

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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U.S. TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD

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MEETING

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WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 7, 2022

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The Advisory Board met via Video
Teleconference, at 11:30 a.m. EDT, Bill
Hornbuckle, Chair, presiding.

PRESENT

BILL HORNBUCKLE, CEO and President, MGM Resorts,
Chair
BRAD DEAN, Chief Executive Officer, Discover
Puerto Rico, Vice Chair
CAROLINE BETETA, President and CEO, Visit
California
BRIAN CHESKY, Co-Founder and CEO, Airbnb
CHRISTINE DUFFY, CEO, Carnival Cruise Line
LIZ FITZSIMMONS, Managing Director, Maryland
Office of Tourism and Film
DAVID GILBERT, President and Chief Executive
Officer, Destination Cleveland and Greater
Cleveland Sports Commission
MICHELLE MCKINNEY FRYMIRE, Former Chief Executive
Officer, CWT
RUSSELL HEDGE, President and Chief Executive
Officer, Hosteling International USA

DEBBIE JOHNSON, Director, Arizona Office of
Tourism

SHEILA JOHNSON, Founder and Chief Executive
Officer, Salamander Hotels and Resorts

STEPHANIE JONES, President and Chief Executive
Officer, Cultural Heritage Economic Alliance

PETER KERN, Vice Chairman and CEO, Expedia

ROLF LUNDBERG, Vice President & Assistant General
Counsel and Head of External Affairs and
Global Public Policy, Choice Hotels
International

GLENDA McNEAL, President, Enterprise Strategic
Partnerships, American Express

DUFFLIED MILKIE, Former Executive Vice President,
General Counsel, Secretary, Cedar Fair L.P.

WILL MOREY, Chief Executive Officer, Morey's
Piers

MARY MOTSENBOCKER, President and Chief Executive
Officer, International Tourism Marketing

CHRIS NASSETTA, President and CEO, Hilton

VINAY PATEL, President and Chief Executive
Officer, Fairbrook Hotels, VA

CATHERINE PRATHER, President, National Tour
Association

TRICIA PRIMROSE, Executive Vice President of
Global Communications and Public Affairs,
Marriott International

BRIAN QUINN, Chief Development Officer, Sonesta
International Hotel Corporation

OLGA RAMUDO, President and Chief Executive
Officer, Express Travel

STEPHEN REVETRIA, President, Giants Enterprises
Daniel Richards, Founder and Chief Executive
Officer, Global Rescue LLC

ADAM SACKS, President, Tourism Economics

MONICA SMITH, President and Chief Executive,
Southeast Tourism Society

D. TAYLOR, President, UNITE HERE

ROB TORRES, Senior Vice President, Expedia Media
Solutions

RON VLASIC, Executive Vice President, City Clubs
& Stadium Clubs, ClubCorp

GREG WEBB, Chief Executive Officer, Travelport

ALSO PRESENT

JENNIFER AGUINAGA, Department of Commerce,

Designated Federal Official

MARK KEAM, Department of Commerce, Deputy

Assistant Secretary for Travel and Tourism

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 11:33 a.m.

3 MS. AGUINAGA: So, good morning
4 everyone. Welcome to this meeting of the Trade
5 and Tourism Advisory Board.

6 It's really good to see everyone. As
7 the Designated Federal Officer, I officially call
8 this meeting to order.

9 Just a few notes, please remember to
10 mute your line if you are not speaking. And
11 also, a reminder that the only time for members
12 of the public to speak, is during the public
13 comment portion of the agenda.

14 And for the TTAB Members, we will not
15 be doing a roll call just to save time. We will
16 do a screenshot of all the participants.

17 And if you are calling in or I can't
18 see you for some reason, just shoot me an email
19 either during the meeting or after, and we will
20 be sure to record that you are present.

21 And now, I will turn it over to the
22 Chair, Bill Hornbuckle.

1 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Well, thank you,
2 Jennifer. And again, good morning everybody.

3 And Jennifer, before I get into the
4 agenda, I just want to thank you and staff for
5 the last couple of months of getting us through
6 this process. Obviously as a new Chair, it has
7 been very helpful. So, thank you for that.

8 I appreciate everyone taking the time
9 today. And want to thank all of you for your
10 dedication through the summer.

11 The travel and tourism industry and
12 the recovery from the pandemic, and it's become
13 more resilient against all of our future
14 adversaries. And so, the focus that we've all
15 put into this work over the summer, I appreciate.

16 Today we'll discuss and vote on
17 letters of recommendations for Secretary Gina
18 Raimondo produced by all of you and our
19 colleagues.

20 Before we discuss the letters however,
21 I would like to introduce you to Deputy Assistant
22 Secretary Mark Keam. DAS Keam was sworn in last

1 week by Deputy Secretary Graves at the Department
2 of Commerce, as Deputy Assistant Secretary for
3 Travel and Tourism.

4 Prior to joining the Department of
5 Commerce, Mark served in Virginia House of
6 Delegates for 14 years, where he was the first
7 Asian born immigrant, and first Korean-American
8 elected to state level office in Virginia.

9 DAS Keam has more than three decades
10 of experience in the public and private sector,
11 including working as Chief Counsel for Senator
12 Dick Durbin on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

13 Mark, thank you for joining us today.
14 And I'd love you to say a few words if you would.

15 DAS KEAM: Sure. Thank you for that
16 Mr. Chairman. First of all, thank you for your
17 leadership and your service. And you should be
18 happy that you're not the newest guy on the block
19 now, because I am.

20 So, it's great to see you. And thanks
21 to the rest of you for joining us this morning.

22 Let me first start by thanking you for

1 stepping up and being part of our democracy here
2 in our government. You are a valuable service to
3 us, even though you might be serving in what you
4 might think of as a voluntary capacity.

5 You're actually very, very valuable to
6 us. It's invaluable because you bring
7 perspective that many of us just don't have in
8 government.

9 And so even though we have an amazing
10 team here lead by Julie and others, and Jennifer,
11 who've had a lot of history working in these
12 issues, it will never be the same as folks like
13 you who are on the ground in the industry working
14 directly with the travel and tourism industry.

15 So, we really value your leadership
16 and your vision and your input. And you'll see
17 that today with the five letters of
18 recommendation that you are going to be
19 suggesting to the Secretary.

20 These are all issues that we really
21 want our government to be focusing on. But,
22 coming from you, as leaders of the industry,

1 makes so much more difference in the way we
2 respond to that.

3 So, I want to thank you for your
4 stepping up and serving. Second, I also want to
5 just say a few words about where we are as an
6 industry.

7 You know better than anybody that the
8 amount of difficulty that your industry has been
9 suffering. COVID was obviously a part of it.

10 But, even beyond COVID, with the
11 inflation, with the reduction in national
12 spending, and so many other aspects of global
13 concerns that we have, there's been no question
14 that tightening of the belts by a lot of
15 families, a lot of business travelers, that's
16 really a difficult topic for us, and foreign
17 students. And so many other ways that we had a
18 robust global travel and tourism, it's dried up a
19 lot.

20 The good news is, we're slowly turning
21 the corner. Things are coming back slowly. But,
22 it could do a better job, you all could be doing

1 a better job to encourage and promote our
2 industries.

3 And so, this is where at this critical
4 moment in our nation's history, and our global
5 history, this is a critical time for you to step
6 up even more than you've already been doing, and
7 to give us that robust input and advice.

8 And so, we look forward to working
9 with you so that we can make sure that we are
10 doing everything right on the government side.
11 We just rolled out the National Strategy for
12 Tourism that our Secretary and the White House
13 are really getting behind.

14 But, as we implement this over the
15 next months and years, we really need the input
16 from the industries across the board. So, we're
17 going to rely on you once again, and many, many
18 times, to ask for your advice and commitment to
19 helping us get through these difficult times
20 together.

21 And finally, just on a personal note,
22 as Bill just mentioned my little bit of

1 background, I just started. I mean, I think I'm
2 on day five or six, if you count Labor Day.

3 So, I'm brand new in this job. I'm
4 also fairly new to this industry. I have had a
5 number of years of experiencing working in the
6 travel tourism from kind of a tangential
7 perspective.

8 I used to serve in the House of
9 Delegates in Virginia, which is the state
10 legislature, where I chaired the Virginia Tourism
11 Caucus, the legislative tourism caucus.

12 And you all know, Virginia is for
13 lovers. We want -- that's one of the areas that
14 we've really been promoting, our state's economic
15 development as part of our tourism industry.

16 But, I will never know as much as you
17 have, and have done. And I certainly won't have
18 the kind of in-person experience that you do.

19 But, what I lack in personal knowledge
20 or professional experience, I will make up in my
21 personal enthusiasm and passion for the industry.

22 And so, as I take this job for the

1 next, as long as I'm able to do this work, I look
2 forward to working with all of you. And a
3 special shout out, I see at least Ms. Johnson,
4 but a special shout out to the Virginians who are
5 participating in this call.

6 And I look forward to getting to know
7 you in person and working with you in the coming
8 days. So again, I'm not going to head role
9 today, I'm just going to listen, and listen to my
10 boss Jennifer, as she leads our discussions.

11 But, thank you once again for joining
12 us. I look forward to seeing you in person.

13 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: I told you, there
14 was no confusion Mark, about Jennifer being the
15 boss. But, thank you for joining us today.

16 Does anybody have any questions of the
17 Assistant Secretary?

18 (No response)

19 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Okay. Having heard
20 none. We appreciate your passion for our space
21 and your joining obviously the Secretary.

22 We look forward to your contribution.

1 Obviously, you can tell by these letters, there's
2 a lot to accomplish. So again, thank you.

3 Earlier this year, Secretary Gina
4 Raimondo charged the Travel and Tourism Advisory
5 Board to provide input and produce specific
6 recommendations in five areas: Diverse Tourism
7 Products, Tourism Planning, Business Travel,
8 Climate Change, and Infrastructure.

9 I want to thank each of the
10 subcommittee chairs for their leadership.
11 Diverse tourism products, Stephanie Jones;
12 Tourism Planning, Monica Smith, we'll hear from
13 Will Morey today, who will present on behalf of
14 Monica who was unable to join us.

15 Business Travel, Michelle McKinney
16 Frymire; Climate Change, Brad Dean. I also want
17 to call out and thank Dean.

18 He's helped us through this summer
19 with this process. And also helped me testify
20 before a Senate Subcommittee on Tourism.

21 So Brad, I want to thank you. You've
22 been invaluable to me and obviously the committee

1 in many years of service. So, thank you for
2 that.

3 And then myself, you'll hear on
4 Infrastructure, something I'm passionate about.
5 And you'll -- probably hopefully many of you have
6 seen our letter to that regard.

7 I appreciate each subcommittee working
8 and generating actionable items to create a more
9 resilient travel and tourism industry. I thought
10 generally we all did a great job on focus.

11 But, there's still a lot to
12 accomplish. And I think at one point we're going
13 to have to zero in on all of the recommendations
14 in terms of a final point of focus for the
15 Secretary.

16 And last week, Jennifer and the team
17 of Commerce and NTTO, shared with you each
18 Subcommittee's letters of those recommendations.
19 Each Subcommittee will present the
20 recommendations now.

21 I've asked that each presenter present
22 for five minutes or less. I'm hoping and

1 believing everyone's had a chance to review the
2 letters.

3 And so, if we could start with the
4 Diverse Tourism Products, Stephanie, if you
5 could? That would be wonderful.

6 MEMBER JONES: My pleasure. Thank
7 you. Greetings Assistant Secretary Keam and my
8 fellow TTAB Board Members and guests.

9 I am Stephanie Jones, the CEO of the
10 Cultural Heritage Economic Alliance and Blacks in
11 Travel and Tourism. It was an honor to serve as
12 Chair for the Diverse Tourism Products and
13 Experience Subcommittee.

14 And it was a pleasure to work
15 alongside Catherine Prather, Russ Hedge, Stephen
16 Revetria, Mary Motsenbocker, Rob Torres, Brian
17 Chesky, and others, to formulate proposed
18 recommendations for how the federal government
19 can support diverse tourism products and
20 experiences.

21 Now, in developing these
22 recommendations, it was established that they

1 should align with the 2022 National Travel and
2 Tourism Strategy. They should consider Brand
3 USA's cultural diversity study, and the UNWTO's
4 definition of tour products.

5 The topic of diverse tourism products
6 and experience is very bad. And to support our
7 effort, the Subcommittee consulted with a broad
8 representation of industry stakeholders with
9 direct connections to diverse tourism products
10 and experiences.

11 Guest speakers included
12 representatives from Brand USA, federal agencies
13 such as NOAA and the National Park Service. And
14 we heard from small scale and global tour
15 operators of diverse tourism products and
16 experiences, as well as travel advisors,
17 destination marketing organizations, and
18 organizations representing diverse communities.

19 Certain destinations attract more
20 visitors than others, with a variety of factors
21 from accessibility to popularity, contributing to
22 the disparity of less visited, under-served

1 communities.

2 Protecting, restoring, and developing
3 a broader array of tourism assets, both
4 recreational and cultural, leads visitors to an
5 expanded range of locals and experiences, and
6 relieves crowding at the most visited sites.

7 Furthermore, many under-served rural
8 and urban communities within gateway destinations
9 outside of national parks, and alongside
10 waterways, have not been extended equitable
11 opportunities to participate and profit in local
12 tourism eco systems.

13 Apart from Native American Tribal
14 communities, federal agencies have not fully
15 engaged and supported other local communities
16 comprised of Black-Americans, Asian-Americans,
17 and Hispanics in their efforts to boost their
18 travel and tourism economies.

19 These local communities need
20 assistance balancing tourism opportunities with
21 the need for affordable housing, living wage
22 jobs, and resource preservation.

1 In addition, these communities have
2 experienced economic decline, and seek help
3 exploring tourism and outdoor recreation as tools
4 to diversify and expand their economies.

5 Within the letter, our Subcommittee
6 has outlined four proposed recommendations,
7 specifying how the U.S. government can support
8 diverse tourism products and experiences.

9 The first recommendation is to apply
10 responsibility to a newly formed Office of
11 Diverse Tourism Products and Experiences within
12 the Commerce Department, to ensure ongoing
13 planning and implementation for the government's
14 investment in diverse tourism products and
15 experiences.

16 This could also be carried out as part
17 of TTAB's charge or through a new advisory
18 committee formed for this purpose.

19 The second recommendation is to
20 establish industry-wide guidelines for defining
21 diverse tourism products and experiences in the
22 U.S., using the National Travel and Tourism

1 Strategy and the UNWTO's definition for tourism
2 products as a framework.

3 The third recommendation is to
4 establish partnerships among government,
5 industry, and private sector to collect existing
6 information and new research to gain data on
7 consumer interests, and the current consumption
8 of diverse products and experiences.

9 And the final recommendation is to
10 ensure small scale providers of diverse tourism
11 products and experiences from economically under-
12 served communities are included in marketing and
13 advertising campaigns targeting international
14 audiences. In addition, ensure that small scale
15 providers have access to tourism specific
16 technical assistance.

17 The implementation of these
18 recommendations will help establish standards for
19 developing diverse tourism products and
20 experiences, create equitable opportunity for
21 small scale providers from under-served
22 communities, and create world-class diverse

1 tourism products and experiences for destinations
2 to promote for attracting international visitors
3 who are seeking a broader narrative of our
4 diverse American story.

5 Thank you for the opportunity to share
6 our recommendations.

7 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Thank you,
8 Stephanie. What I'm going to ask after each
9 letter, is if we -- because we need to vote on
10 each one of these for submission to the
11 Secretary, that we unmute and give an aye or a
12 nay.

13 And if there are any -- maybe I'll
14 start with this, if there are any specific
15 questions of Stephanie or her colleagues?
16 Recognizing we are short on time, but if I might,
17 any questions?

18 (No response)

19 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Thank you. So,
20 Stephanie, I think everyone's affirmative on what
21 you've all done. It's excellent work by you and
22 the committee. And we particularly appreciate

1 your personal passion.

2 So, if I could take a vote, if we all
3 could aye or nay. All in favor say aye.

4 (Chorus of ayes)

5 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Any nays?

6 (No response)

7 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Any abstains?

8 (No response)

9 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Okay. So, thank
10 you, Stephanie and the committee. The letter
11 goes forward as submitted.

12 If we could move onto Tourism and
13 Planning. And Will, I think you're going to take
14 over for Monica on this, if you could?

15 MEMBER MOREY: Yes, sure, thank you.

16 Can you all hear me well?

17 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Yes.

18 MEMBER MOREY: Okay, cool. So, yeah,
19 on behalf of our Subcommittee Chair, Monica
20 Smith, pleased to join you this morning and
21 present our recommendations.

22 The focus of our recommendations, are

1 alignment of the local and regional tourism plans
2 with the regional Comprehensive Economic
3 Development Strategies, or the CEDS. I think
4 we've recognized just how important the CEDS are
5 as a planning tool, and also as a portal to
6 federal funding.

7 I -- as part of my, a part of one of
8 my day jobs, I guess we'll call it, I chaired the
9 South Jersey Economic Development District for
10 over five years, and I'm their Vice Chair now.
11 So, I've become more acquainted as too just how
12 important that resource is.

13 And I think this committee is really
14 focused in on the CEDS being a gateway to USED
15 funding enhanced planning and the field of travel
16 industry must be better informed on how the CEDS
17 could be useful to their entities.

18 I think there is a gap in that, or we
19 do think there is a gap in that currently in
20 connecting these tourism entities to the CEDS
21 planning documents.

22 So, we think it is critical that the

1 Department help to meet the federal effort to
2 include tourism in economic development issues
3 nationwide. And that these recommendations aim
4 to facilitate industry access to federal economic
5 development resources and disaster recovery
6 support.

7 So, our recommendation, we have two
8 recommendations. One is that the Department of
9 Commerce develop and communicate a summary of
10 federal resources to tourism economic development
11 entities, which details how to access tourism
12 planning and disaster recovery support.

13 Among the sort of bullet points along
14 those are that to increase messaging, that
15 tourism strategy should be incorporated into
16 economic development, resiliency planning, and
17 destination recovery strategies.

18 And to stress to tourism stakeholders,
19 the value of participating in CEDS planning and
20 the renewal processes and efforts through the
21 USEDA.

22 Now, we have a number of appendixes

1 that are attached to these recommendations as
2 well, that focus very much on recommendation
3 number one. I won't, of course, review those at
4 this point.

5 Our second recommendation is the
6 Department of Commerce prioritize efforts to
7 provide timely data and climate related events,
8 natural disasters, and other crises.

9 We suggest prioritizing these efforts.
10 I believe there are efforts that exist now. But,
11 we suggest that they be prioritized to provide
12 training programs for the tourism industry on how
13 to access NOAA data.

14 And how to utilize NOAA tools in
15 reports preparing risk assessments and disaster
16 recovery, and crisis management plans.

17 We believe that stakeholders should be
18 engaged from the tourism industry to provide
19 input and to update on the national disaster
20 recovery framework. And also that we expand
21 efforts of the SBA's Office for Disaster
22 Assistance, to provide training and disaster

1 planning and recovery.

2 Following a disaster, recovery of the
3 tourism industry is critical. You know, we see
4 that in so many tour -- in so many tourism
5 regions, just how important it is to get tourism
6 up and running for the ecosystem generally.

7 So, we encourage that planning and the
8 disaster response efforts be enhanced to speed
9 recovery in the tourism sector.

10 So, increased training, education, and
11 tourism in economic development leaders, we think
12 is critical to disaster preparation, crisis
13 communication, and aiding in recovery.

14 Those are our two recommendations.
15 I've moved through them kind of quickly, I guess,
16 in the interest of time.

17 I'd be happy to take any questions
18 that you might have.

19 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Thank you, Will.
20 Very solid and straightforward. Appreciate it.
21 If -- does no one have any questions of Will or
22 the committee?

1 (No response)

2 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: So again, if I
3 could ask everyone to unmute and take a vote.
4 All in favor aye?

5 (Chorus of ayes)

6 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Any opposed?

7 (No response)

8 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Any abstentions?

9 (No response)

10 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: I thank you. It
11 passes. Thank you, Will and thank you to the
12 entire committee.

13 MEMBER MOREY: Thank you.

14 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: I appreciate the
15 work. Let's move onto Business Travel, and
16 Michelle Frymire. Michelle?

17 MEMBER FRYMIRE: Thanks, Bill. So, as
18 many of you know, this was a really robust
19 conversation. We had a lot of great industry
20 experts.

21 And one of the senses of urgency was
22 caused because the fact that business travel has

1 just simply not recovered at the same pace that
2 leisure has. But, contributes significantly to
3 the industry as a whole, particularly from a
4 profitability perspective.

5 So, we took the approach that we
6 wanted something that was pragmatic and doable.
7 And came away with three, we'll call it three and
8 a half recommendations.

9 And the first of those affects both
10 staffing, as well as tourism itself, and travel
11 itself. And that was around improving the visa
12 processing wait time.

13 As you all know, the average visa
14 interview wait time has increased significantly,
15 with now an average of over 400 days as of May.
16 So, we felt that improving this could really
17 benefit.

18 And we thought about that as
19 increasing staffing, restoring operations, but
20 also adding innovation into this process, all
21 within a range of thinking about maintaining
22 national security and safety. And the biggest of

1 those would be to consider adding video
2 conferencing technology.

3 Our second recommendation was around
4 improving the travel experience. Here again, we
5 felt like focusing on where the administration
6 could have the biggest, most immediate impact.

7 And to this, we thought that working
8 with Homeland Security to increase TSA staffing
9 levels. There's still a fairly wide, I think,
10 experience at the airport.

11 Lines can be long. And we know that
12 TSA Pre-Check lines, having more of those will
13 aid the experience. And so we felt that was a
14 good second recommendation.

15 And then we also felt that government
16 spending as a whole would be something that
17 should be restored to previous levels. This is a
18 lead by example approach.

19 As you know, we have a chance here, I
20 think, in the administration to lead the way in
21 terms of what we're doing and how we think about
22 business travel. And that included thinking

1 about things like per diems, et cetera.

2 And then lastly, for the Secretary
3 herself, you know, she has an opportunity here to
4 really impact, I think, the messaging in the many
5 forums in which she participates.

6 And we felt like, you know, urging the
7 largest companies in the U.S. to continue to
8 restore travel spending, would also be extremely
9 valuable and beneficial, for that for a messaging
10 standpoint. Again, kind of the akin to leading
11 the way.

12 So, those were our highest
13 recommendations. And if there are questions, I'm
14 happy to answer those.

15 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Thank you,
16 Michelle. Any questions of Michelle or the
17 committee?

18 (No response)

19 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: And I would just
20 double down that of all of the factors of the
21 industry that have been impacted, this is the one
22 that, other than international, which is now

1 finally coming back, thank you, this is the one
2 that's impacted the most currently. So, thank
3 you for your work.

4 Could I get a vote, please? All in
5 favor say aye?

6 (Chorus of ayes)

7 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Any opposed?

8 (No response)

9 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Okay. The letter
10 carries. Thank you again for your work on that.

11 Let's move onto Brad and Climate
12 Change. A simple subject, Brad. Good luck.

13 VICE CHAIR DEAN: Thank you, Mr.
14 Chairman. And I want to thank the committee
15 members, my colleagues on the TTAB, Russ Hedge,
16 Sheila Johnson, Will Morey, Brian Quinn and D.
17 Taylor for their efforts.

18 I also want to acknowledge the
19 exceptional support we received from Christina
20 Gay, an economist and international trade
21 specialist with the International Trade
22 Administration.

1 The charge for the Climate Change
2 Subcommittee was to provide recommendations from
3 the top drivers for implementing climate change
4 strategies for both businesses and destinations.

5 So, as the Chair alluded to, no simple
6 task. And certainly not a small scope. But, our
7 hope is that we've laid the groundwork for some
8 near-term actions and also perhaps future work at
9 the next TTAB.

10 We were very fortunate to hear from
11 experts at the Economic Development
12 Administration, the Environmental Protection
13 Agency, as well as the U.S. Travel Association.

14 And the Subcommittee identified three
15 internal drivers and three external drivers. The
16 first internal driver being this vast knowledge
17 gap between small businesses and larger
18 businesses in terms of just knowledge base as
19 well as having the resources to be able to better
20 understand what actions can and should be taken.

21 The second challenge identified, is
22 the balancing act that every business, whether

1 small or large, faces in terms of delivering on
2 short term objectives versus long term
3 objectives.

4 Most businesses acknowledge the need
5 to proactively address climate change, but doing
6 so within the scope of normal investment cycles
7 and just the regular business cycle, especially
8 coming out of the worst crisis ever for this
9 industry, certainly doesn't make it easy.

10 And then the third internal driver
11 that we identified, was the challenge of making
12 sensible investments in sustainable practices,
13 which enhance a business's reputation not only
14 with customers and investors, but also current
15 and future employees.

16 We also identified three external
17 drivers. One of course being consumers that are
18 increasingly aware of the importance of
19 sustainability and travel tourism.

20 And we discussed extensively in a very
21 robust fashion the propensity of consumers to
22 think that way as opposed to acting that way.

1 And there's obviously a little bit of
2 difference between the consumer purchasing
3 patterns as well as in comparison to what
4 consumers prioritize. And that of course, is
5 changing constantly.

6 We also identified one of the drivers
7 externally are the industry professionals seeking
8 to measure and monitor a specific destination
9 status.

10 So, if you think about trying to
11 evaluate where a destination stands in comparison
12 to say other destinations, you're talking about,
13 you know, literally thousands and thousands of
14 organizations and various subsectors and segments
15 of the industry.

16 And then we talked extensively about
17 the impact of the transportation sector, noting
18 that a big portion of the carbon footprint for
19 travel and tourism comes down to the actual
20 transportation segment.

21 So, topics like making it easier and
22 more readily available for charging stations for

1 electronic vehicles, as well as the cost
2 challenge for sustainable aviation fuel. One of,
3 if not the only, major impediments right now for
4 the airline industry.

5 So, those were the internal and
6 external drivers that we identified. We
7 summarized in the letter to the Secretary, five
8 recommendations, most of which take on a longer
9 term, you know, aspect.

10 But, all of which merit consideration
11 and potentially action in the short term.
12 Especially noting that historic timing of the
13 inflation reduction act.

14 So, the first recommendation was to
15 develop a Department of Commerce resource,
16 perhaps a web portal or a guide to helping travel
17 and tourism businesses more easily understand and
18 access up to date sustainability resources.

19 And interestingly enough, this aligns
20 very closely with the Tourism Planning and
21 Product Subcommittee's recommendation presented
22 by Will. So, there maybe a sharing opportunity

1 there as the Secretary evaluates this.

2 The second recommendation was to
3 mobilize government resources, grants, loans, tax
4 credits, et cetera for travel and tourism
5 sustainability projects.

6 And as noted previously, we think this
7 could very well be a great outcome from the
8 Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. Much like, if
9 you think back to the American Rescue Plan and
10 what came out of that with the travel tourism and
11 outdoor recreation grants through the EDA.

12 A third recommendation was to identify
13 adequate benchmarking tools that can be used for
14 evaluating sustainability status and progress at
15 the destination level.

16 The fourth recommendation was to
17 pursue expanded access and improve cost
18 efficiencies related to sustainable aviation
19 fuel. Recognizing that that may have to start or
20 begin with at least an action in Congress.

21 We're encouraging the Administration
22 to work with Congress and the airline industry,

1 and the producers themselves, to identify and
2 implement efficient means of reducing the net
3 cost of sustainable aviation fuel.

4 And then finally, the fifth
5 recommendation we identified was to review
6 government policies related to sustainable travel
7 expenditures. This really started by just asking
8 the question, is the government prioritizing this
9 in its purchase of travel?

10 And so those are the five
11 recommendations we put forth to the Secretary
12 related to the drivers of climate change and
13 implementation in the business sector.

14 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Thank you, Brad.
15 Great work. And I don't need to remind all of
16 us, but I will, subsequent to what we do here,
17 about 40 percent of our market mix is convention
18 and group business. And about 70 percent of them
19 now request of us all things BSG, and what we're
20 doing with sustainability.

21 And so the focus of the industry is
22 upon us. And so, any and all work that's done in

1 this regard, I think, is very meaningful.

2 So, thank you. Any questions of Brad?

3 (No response)

4 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: So, all in favor of
5 endorsement, please say aye.

6 (Chorus of ayes)

7 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Any objections?

8 (No response)

9 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: All right, thank
10 you. And Brad, the note passes as prescribed.

11 So, thank you for your work.

12 The last one was infrastructure. This
13 was a subset of a conversation that I had had
14 with Jennifer and ultimately the Secretary in
15 wanting to add this pillar.

16 Originally there were four pillars.
17 And I'm relatively passionate about this. And I
18 will again, personalize this story for a moment,
19 but I think it's relevant.

20 Labor Day weekend, yesterday people
21 returned to southern California, if you were in a
22 car going to southern California yesterday, it

1 took you 12 and a half hours for what is normally
2 a five-hour drive to get home.

3 By the way, it was 113 degrees across
4 the desert. So, the need is there. We focused,
5 if you had an opportunity to read the letter, we
6 focused our energy on highways and byways, while
7 obviously air, rail, sea, et cetera, all-
8 important transportation methods.

9 It carries about, our highways, about
10 five and a half times more people for tourism and
11 all other things commercial and otherwise, than
12 any other mode of travel.

13 So, we wanted to focus on that. We
14 also understand, and I think that you would know,
15 I suspect, or hope, that in 2018 and '19, the
16 Secretary of Transportation formed a similar
17 committee, it was a tourism related committee for
18 infrastructure.

19 And they came up with a series of
20 recommendations. Our committee did some homework
21 with that group and that committee.

22 We went back and understood what was

1 being put forth at that point in time. And we
2 recognized that not all of this, marked with
3 note, is within the Secretary's domain.

4 But, the idea to reach across from one
5 group to the next in terms of how to work and
6 ultimately help the industry, is important.

7 And so, I think the Secretary is
8 committed to that general notion. And so with
9 that, we made the following recommendations,
10 there's principally three.

11 But, like with all of these
12 recommendations, there's a significant amount of
13 subsets.

14 But, initially it was to support
15 diverse, inclusive, and accessible travel by
16 collaborating with the federal, state, and local
17 officials to identify and fund major highways and
18 byway projects that improve interconnection to
19 travel and tourism reliant communities.

20 The good news about recent
21 legislation, is there's about 1.2 trillion
22 dollars sitting in an infrastructure fund.

1 Generally the Department of Transportation runs
2 at about \$760 billion.

3 And so there is money sitting there to
4 be focused on, to be put to work. With some
5 energy behind it on certain projects, we
6 identified a few. There are many. There are
7 hundreds if not thousands.

8 But, we identified a few we think
9 impact tourism. And ultimately over time, we
10 look to work with both the Secretary, Mark,
11 yourself, and the balance of the team in
12 promoting whether it's Department of
13 Transportation or others, to reach some of these
14 goals.

15 The second recommendation was work
16 with Congress to create a pilot program with the
17 U.S. Economic Development Administration, the
18 EDA, that complements funding provided by the
19 National Scenic Byways Program.

20 For states, we recognized five
21 segments to revitalize and enhance byways with a
22 focus on economic development and opportunities

1 in helping to achieve the National Travel and
2 Tourism Strategy goal of fostering resilient and
3 sustainable travel and tourism industry.

4 And so, I can speak about I-15,
5 because it's easy. There are many, many byways
6 that impact many, many places that are far away.
7 And a single road in and a single road out is the
8 only access that they have.

9 The third recommendation was foster a
10 continued whole of government approach to travel
11 and tourism, to identify and support travel and
12 tourism related priorities. To support the
13 National Travel and Tourism Strategy.

14 A five-year goal of attracting 90
15 million visitors who will spend \$279 billion
16 annually, to include, I encourage the White House
17 to create and for Congress to properly fund, I
18 promised the Secretary unless it's funded, we
19 won't ask.

20 To properly fund the position of
21 Travel and Tourism Coordinator to demonstrate the
22 importance of travel and tourism to our economy.

1 And provide much needed coordination throughout
2 the whole of government.

3 A second subset, support travel and
4 tourism focused programs and initiatives within
5 our agencies, including the National Advisory
6 Committee on Travel and Tourism infrastructure at
7 the Department of Transportation.

8 And finally, to collaborate with the
9 Department of Homeland Security, Department of
10 State, and the Department of Transportation to
11 provide seamless travel experiences including
12 broadband access in under-served communities,
13 biometric identification, digital visa
14 appointments, and improvement to our roadways and
15 public transportation systems.

16 And like all of your recommendations,
17 obviously there's a great deal of subsets and
18 work for all of this. But, the general idea is
19 to stress the importance of infrastructure and
20 what it means to the industry.

21 And so hopefully this letter was a
22 start. And so having said all of that, if there

1 are any questions?

2 (No response)

3 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Okay. Hearing
4 none, if I could take a vote, I'll say aye for
5 myself. Go ahead.

6 (Chorus of ayes)

7 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Any objections?

8 (No response)

9 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: Great. Hearing
10 none, I do want to reach out and thank Liz
11 Fitzsimmons, Rolf, Duff and Dan Richards for
12 their help with this.

13 I know this was a project that was
14 just kind of put upon them at the last minute.
15 It wasn't part of the core.

16 But again, I think it's really
17 important to what we're trying to accomplish here
18 at macro, because it touches basically all of the
19 various discussions and letters that we've
20 submitted.

21 So again, I want to thank everyone for
22 all of your work. I'm encouraged by the

1 opportunities presented by each of the
2 recommendations that provide both short and long
3 term success for our industry.

4 I'm hopeful these recommendations will
5 provide a great foundation to the Secretary and
6 the Department of Commerce to continue great work
7 for our industry and within the industry.

8 As the Secretary and her team review
9 our recommendations, we must also look to
10 prioritization. And so, one of the exercises
11 I've promised Mark and Jennifer is, we'd go
12 through all of these letters and begin to think
13 about, and if you could all help us think about,
14 what are the priorities?

15 Because if you add them up, there's 25
16 recommendations, give or take, with various
17 subsets. And there's only so much to be focused
18 on.

19 And so, helping now to hone these down
20 into a series of five or six core
21 recommendations, I think would be critical.

22 And so Brad, I look forward to working

1 with you. Jennifer and Mark, and anyone else who
2 wants to participate in that, I think would be
3 gratefully needed.

4 I believe each recommendation provided
5 it's important. Again however, we must
6 essentially be most actionable.

7 And like all of these stuff, there are
8 some short-term things and wins. And there's
9 some long-term vision and things to be
10 accomplished, particularly when we think about
11 sustainability and some of the things to be
12 accomplished there.

13 To the DAS team, Jennifer and the team
14 from Commerce, are helping to review our
15 recommendation. They'll send us their thoughts
16 in the coming weeks on the same mind set I just
17 had.

18 And lastly, we are working on
19 scheduling one last meeting for the team for the
20 term, for the end of October. And we will keep
21 you updated as that develops.

22 In the meantime, I want to thank

1 everyone for their service. And I want to remind
2 you, if you're interested in TTAB again for the
3 next terms, because this is everyone's last term,
4 please submit your applications, I think it's by
5 September 16, Jennifer, if I'm remembering
6 correctly.

7 MS. AGUINAGA: That's correct.

8 CHAIR HORNBUCKLE: And again, I'm
9 grateful for everyone's support and work
10 throughout the summer on all of this.

11 I think we made some great
12 recommendations. And hopefully with some focus
13 and some push and some energy, we can get
14 something accomplished.

15 So, I thank you all. And Jennifer, I
16 will turn this back to you.

17 MS. AGUINAGA: Thanks Bill. And
18 before I officially close, I just want to do two
19 things.

20 First, offer the opportunity for
21 public comments. I didn't receive any ahead of
22 time in writing, but I just wanted to double

1 check.

2 (No response)

3 MS. AGUINAGA: Going once, going
4 twice.

5 (No response)

6 MS. AGUINAGA: Okay, thank you. And
7 then just to echo what Bill said about the
8 application process.

9 You know, there are no term limits for
10 the TTAB, so you are all eligible to reapply if
11 you would like to.

12 And if you have any questions about
13 the application process, or what exactly is
14 needed, I know the Federal Register Notice is not
15 the most clear and transparent document, so
16 please feel free to reach out. And I will guide
17 you through it.

18 And yes, the applications are due by
19 September 16. So, just shoot me a note if you
20 have any questions.

21 And with that, I echo Bill's and
22 Mark's thanks for all of your work, particularly

1 over a fast-paced summer.

2 And I look forward to hopefully seeing
3 you in person at a meeting. And we will
4 definitely keep you posted on that.

5 And with that, the meeting is
6 officially closed. Thank you all so much.

7 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
8 went off the record at 12:10 p.m.)

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Advisory Board Meeting

Before: US DOC

Date: 09-07-22

Place: teleconference

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under
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Neal R Gross

Court Reporter

NEAL R. GROSS

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