

December 13, 2021

U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA)
Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

U.S. Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS)
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce
Science, and Transportation
554 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

U.S. Senator Jacky Rosen (D-NV)
Chair
Subcommittee on Tourism, Trade,
and Export Promotion
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

U.S. Senator Rick Scott (R-FL)
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Tourism Trade,
and Export Promotion
554 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Chair Cantwell, Chair Rosen, Ranking Member Wicker, and Ranking Member Scott,

Our names are Terry Dale and Catherine Prather. We are the President and CEO of the United States Tour Operators Association (USTOA) and President of the National Tour Association (NTA), respectively. On behalf of USTOA and NTA and its members, we would like to thank you for your continued efforts to support the travel and tourism industry throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

USTOA is a professional, voluntary trade association created with the primary purpose of promoting integrity within the tour operator industry. USTOA Active Members represent some of the top names in travel and tourism, and account for a sizeable portion of the tour operator market in North America. USTOA's expansive membership services travelers from around the U.S., and around the world, bringing \$19 billion in revenue to the U.S. economy and, prior to the pandemic, employing over 450,000 U.S. citizens. Our members' life's work is to facilitate unforgettable experiences. USTOA is dedicated to consumer protection. To protect consumers, USTOA requires every member company to post a \$1 million bond to be used to assist travelers that may be affected by a company's bankruptcy.

NTA is the leading business association for companies and organizations that serve customers traveling to, from, and within North America. Our 700 buyer members are tour operators and travel advisors who package travel domestically and around the world. Our seller members — 500 destinations and 1,100 tour suppliers — represent product in all 50 U.S. states, each Canadian province, and more than 40 other countries.

Our members are emboldened and highly encouraged by your Omnibus Tourism Act of 2021, which is set to be marked up by the Committee on December 15, 2021. Our Associations have worked closely with other industry associations and leaders, and your staff, on providing feedback to this legislation to make it as helpful as possible to our industry, which continues to ail due to the pandemic. After being decimated due to the pandemic, it was critically important for our members to tap back into the international market following borders reopening on November 8. This move resulted in much-

needed capital to keep our members' businesses operational, and has helped bring tourism dollars back to communities that have suffered without business for almost two years.

More must be done to help our industry, and this commonsense legislation is a great first step. We are highly supportive of the legislation and the key provisions within it. Our Associations have long supported and participated in the Department of Commerce's Travel and Tourism Advisory Board. We have also worked directly with the Department of Commerce and its National Travel and Tourism Office for years and would welcome the opportunity to work with the new Assistant Secretary for Travel and Tourism. Additionally, USTOA and NTA highly support updating our National Travel and Tourism Strategy and sees great benefit in ensuring it remains up to date. The other provisions in this legislation dealing with the efficient flow of passengers through our nation's airports, and specifically the Ensuring Health Safety in the Skies Act, are also highly supported by our Associations.

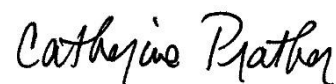
Tour operators are the lifeblood of the travel and tourism industry. They bring travelers, and therefore increased business and revenues, to all corners of the industry, including airlines, airports, live venues, restaurants, national parks, motorcoach operators, and much more. To help ensure that the industry rebounds in a time-efficient manner, it is critical that legislation like this is enacted, and more relief is afforded to our industry. Most importantly, providing direct relief to those industry stakeholders, including tour operators, who did not receive targeted relief in any of the COVID-19 relief and recovery bills must be a priority. We urge you to consider additional, direct relief for the hardest hit businesses in the travel and tourism industry.

We applaud you for your leadership on this legislation, in addition to Senators Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Angus King (I-ME), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Dan Sullivan (R-AK), and Roy Blunt (R-MO). USTOA and NTA and its members are available to you at any time to help ensure this legislation is enacted into law. We urge you to do all in your power to ensure that happens.

Sincerely,



Terry Dale
President and Chief Executive Officer
United States Tour Operators Association



Catherine Prather, CTP
President
National Tour Association