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell

Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

Ruben Kihuen

Ruben Kihuen
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Tom MacArthur

Tom MacArthur
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Barbara Comstock

Barbara Comstock
Member of Congress

Mike Quigley

Mike Quigley
Member of Congress