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President Obama Signs Travel Promotion Act into Law

Enactment of Historic Travel Legislation will Boost Inbound Travel to California and Stimulate Local Economy

Orange County, CA — The Orange County Tourism Council welcomed news today that President Obama has signed the Travel Promotion Act into law. The new legislation will create economic growth and thousands of new American jobs by welcoming millions more international travelers to the United States.

“The United States is equipping itself to compete in the international travel market as so many other countries are successfully doing today by promoting our diverse destinations and travel policies abroad, all under a collective national brand,” said Steve Bone, Chairman of the Orange County Tourism Council and CEO for Huntington Beach Marketing and Visitors Bureau. “Travel promotion legislation enacted in Washington will benefit every state across America and support the estimated 160,000 travel-dependent workers in Orange County, CA. I applaud Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer and Representatives Edward Royce, Gary Miller, Ken Calvert, Loretta Sanchez, and John Campbell for embracing travel as an economic stimulant and getting this bill to the President for his signature.”

“This is a historic victory for the U.S. economy and the one in eight American workers whose jobs depend on travel,” said Roger Dow, president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association. “The United States Congress has sent a clear message that travel is a high priority to our nation and that tangible steps must be taken to increase travel to and within the United States.

The Travel Promotion Act establishes a public-private partnership to promote the United States as a premier international travel destination and communicate U.S. security and entry policies. According to analysis by Oxford Economics, the bill is estimated to drive \$4 billion in new consumer spending annually, provide \$321 million in new federal tax revenue each year and create 40,000 U.S. jobs nationwide. Further, it is expected to reduce the federal budget deficit by \$425 million over the next 10 years, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Overseas visitors spend an average of more than \$4,000 when they visit the United States.

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The Travel Promotion Act is modeled after successful state-level initiatives and is funded through a matching program featuring up to \$100 million in private sector contributions and a \$10 fee on foreign travelers who do not pay \$131 for a visa to enter the United States. The fee is collected once every two years in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security's Electronic System for Travel Authorization. No money is provided by U.S. taxpayers.

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About the Orange County Tourism Council

The Orange County Tourism Council (the "OCTC" or the "Tourism Council") promotes visitors to travel to "The OC". The OCTC represents a wide variety of official tourism organizations including accommodations; arts & culture venues; attractions; chamber of commerce's; convention & visitor bureaus; retail & shopping centers; restaurants; transportation providers, and visitor services. The Tourism Council is governed by a board of directors, a steering committee and committees representing marketing & branding, education and advocacy. The OCTC is funded by public/private partnerships with Orange County and its visitor serving industry stakeholders.

www.visittheoc.com

About the U.S. Travel Association (USTA)

The U.S. Travel Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the \$770 billion travel industry. U.S. Travel's mission is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the United States. For more information, visit www.ustravel.org.

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