BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

BRAND USA CEO JIM EVANS TESTIFIES BEFORE U.S. HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE

Washington, DC - May 17, 2012

- Bipartisan Support Expressed for Boosting International Travel as Jobs Engine

Jim Evans, chief executive officer of Brand USA, testified yesterday before the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade. At the hearing, entitled “Where the Jobs Are: Promoting Tourism to America,” Evans emphasized the significant positive impact international tourists have on the U.S. economy and job growth, and he provided an example of the creative elements and messaging featured in the United States’ first global marketing campaign created to inspire international travelers to “Discover this land, like never before.”

Brand USA, the new tourism marketing entity responsible for promoting the United States to world travelers, launched the campaign this month in Canada, Japan, and the United Kingdom. Evans’ remarks were received with bipartisan support from lawmakers and industry partners. The session was convened by Chairwoman Mary Bono Mack (R-CA) and Ranking Member G.K. Butterfield (D-NC) to discuss the many ways in which increased international tourism to the United States drives job creation.

The travel and tourism industry has been a consistent driver of economic growth for the U.S. economy, generating $1.2 trillion of revenue in 2011, and supporting 7.6 million jobs. A 2011 McKinsey Global Institute report estimates that the tourism sector could add 2.1 to 3.3 million jobs this decade. Brand USA is dedicated to increasing the number of international visitors to the United States from a record 62.3 million in 2011 to 100 million annually by 2021, aiming to create a total impact of $250 billion in travel related spending and a corresponding increase in American jobs.

“Prior to the creation of Brand USA, the United States was the only industrialized nation that did not actively promote itself to international visitors,” Evans testified. “We know that every 33 overseas travelers creates one U.S. job, making these travelers the most lucrative for our economy. On average, each overseas visitor spends $4,300 when they visit the United States. We have launched a strategic, comprehensive marketing campaign to increase the number of visitors, which will in turn add American jobs across multiple industries.”

Jim Evans was the first speaker on a panel that included industry partners Geoff Freeman, COO and executive vice president of the U.S. Travel Association; Debbie Marriott Harrison, senior vice president of government affairs for Marriott International; Scott White, CEO, Greater Palm Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau; and Dr. Patrick T. Long, director of the Center for Sustainable Tourism, Division of Research and Graduate Studies at East Carolina University. Both White and Harrison spoke specifically of their strong support of Brand USA’s efforts, citing how critical the national marketing organization efforts is helping them further amplify the reach of their own individual brands internationally.

At the conclusion of his testimony, Evans played the full-length music video for “Land of Dreams,” the anthem composed by Rosanne Cash for the USA’s international marketing campaign. The song is a central theme in the TV component of the integrated campaign, which includes print, out of home, and social media elements. The video, which you can see at www.youtube.com/yourdiscoveramerica, was received with warm applause.

###

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.