BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA Applauds Creation of National Travel and Tourism Strategy

Washington, DC - January 19, 2012

National Plan Will Enhance Marketing Efforts to Bring More International Travelers to the United States?

Brand USA applauds President Obama's announcement of the creation of a national travel and tourism strategy aimed at growing the U.S. economy through increased international travel to the United States. Today's announcement in Orlando demonstrates the administration's commitment to strengthening America's competitiveness in the growing global travel marketplace by improving travel facilitation for international visitors and improving visa processing times in important growth markets including China and Brazil.

The President's plan includes the following:

- Expanding and making permanent the Global Entry program.
- Increasing efforts to expand the Visa Waiver Program and travel by nationals eligible to participate in the Visa Waiver Program, including through nomination of Taiwan to the program.
- Increasing non-immigrant visa processing capacity in Brazil and China by 40% in 2012.
- Creating an interagency government task force to work with Brand USA to promote travel and tourism opportunities in the U.S. to create jobs.

"We commend the administration's new efforts, which correspond directly with the mandate of Brand USA, which is to promote travel to the United States, thereby increasing U.S. export revenues and creating new American jobs," said Brand USA Chairman and CEO of Diamond Resorts International, Stephen J. Cloobeck. "Travel and tourism, which has long been the United States' number one service sector export, has the potential to be the jobs creator and economic powerhouse that sets the United States on a path of economic recovery. Encouraging more visitors to come to the United States to stay in our hotels, eat in our restaurants, shop in our stores and explore this great country, will deliver a much needed economic boost while strengthening U.S. relations around the world."

The global travel industry is booming. In 2010, the travel and tourism industry supported 7.4 million direct travel jobs; generated $188.4 billion in wages; and directly contributed $118 billion in tax revenue to government at all levels, leading economic recovery nationwide. In fact, according to the U.S. Travel Association, between March 2010 and July 2011, job growth in the travel industry was 84 percent faster than the rest of the economy. Particularly, as the administration has recognized, travel from the emerging markets of Brazil, China and India will be important growth markets. Travel from these countries increased 110 percent between 2000 and 2010. Spending from these countries resulted in $14.9 billion in export revenue in 2010. Demand for visas is stronger than ever from these emerging markets and growing – since 2005 demand from Brazil has gone up 234 percent, 124 percent in China and 51 percent in India.

"Brand USA is committed to bringing more travelers to the United States to explore the incredible diversity of experiences, attractions and possibilities this country offers, but our efforts must be met with a similar commitment from the federal government to ensure our nation's welcome is consistent throughout the international visitor's entire travel process," said Cloobeck. "Today's announcement is a welcome first step. In coordination with the administration's new strategy, Brand USA will build smarter and more effective marketing tools that maximize our nation's potential as the leading travel destination in the world."

Brand USA, formerly the Corporation for Travel Promotion, was created in 2010 with the mission to promote international travel to United States in a coordinated fashion for the first time, and in November 2011, launched America's brand – Brand USA. Brand USA will launch its advertising campaign this spring, and continues to work closely with all stakeholders, including U.S. government officials, who are helping to maximize its efforts to position the U.S. as a destination of choice for travelers.

###

About Brand USA
Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, dedicated to attracting legitimate international inbound travel to strengthen the U.S. economy, increase exports, create quality jobs, and promote community prosperity. By running data-driven campaigns and unifying messaging across industry and government, Brand USA positions the United States as a top global destination while providing current visa and entry information.

Over the past 13 years Brand USA has driven 11.3 million additional international visitors who spent $38.1 billion in the United States, leading to $82.9 billion in total economic impact and sustaining an average of more than 40,000 jobs each year. These efforts have generated nearly $11 billion in attributable tax receipts at the federal, state, and local levels.