

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

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TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD

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MEETING

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**FRIDAY,
NOVEMBER 20, 2015
10:00 A.M. EST**

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The Board met in the Commerce Research Library, 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., at 10:00 a.m., Sam Gilliland, Chair, presiding.

PRESENT

SAM GILLILAND, Chair
JOHN R. SPROULS, Vice Chair (by telephone)
DAVID BERG
HENRY CRUZ
TODD DAVIDSON
BRAD DEAN
MARYANN FERENC
ELLIOTT FERGUSON
DONALD FREEMAN

MIKE GALLAGHER
JAMES HAGEN
JEREMY JACOBS
ROBERT LYNCH (by telephone)
MICHAEL MCCORMICK
MARGARET MCKEOUGH
ROSSI RALENKOTTER
DEAN RUNYAN
SHERRY RUPERT
GREG STUBBLEFIELD
JONATHAN ZUK
ALSO PRESENT

KENNETH E. HYATT, Deputy Undersecretary for
International Trade, U.S. Department of
Commerce
JOHN BLAIR, Director, Office of
Intergovernmental and External Affairs,
U.S. Department of the Interior
RAUL PERALES, Assistant Secretary, U.S.
Department of Homeland Security
THOMAS ENGLE, Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S.
Department of State
EDWARD RAMOTOWSKI, Deputy Assistant Secretary,
U.S. Department of State
DANIEL TANCIAR, U.S. Customs and Border
Protection
KELLY CRAIGHEAD, Executive Director, DOC/NTTO
ISABEL HILL, Director, DOC/NTTO
SHANNON ROCHE, DOC/OACIO
ARCHANA SAHGAL, DOC/OACIO
KATE MCADAMS, DOC
VANESSA BALGOBIN
BRIAN BEALL
DESIREE BLUM
LAURA BROKENBAUGH
BRUCE CHARENDOFF
CURT COTTLE
VICKI DIXON
SHANE DOWNEY
RON ERDMANN
CRISPUS GORDON
KATIE GORMAN
ED HALL
JULIE HEIZER

PAM INMAN
 DONNA KEREN
 JERRY KOEHLER
 DANIELLA LANDAU
 DEBORAH LIPMAN
 RYAN LONG
 STEVEN REDLINGER
 PATRICIA ROJAS-UNGAR
 NARRIC ROME
 VALERIE SEGARRA

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10:12 a.m.

1 CHAIR GILLILAND: (presiding) Okay, we will, with
2 the gavel, call this meeting of the Travel and
3 Tourism Advisory Board to order.

4 I should say that many have said in the past that
5 I manage the agenda with a sledgehammer. We were
6 fortunate enough to have that as background music
7 earlier for an earlier education session. So, it
8 is kind of a nice tribute.

9 (Laughter.)

10 I appreciate Archana figuring out to get that
11 turned off again. These are miracles in my view.
12 I can't even imagine how this happens. But I think
13 our first session of this Travel and Tourism
14 Advisory Board started with Sledgehammer. So, we
15 are ending on an appropriate note.

16 Welcome to everybody.

17 I think what we will do as we get started here is

1 just run around the room very quickly and make
2 introductions.

I should say we do have three people on the phone.
So, enunciation is very, very important as you
speak, and using a microphone is also very
important. If it comes to you as you make your
remarks, you might introduce yourself for the
benefit of the scribe.

So, with that, I'm Sam Gilliland, representing
Sabre.

MEMBER DAVIDSON: Good morning, everyone.

I'm Todd Davidson with Travel Oregon.

MEMBER BERG: I'm David Berg with Airlines for
America.

MEMBER CRUZ: Henry Cruz, CrossBrook.

MEMBER DEAN: Brad Dean with the Myrtle Beach Area
Chamber of Commerce in Myrtle Beach, South
Carolina.

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ENGLE: Tom Engle,
State Department, Economic Bureau.

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY RAMOTOWSKI: Ed
Ramotowski, State Department, Consular Affairs.

MEMBER FERENC: Maryann Ferenc, Mise en Place
Hospitality.

MEMBER FERGUSON: Elliott Ferguson with
Destination DC.

MEMBER FREEMAN: Don Freeman, The Freeman Company.

MEMBER GALLAGHER: Good morning. Mike Gallagher,
co-owner of CityPASS.

MS. HILL: Good morning. Isabel Hill with the
National Travel and Tourism.

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: Ken Hyatt from the
NTA, the National Trade Administration.

MS. CRAIGHEAD: Following Ken Hyatt, who just got

off an overnight flight, Kelly Craighead from the National Travel and Tourism Office.

MS. SAHGAL: Archana Sahgal, Office of Advisory Committees.

MS. ROCHE: Shannon Roche, Office of Advisory Committees.

MEMBER HAGEN: Good morning. Jim Hagen, South Dakota Tourism.

MEMBER McCORMICK: Mike McCormick with Global Business Travel Association.

MEMBER McKEOUGH: Margaret McKeough with the Washington Airports Authority.

MR. PERALES: Raul Perales with the Department of Homeland Security.

MR. TANCIAR: Dan Tanciar with U.S. Customs and

Border Protection.

MEMBER RUNYAN: Dean Runyan, Dean Runyan Associates from Oregon.

MEMBER RUPERT: Sherry Rupert with the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association.

MEMBER ZUK: Jonathan Zuk, Amadeo Travel Solutions. Good morning, everybody.

MEMBER RALENKOTTER: Rossi Ralenkotter, Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority.

MEMBER JACOBS: Jeremy Jacobs, Jr., with Delaware North Companies.

CHAIR GILLILAND: And why don't we pass the microphone back this way? Okay?

MS. SEGARRA: Hi. Valerie Segarra from the LVCVA.

MS. BROKENBAUGH: Laura Brokenbaugh, Bureau of Economic Analysis, part of Commerce.

MS. BLUM: Desiree Blum, Escalante International.

MS. KEREN: Donna Keren, NYC & Company.

MR. CHAMPLEY: Good morning. Dick Champley, NTTL.

MR. ERDMANN: Ron Erdmann, National Travel and Tourism Office.

MS. INMAN: Pam Inman, National Tour Association.

MR. REDLINGER: Steve Redlinger with DHS.

MS. DIXON: Vicki Dixon with the Department of the Interior.

MR. HALL: Ed Hall, Bureau of Indian Affairs.

MR. KOEHLER: Jerry Koehler with TSA.

MR. ROTHERY: Brian Rothery -- I don't need a microphone -- Enterprise Holdings.

MS. LIPMAN: Debbie Lipman, Washington Airports Authority.

MR. CHARENDOFF: Bruce Charendoff with Sabre.

MS. GORMAN: Katie Gorman with Delaware North.

MR. DOWNEY: Shane Downey, GBTA.

MR. COTTLE: Good morning. Curt Cottle, National Travel and Tourism Office.

MR. LONG: Ryan Long, State Department, Economic Bureau.

MS. HEIZER: Good morning, everyone. Julie Heizer, National Travel and Tourism Office.

MR. BEALL: And Brian Beall -- good morning -- National Travel and Tourism Office.

MR. GORDON: Good morning.
Crispus Gordon, Destination DC.

MS. BALGOBIN: Vanessa Balgobin in Department of Transportation.

MS. LANDAU: Daniella Landau, representing Delaware North.

MR. ROME: Narric Rome with Americans for the Arts.

MS. ROJAS-UNGAR: Patricia Rojas-Ungar with the U.S. Travel Association.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Oh, people on the phone, could you announce yourselves?

(No response.)

Do you want to go ahead and get started?

Okay, I think John at least is joining on the phone

and there are a few others as well. So, we will go ahead and get started then.

Deputy Undersecretary Hyatt, Members of the Board, Government Partners, and all the people in the room who make our Board run, good morning and welcome to the last TTAB meeting of the year and of our current term.

To you, Ken, much appreciation for coming off an overnight flight. I am sure you wouldn't have made it here without Global Entry.

(Laughter.)

As always, it is great to see you all.

Before we start in with our agenda, I wanted to pause for a moment to reflect on the tragic events in Paris and, as of this morning, in Mali, which have deeply saddened me, and I know all of you, and on what they mean for our work.

We often talk about the competition we are in for international travelers with cities and countries throughout the world. And by any measure, Paris and France are among the United States' most worthy competitors. However, there is no competitive

edge to be gained from what happened in Paris last Friday. Instead, I would like to offer our Board's sincere compassion for and full solidarity France and its people as well as our heartfelt prayers for healing and renewal. We stand with Paris, the City of Light, against this darkness.

Cowardly acts of terrorism and violence that shake our world and our sense of security are becoming disturbingly regular events. We simply cannot allow these acts to overwhelm and paralyze us.

Here in the United States we are reminded that we need our government, first and foremost, to take all reasonable measures to keep our homeland safe and secure, and in the aftermath of tragedy, we need to check ourselves to make sure that the policies and programs that we have carefully and thoughtfully put in place are working and up to today's challenges and threats.

What makes no sense to me is the call from some politicians to abandon these programs in a knee-jerk fashion out of a desire to swiftly do something, anything, without careful and

deliberate consideration of the consequences. Surely, we can do better than that.

There is an old saying that bad facts make for bad laws, and so do bad events. In the past, our government layered on one security program after another at airports in response to bad events. More recently, with the encouragement of our Board, our government has adopted a much more sensible Trusted Traveler approach, leading to outstanding programs like Global Entry and PreCheck, which facilitate travel and allow DHS and TSA to focus on finding and detaining people who pose a threat. Now is precisely the time to make those programs stronger, to enroll more people, and to allow officials the best possible chance to find the needle in the haystack by making the haystack smaller.

The priority recommendation we made in May about expanding Trusted Traveler programs to more partner countries seems even more relevant today. Likewise, with the Visa Waiver Program, which over the last week has been particularly targeted for

attack. The program may, indeed, need to be rebranded, as U.S. Travel has wisely suggested, since the word Awaiver@ suggests no scrutiny, which, of course, we know is absolutely not true. As you know, expansion of the Visa Waiver Program is also one of our Board=s top priority recommendations. While politically this may not be the right time to expand it, it is clearly the right time to defend it, since we know how vital this program is to reaching our lofty international traveler visitation goals.

Ultimately, my hope is that this Board and the one that succeeds it in 2016 will continue to work tirelessly with our government partners on travel and tourism policies that promote freedom and that never succumb to fear.

To that end, I am pleased to report that, with all of your help and energy, this has been a remarkably successful and prolific term for the United States Travel and Tourism Advisory Board. By the time the curtain falls, I believe we will have made close to 50 recommendations to Secretary Pritzker, which

I know at times has been a laugh line at our Board meetings. By any measure, it is a lot of recommendations.

This is the opposite of a do-nothing Board. Our group is filled with passion and energy and brimming with excellent ideas on all sorts of policies that would help our country reach and exceed our travel and tourism goals.

The scope of your creative thinking goes beyond the nuts and bolts of processing visitors efficiently to soaring ideas about doubling-down on showcasing the arts, the parks, the food, and the culture that make our country special and worth visiting.

I want you to know that, as your Chairman, that I appreciate all the effort that went into the many letters that bear my signature, but which reflect your collective wisdom.

It has been an honor working with you over these past two years. You have, quite simply, been awesome to work with.

But it is also the case that in Washington, as in life, there are many more issues than there is time

to work on them. We have been blessed with a gifted Secretary of Commerce in Penny Pritzker, who has made it clear in her words and in her actions that she is firmly committed to travel and tourism and that she is not looking simply to collect our letters in a binder, put them on a shelf, and thank us for our service.

She is committed to getting stuff done. As a former CEO, I can't tell you how much I appreciate that approach to business and to government service.

Her admonition to prioritize and re-prioritize, so that she could run with a manageable set of policies toward a goal line that is reachable before the lights go out at the end of her term, makes a whole lot of sense to me. That admonition has given our work a sense of purpose and possibility that I think made all of us more productive. There is nothing like a boss taking a personal interest in what you are doing to make you work harder and smarter, and I suspect our friends at the Department of Commerce know exactly what I am talking about.

I think the TTAB has been up to the challenge of giving her actionable priorities, and notwithstanding the madness going on in the world, I am betting that before the lights go out Secretary Pritzker will succeed in putting more significant points on the board for our industry.

I am also mindful that the sense of shared purpose that we have created around this table has led to private sector companies and organizations taking responsibility for advancing our priorities. You will remember that, after filtering all of our recommendations from 50 to 15 to 5, we came up with one overarching principle; namely, the key to achieving the President's goal of welcoming 100 million visitors per year by 2021 is to focus on improving the customer experience for international travelers.

While I found it extremely gratifying to open The Washington Post this week and see a full-page ad from the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority -- and I will pass this around in just a minute. Here's the full-page ad, and I will let

you read it.

But it says, AYour journey begins with us, Reagan National, Dulles International, the nation=s airports, committed to continuing enhancing your travel experience.@

Let me send this around. You can just pass it around.

So, kudos to Margaret and Debbie for this. I hope all of our companies and organizations literally get on the same page with you, and that is the commitment that is going to make travel and tourism in this country soar.

I also want to mention how gratified I am that, beyond the subcommittee work that structures the term of the TTAB, that members of our Board were also ready and willing to serve on special task forces, the need for which has arisen from presidential memoranda and orders.

The Task Force on Entry, co-chaired by John Sprouls and Dave Berg, was a shining example from this term. The illuminating work that came out of that project clearly helped the White House

and the CBP refine its thinking about goals and the metrics. So, well done.

Before I turn this over to Ken and we start on our formal agenda, I want to thank all of the ex officio members of the TTAB for their services and for their guidance. If you would stand up? Our ex officio members, will you stand up, please?

(Applause.)

Of the many accomplishments we have to be proud of, I think one of the best is the strong and durable relationships that have been created between the public and private sector members of this Board. And I am here to tell you, as an eight-year veteran of the TTAB, that wasn't always so. For the last several terms at least, I think that not-invented-here skepticism has fully replaced with what can we accomplish together.

Thank you for being open to that transition and for patiently listening and helping to shape our ideas into a form that you could productively use.

Of course, at least one of you has turned that skill into an art form, since there continues to be talk of renaming the TTAB into the ERFC, or the Ed Ramotowki Fan Club.

(Laughter and applause.)

And lastly, to our friends at Commerce, thank you for everything you do to make this Board successful.

Archana, your idea to edit letters on Google Docs increased our Board=s editing efficiency by a gazillion percent, I think. That was an inspired move that I am going to steal again and again.

Kelly, your steady hand as the first Executive Director of the National Travel and Tourism Office has brought an even higher degree of professionalism and visibility to our industry=s important work. I am extremely excited to hear more about your plans for the Year of U.S.-China Tourism in 2016.

And, of course, to Isabel and your entire team, so much of what we do at TTAB would

not be possible without the wealth of experience and hard work you dedicate to our industry, not only for this term, but over many, many years. We are in your debt.

So, more from me later. We have a busy agenda, including three letters to consider for approval.

So, let me turn the proceedings over to my friend, Deputy Undersecretary for International Trade Ken Hyatt.

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: Thank you, Sam.

I am delighted to be here. I came through Miami. Everything very smooth. Made it here on time, which is just a beautiful, beautiful story.

(Laughter.)

Yes, thank you. Thank you very much. So, I am delighted to be here. Yes, I was in Brasilia last night and am just delighted to be here.

First, let me thank all of you. For

some of us who have been sitting on this side of the table, we have been working together for many years together, right? Many of us have been working for many years.

As I reflected on the plane as I was coming here, if we just look at the last couple of years, it has again been a pretty extraordinary couple of years in this sector, right?

If you look at the numbers, we hit 75 million visitors last year, which was a record. So, we continue to hit the numeric targets.

But, then, you look at things like reauthorization of BrandUSA, pretty big event in the travel and tourism industry; the extension of China visa validity, pretty big event, and all of the border stuff that has been worked on; you know, setting a national goal of best in class and the extraordinary contributions. It has been a pretty extraordinary couple of years.

And then, you know, Sam, as you started, even were it not for France, I would argue the challenge would still be how do you keep the

momentum, right? How do you just continue to drive change, to drive improvement, to continue maintaining tremendous performance on the visa side, to continue driving improvement in the customer experience, to continue to market the U.S.? And then, you add France to it.

So, I sort of start with we have a momentum challenge, and then, we have now the complication of France. For me, that has a couple of different levels.

No. 1 is how do we maintain our leadership in safe tourism, right? And that is essentially what we have been trying to do here for a while, is not trade between safety and tourism and to do everything we can to stay vigilant in terms of protecting this country, which we intend to continue to do, and to do it in a way cleverly, strategically, carefully, and still draw visitors. And that remains, I think, a great challenge for us going forward and the one that we have to do.

And then, I think I would also add that, as we all know -- and some people have talked about

tourism as a diplomatic tool, right, and the importance, particularly in times like this, that people are traveling and people are seeing this country and people are learning about America, and the challenge that is, then, created. It is precisely at the moment you need it that people are concerned.

So, again, I think the next Board, there will be an interesting set of conversations. But, again, for me, how do we keep this going, how do we keep the momentum?

Just two final things. One is I hope that many of you reapply, right, because we should hope that we continue this conversation together and we continue this journey together.

And then, I just wanted to stop and thank you, in particular, for your leadership through this time.

I want to thank John -- I don't know if he is on the phone -- who, then, stepped into the Vice Chairman role and his leadership on explaining to me the customer service; Greg explaining to me

connecting, as we talked with the customer experience people in these companies and we thought we knew a little bit about it. And then, the experts sort of said, ANo, no, actually, you don=t really understand anything.@

(Laughter.)

ALet us actually take you through how we are thinking about this.@

But, again, particular thanks to you for your leadership, to John for stepping in and replacing Kathleen. Again, let=s continue the journey together.

We are excited to be here and interested in hearing the recommendations for today.

Oh, and I should also mention Penny is in China. The reason she is not here is because she is somewhere in China, probably in Beijing, I would assume, at this moment. But, were it not for that, I know she would have been here. But I wanted to communicate her regrets at being thousands and thousands of miles away and not being able to be here.

Again, thank you for all of your service and all of your contributions.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Thank you for your remarks, Ken. We really do appreciate it.

With that, we will go to Kelly to give us a travel and tourism update.

MS. CRAIGHEAD: Sure, and I also want to thank Ken. As you know how difficult it is to schedule these meetings, and we were particularly sensitive to the timing of the U.S. travel meeting this week and making the most of everyone's time. Literally, Ken was the first person to step in and say, "I'm going to come back. This is a priority." So, thank you, Ken, for that.

I also want to thank you, Sam, and all of the TTAB. As many of you have heard me say, I am so fortunate; I get to come into this process after you all have done so much great work. And so, I get to be a wonderful validator for all of your efforts.

So, part of what I want to do today is to just catch you up from where we were last. We

got together on June 1st. We have done some good work together, and you have done excellent work as an Advisory Board working on some important priorities.

When we last met in person in Orlando, you made a set of recommendations. The Tourism Policy Council that Secretary Pritzker is the Co-Chair of, has met. They took up in detail each of the recommendations you had made to date. I want to give you a little sense of where we are, just at a very top-line version, and then, I will walk through some of the priorities that we are experiencing now as we start to look ahead to the remainder of the Administration and the next TTAB, and to also share with you some updates from BrandUSA.

So, you will recall from the June 1st meeting that you forwarded a set of recommendations on implementing and refining airport-specific action plans. I look forward to giving a broad-brush update on where we are on achieving the national goal in these airport-specific action

plans. We have Dan Tanciar here from CBP who has been the leader of that effort and just an extraordinary partner in trying to provide excellent service, because our private sector colleagues have helped show the way.

You have asked us to take a focus on expanding Trusted Traveler programs to more partner countries. Again, we are lucky that we have Assistant Secretary Raul Perales here, who can speak more about.

But I was fortunate to be at WTN in London where the UK and entry into Global Entry is an excellent example of how we continue to make progress in key markets.

You talked to us about maintaining progress on world-class visa processing, and I guess now that we know that it is the Ed Ramotowski Fan Club, I can tell you that there has been a wonderful input and Ed will have a great update on that.

You talked to us about expanding and protecting the Visa Waiver Program. I think both

Sam and Ken spoke to that eloquently, and I know Raul will say more about it, but I couldn't agree more.

I echo all of your sentiments that that is something that has to be protected more than ever and agree with Ken that maintaining progress on all of these fronts was an overarching frame of your recommendations to the Secretary. And now more than ever, that is true.

So, there continues to be progress on all of these fronts. I look forward to being able to share the recommendations that will come out of today's meeting with the new Tourism Policy Council meeting, which we expect will be in January, which will help us ensure that we are making progress on all of these initiatives and consider some other conversations.

One of the things that came out of the last Tourism Policy Council meeting that Sam alluded to was, you know, Penny is so great about never accepting just the last accomplishment. I feel like she is a little bit like you, Sam. And

so, she said, AGreat. We just expanded visa validity with China from one to ten years for tourists and one to five years for students. So, all right, what are we going to do more about that?@

And so, she asked the interagency to put together a working group to really consider what we could do on the public sector to make the most of that opportunity. That working group was the genesis of an initiative that was picked up by the White House, that was announced at the end of September for one of the few strategic and economic partnerships that we will have with a cooperative relationship with the Chinese next year.

And so, we have announced a U.S.-China Year of Tourism for 2016. For all of you who know this so much better than I do, China is such a tremendous market opportunity for us. You know, attracting only 2 percent of the share, representing the second-biggest spending here in the United States, we see this as an opportunity to really use the high-level focus from both governments to work very deeply and engage deeply

with our private sector to really bring about that kind of coordination and alignment, to be responsive to not only creating accelerated opportunities for greater market share, but also to reflect on the lessons that we have heard from the Chinese when Penny got us together through the Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade that said, AWe=re more likely to come if you can be better prepared to welcome us.@

I think, through the leadership of BrandUSA and partnership with many other industry associates, there is an opportunity. And we look forward to engaging the next TTAB strategically around some of the opportunities that may exist in this market.

And following up on a very productive meeting yesterday that really started to get the best thinking of how we can not only best promote the United States, but to ensure that on the government side we are doing what we can with our assets to be more welcoming and what the private sector can do, so that we can put our best foot

forward.

On the national goal, which is another kind of focus of our time since we last met, there was a call where the TTAB accepted the recommendations that were surfaced by the working group that was led by John Sprouls, that Marriott and Enterprise, Greg Stubblefield and Kathleen until she left, and their customer experts had put together a set of recommendations. I am pleased to say the government has accepted those recommendations. DHS will be accepting the findings and adapting their surveys. Commerce, through the SIAT, will accept the findings and adopt the recommendations.

And so, you will see from the government side that early next year we will be sharing questions and being able to create the common baseline, so we can measure progress against performance on the government side.

The next critical step of this activity is to really engage the private sector, so that we can share responsibility in the airports and at the

national level for really delivering on a best-in-class goal vis-a-vis our world competitors.

And so, we look forward to continuing these conversations to get your best thinking on how to best approach the private sector on this shared goal. And so, I look forward to being able to update on that after we report to the President in April,

I think on the next kind of critical piece of work, where some of the recommendations today will be a tremendous help is that another priority through the TPC is celebrating the Centennial activities, not just of the National Park Service, but all of the public lands and waterways, and how we can use that as further enticement and aspirational motivator for international travel to the United States and the critical role that they will play.

We will also use that as an opportunity to engage in best practice sharing with our Chinese counterparts and really be able to adapt the thrust

of natural resources with a tourism lens in an exchange of that sort

I want to just give a moment to give a shoutout to Chris Thompson. I was on the phone with Sam and John Sprouls earlier this week. Chris Thompson is probably one the most dedicated leaders I have ever met in BrandUSA, which I will talk about in a minute, who has been doing extraordinary work.

But, like Ken, Chris was going to go to extraordinary measures to be here, but didn't have quite the flexibility to do so. And so, he wanted me to express on his behalf his commitment to the work that you do, his appreciation for it, and to talk a little bit about BrandUSA because they have put together, as I think everybody knows, a large-format film that will be world-premiered on February 10th. It will be aired here in Washington and, then, it will have a world premiere on the 12th. Then, we expect to use it in China as well.

It really is an extraordinary reflection of iconic American assets. So, it is a nice synergy with the earlier kind of efforts of

the Centennial. And I have a little cheatsheet from Chris that I want to make sure I share.

So, I think it is clear that their activities are making a significant, immeasurable impact. They are keenly focused on executing against a five-year strategic plan which they feel like they are able to do because their funding was secured a year ahead of time, and it has really given them the opportunity to maximize their own efforts.

Although they have not officially reported fiscal year 2015 results, there are some preliminary results. They have expanded the consumer campaign to cover ten key markets which generate 80 percent of all international travel to the U.S. During fiscal year >16, BrandUSA is focusing the Consumer USA Marketing Campaign on 14 markets that generate nearly 85 percent of all inbound travel to the U.S.; plus, 14 trade-only markets.

The partner base has expanded by 11 percent of >14 to >15 and 600 percent since fiscal

year >12, from 89 partners to 339 partners in >13 and 475 in >14 and more than 500 through >15. So, they are making a tremendous contribution. They are a wonderful private sector partner to our efforts. They are going to be critical to the Year of Tourism. And so, I know that Chris wanted to make sure that you had a chance to hear how well they are doing.

I want to just close by talking about how well we are doing. We are so lucky to have Ron Erdmann and our data team to really talk about where we are in data.

In your packets for today's meeting, you will see the new NTTO forecast issued in October for the top 20 countries, for 2015 through 2020. So, you will see that the forecast shows that total international arrivals may reach over 90 million by 2020, a 20 percent increase over the 2014 totals. So, I think it is important to understand that we are trending in the right direction. It makes a point, I think, for maintaining progress. Certainly, we have our office here to answer any

questions that you have on that.

With that, I just want to offer my thanks again and say I look forward to hearing from my colleagues from the interagency who have much more in-depth kind of tidbits about the work that they are doing.

And thank you again.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Thank you, Kelly. We really do appreciate that update.

Any quick questions for Kelly before we move on?

I guess I had one. So, maybe I could just jump in with that. You referenced SIAT in your remarks. I am curious as to where we are on SIAT funding. Is there a change in status?

MS. CRAIGHEAD: Aren=t you glad you came?

(Laughter.)

CHAIR GILLILAND: Yes. Yes, welcome back.

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: The fiscal 2016 budget asks for an additional \$2

million.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Can you get a little closer to the microphone, Ken?

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: The fiscal 2016 budget asks for an additional \$2 million in fiscal >16, the President=s budget. That would take funding for the SIAT to roughly \$4 million, the 2 plus 2, 4.4.

As you know, the fiscal >16 year budget is being discussed right now on the Hill.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Right.

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: So, we don=t have an answer to the question of what will occur in >16, although, again, the request was made in the >16 budget.

Were it to be accepted in the >16 budget, then the operating assumption is it would, then, carry forward into >17. But the first-order issue is, what do we hear back from the Hill, which we should know in a couple of weeks.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. All right. Thanks for that, Ken. Okay. Thanks, Ken. I

appreciate it.

If there aren=t any other quick questions for Kelly, then we will move on to our review of recommendations from the various subcommittees. To lead off that set of discussions, Todd Davidson, my colleague here to the right of me, will talk us through the BrandUSA recommendations.

Todd?

MEMBER DAVIDSON: Thank you, Sam.

I commented, when I walked into the meeting this morning, that this is how you make sure your agenda stays on schedule; you set me next to Sam and give him the gavel.

(Laughter.)

I am a proud charter member of the Ed Ramotowski Fan Club and have certainly enjoyed my working relationship not only with Ed, but with all of our ex officios and certainly our colleagues at the Department of Commerce.

It has been an honor for this group of folks to serve on your BrandUSA Subcommittee, Sam,

and we were honored to be invited to serve this TTAB in this capacity.

You know, we in the industry here in the U.S. often refer to our collaboration as kind a four-legged stool, is often referenced, three- or four-legs. I tend to use a four-legged stool with the idea that, of course, the TTAB with their work on the policy side, the U.S. Travel Association with their work on industry, Advocacy Brand USA with marketing, and, of course, our colleagues with the Department of Commerce, the NTTO, and the ex officios that are part of the Tours Policy Council, as a fourth leg in that stool.

So, for us, as your BrandUSA Subcommittee, we saw this as an opportunity for one of those legs to offer some advice for strengthening the relationship between two of the other legs, that being BrandUSA and our colleagues at the Department of Commerce.

We held several in-person and telephonic Subcommittee meetings. We consulted with Commerce staff, BrandUSA staff, BrandUSA

partners, of which, as Kelly noted, there are many, going from 89 to over 500.

We have reviewed federal law that was deemed applicable to our recommendations. We also reviewed additional legal sources, as we wrestled with definitions and interpretations and the like. And so, we thought it worth looking at some additional sources as well.

I want to give a very special thank you to the staff at both the Department of Commerce and BrandUSA. They worked diligently with us as we were, in essence, kind of interviewing them for what is working and what is not and where can we find efficiencies.

And that leads me into what our key objectives were for our Subcommittee. First and foremost, we wanted to make sure that we were optimizing the operational efficiencies for both. You know, we saw a great opportunity here to make sure that we were maximizing the funds available on both sides, both Commerce and BrandUSA. Obviously, time needs to be spent at testing for

those values and in reviewing the submissions for the matching grant, which are objectives are primarily focused -- or our recommendations, rather, are primarily focused. But it is certainly about both organizations achieving organizational and operational efficiencies.

We wanted to make sure we were optimizing the timeliness, the predictability of cashflow for BrandUSA, and we want to make sure that are optimizing and enabling all levels and types of partnerships. It is in the Travel Promotion Act that the work of BrandUSA is to benefit all 50 states, all five territories. That comes with various budget sizes and various opportunities for folks to be able to partner with BrandUSA.

At the end of the day, if I were to sum up our key objectives -- and I will probably steal from one of our Subcommittee members, Mike Gallagher=s comment -- it is we are taking a good thing and wanting to make it great. You know, this is working well. This has been working well. It has been working well because the teams, both

teams, have been very professional. They have been very fair. They have been very diligent.

We saw this as an opportunity to go in with the reauthorization and do a review and make some recommendations for how we could, then, enhance operational efficiencies. So, we looked at two things. We looked at process and we looked at policies that were governing this matching-grant submission process.

So, as it relates to the process, the current situation is the Travel Promotion Act of 2009 -- this is the initial Act that set up BrandUSA -- is what also creates the fund, the \$100 million fund. It is available to BrandUSA, and that fund is within the Department of Treasury.

The law also references quarterly adjustments that can be made to the fund by the Secretary based on the actual amounts that are received. It talks about transfers that can be made on an up-to-quarterly basis from the Secretary to the fund.

We believe there is an opportunity here

to look at the interpretations on this in terms of, could this mean quarterly transfers to BrandUSA that are, then, reconciled through their matching grant submissions. Now there are challenges with that, no doubt, and they are not within the Travel Promotion Act. They actually reside in another piece of federal law called the Anti-Deficiency Act.

Reading the Anti-Deficiency Act is what helps Ken sleep on airplanes when he is flying back from Brasilia.

(Laughter.)

But, in applying the Anti-Deficiency Act, in taking that into consideration, we run into things like, for example, the 70/30 in-kind-to-cash ratio that is required in the Travel Promotion Act has to be maintained throughout the process. Okay? You can't have one that is a whole bunch of in-kind if there is no cash. Okay? There has got to be some cash to go with that in-kind when they are submitting their matching grant request. So, that ratio has to be

maintained.

And there has to be that attestation, the documentation for those submissions submitted in advance and reviewed in advance and accepted in advance before the funds can be released. That is some of the repercussions of currently the Anti-Deficiency Act.

So, the question for us is, is there a way to make the cashflow for BrandUSA more predictable? Our recommendation is that, given the passage of the Travel Promotion, Enhancement, and Modernization Act, we would recommend that there be a review of the legal interpretations regarding the authorization of the transfer of funds, see if there is language in the reauthorization of BrandUSA, specifically the Travel Promotion, Enhancement and Modernization Act, that would enable this. I would go one step further and say, and if not, as we think four years from now to the next reauthorization, is there language that this future TTAB should recommend be considered?

Also related to process, the current situation within the Travel Promotion Act of 2009, it is silent on the procedures for determining the fair market value of projects. It says it needs to be done, but it is silent on how that gets done.

And the current policies between Commerce and BrandUSA stipulate that both Commerce and BrandUSA re currently doing what I would call very thorough, very comprehensive, I would even use the word exhaustive, attestation of each matching grant submission.

However, the Travel Promotion, Enhancement, and Modernization Act of 2014 actually increased the financial regimen on the BrandUSA Board members when they are appointed by the Commerce Secretary. So, we believe there is an opportunity here to modify this process while maintaining good governance, actually honoring the strength in governance that was put in place with the passage of the Travel Promotion, Enhancement, and Modernization Act.

If you look at the challenges, the

current process involves about 14 Commerce staff. It is estimated at about 1,000 hours annually that are spent reviewing the matching grant submissions. And BrandUSA is hiring a third-party vendor with costs in the neighborhood of almost a half-a-million dollars a year to evaluate those.

So, given the heightened financial acumen that is now required on appointments that are made to the BrandUSA Board, we believe there is an opportunity to revise the process, so that the attestation of fair market value for each of those matching grant submissions remain the fully responsibility of BrandUSA and that the Department of Commerce is permitted to implement a system of random checks and audits throughout the year. Related to that, BrandUSA should also develop an internal review and approval process for those matching fund submissions that would subsequently, then, be adopted by their full Board.

As it relates to policy, the U.S. Government has interpreted contributions as it relates to cash as meaning donated. Current

policies governing matching fund submissions state that cash can only be provided by a partner to BrandUSA via a Letter of Agreement or as a paid sponsorship.

The challenges with this, of course, when it goes through the LOA, is that cash contributions cannot be tied to a specific -- that is a keyword -- specific promotional activity. There are some non-binding, broad requests that are outlined in the LOA, but they are not binding and they are not specific.

Industry partners find it difficult, if not impossible, to be able to track ROI resulting from some of these investments, and there are actually government tourism organizations that are prohibited from signing the LOA because it is deemed a non-binding, almost donation because of that interpretation.

I will tell you that in my personal case in Oregon, when I submitted the LOA to our Department of Justice for review, they came back and the recommendation to me, because they help me

mitigate risk, is ADon=t sign this.@ Now I elected to sign it because, again, their position was to help me mitigate risk, but I had the option of signing it anyway. I chose to do that, which I can=t believe I am announcing on public record -- (laughter) -- but I chose to do it, and our attorney, because he is very, very good at what he does, basically, pushed back on me and said, AWhy are you signing this? How do you know they will deliver on the things that you are putting in here in these broad, non-binding requests?@

And I said, ABecause they want my money next year.@ This is a relationship. This is a partnership. So, there was a bit of a step of faith that was involved in that.

I also polled members of the National Council of State Tourism Directors at a recent meeting and I asked, AHow many of you cannot sign the LOA in its current form?@ And of the roughly 40 Tourism Directors that were in the room that were aware of the situation and could answer the question, I had a dozen that raised their hands and

said they could not currently sign the Letter of Agreement.

Therefore, our recommendation is that we should amend current policy and recognize cash as a commitment to BrandUSA, not a donation, and that it be eligible for federal matching funds and able to be tied to specific programs and deliverables.

There is actually a definition from Black=s Law Dictionary that we contained in our letter of recommendation that we feel reinforces the case for this recommendation because it acknowledges the word Acontribution@ as being a shared responsibility for a project, not a donation.

Either that or amend the current Letter of Agreement to actually enable partners of BrandUSA to identify the specific elements of BrandUSA=s strategic marketing plan that would be implemented through the LOA and additional specific implementation tactics. In essence, it becomes a contract rather than a Letter of

Agreement.

The next policy is related to what we call co-optable in-kind media. This one may have read a little differently to you in the letter because it basically said: we like what you are doing. Please continue to do it.

We thought that was important, though, to get on the record because there was clarity that was needed around the specific recommendation. There were elements of it that were not completely clear.

This is an opportune time for me in my comments just to say that, for all the comments that were submitted through the Google Docs -- and I share Sam=s sentiment. Archana, it is a beautiful step forward. It is great to be able to go in and monitor the comments that are coming in. Nearly all the comments were grammatical in nature and we accepted those wholesale. Every one of those was brought right into -- I am happy to have my writing and the Subcommittee=s writing reviewed.

There was one substantive comment

specifically related to this that made it clear that additional clarity was still needed. And so, we were able to address that and bring the revised letter forward to you today, and that is the final document that you have in your folder, where we add additional clarity to the fact that, if a media outlet -- and let me be very specific -- if The London Times comes to BrandUSA with \$100,000 worth of media space and said, AWe want to donate this to you,@ and BrandUSA is, then, submitting that to the Department of Commerce as part of their matching grant submission, they are receiving \$100,000 of in-kind value for that donated media space.

BrandUSA is, then, able to use that media space as they deem fit as it relates to implementing their strategic marketing plan. Okay? They can co-op it with partners. They can put just part of their feel it, live it, touch it, you know, whatever their advertising campaign is, or they could use it to co-op with their partners, because they control the content, which is a

different part of the process than if I were to come to them as Travel Oregon and say, AI would like to give you a page in my Travel Guide and it is going to have an Oregon picture on it, but I am going to put your logo over here.@ We have other processes in place that deal with that. This is not that process, and that is the clarity we wanted to make sure we brought forward.

So, that is why the recommendation for this one basically says keep on keeping on; we like what you are doing; we are in agreement on what this is; we have clarified what any of the questions were, and we want to see this one continue.

The final recommendation is related to BRANDUSA retaining a firm experienced in the field of media evaluation to be able to determine the fair market value of in-kind donated media. The challenge is, again, as I mentioned earlier, they are spending \$400 to \$500 thousand a year with a third-party vendor to do that evaluation.

However, this is media that is being contributed, not purchased. And the standard

industry practice to determine the value of contributed media space is that media outlet=s published rate card. That is what gets used. It addresses frequency. It addresses reach. It addresses size, all the things that we talk about, size or length, whatever it might be.

And also, when you think about it, ad equivalency using rate card is often used as a tool for evaluating public relations programs really around the world. So, we believe there is an opportunity here to amend the current policies and guidelines and allow the media outlet=s published rate card, rather than this third-party evaluation, to establish the fair market value of in-kind contributed media space.

So, with that, Sam, I will turn it back to your musical phone.

(Laughter.)

CHAIR GILLILAND: All right. Well, thanks, Todd, for laying that all out for us. It did seem like it was an improved use of your allotted time.

(Laughter.)

So, thank you for that.

What I would like to do is open up the floor for questions and concerns from the Board or, obviously, one other leg of the stool being Commerce, if there are questions or concerns from Commerce around this, given that you will be a party to these recommendations. Questions? Concerns?

(No response.)

Wow, that is terrific. All right.

Now, now, now, we are out of time. No.

(Laughter.)

Okay. All right. All right, go ahead, Ken. Go ahead, Ken.

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: Just a couple of clarifying questions. The recommendation with respect to payments during disbursements based on estimates, is that what I heard?

MEMBER DAVIDSON: That is the way the law reads. I am just citing law.

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: And did

you talk about what that estimate had to be? How does one codify an estimate? What is the structure of an estimate? So that if we were to receive such estimate, I sort of know what to do with it.

MEMBER DAVIDSON: Yes. There were a couple of places here, Sam, that certainly needed -- or, Sam? -- sorry, Ken, in subsequent conversations I think as we looked to implementing the recommendations. One was the reference to Secretary by some is believed to be Secretary of Treasurer. However, there=s also some who feel that the 3B MOU that Treasury has with Commerce, that authority may have been able to be delegated to Secretary Pritzker.

As it relates to the estimates, again, if we move forward with this, that is something that we would look at as a subsequent recommendation from the Subcommittee because we just took the language right out of law that says it could be done based on estimates. We are assuming it is estimates of receipts, but how those are actually derived was unclear to us.

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: And the recommendation that relates to the BrandUSA attests to fair market value, and then, we reach agreement with BrandUSA, what that is basically saying is we sit down with BrandUSA and reach agreement on that which they would do to increase our confidence in the quality of their assessments of fair market value, which would, then, enable us to spot-check. That is the premise that is underlying this recommendation.

MEMBER DAVIDSON: That becomes the demonstrable execution of the additional financial acumen that been asked for --

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: Right.

MEMBER DAVIDSON: -- by the members, and I couldn't have put it better myself, Ken. Thank you.

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: Thank you so much, Todd.

MEMBER DAVIDSON: You do jet lag well. I'm proud of you.

(Laughter.)

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: Great.
Those are my questions.

MEMBER DAVIDSON: Okay. Thank you,
Ken.

DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY HYATT: Thank
you.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. Any other
questions for this Subcommittee on the
recommendations they have set forth? Concerns?

(No response.)

Okay. Well, then, I am going to ask if
there are any objections to adopting the new
recommendations.

Archana, you are going to keep me
straight and narrow on the words that I am using,
so that we don't have to come back and have another
conference call to actually approve these again.

But I am going to ask, are there any
objections to adopting the new recommendations?

(No response.)

Okay. Hearing none, I proclaim the
recommendations adopted by the TTAB.

Are we all set then? Are we good?
Okay.

And my huge appreciation to the BrandUSA Subcommittee for their work. It has been a long time coming. You made very fast progress on this, and I sense that we slowed you down a little bit over the course of the two years.

MEMBER DAVIDSON: But it is a better work product.

(Laughter.)

CHAIR GILLILAND: Well, but, yes, it was pretty darn good in the very beginning, too. So, we really appreciate your work, your patience, your perseverance, resilience in getting these across the line. So, thank you so much for that.

All right. We will, then, move forward with the first of two recommendations that are coming from the Cultural and Natural Heritage Subcommittee, and to lead the discussion of the first letter, Jerry Jacobs.

Jerry?

MEMBER JACOBS: Thank you, Sam.

Let me start by just echoing what has already been stated around the table. It has been a real honor and privilege to work with such a committed group of professionals, and I found this a tremendously rewarding experience. So, thank you.

I am going to start by thanking by Committee, my Co-Chair Bob Lynch, who is on the phone I believe, and our Subcommittee members, Olga, Maryann, Sherry, Brian, Kirk, and along with Vicky and John from Interior. Thank you for all your support.

I am going to talk about our Committee=s letter on domestic tourism and, then, my Co-Chair Bob Lynch, assuming technology allows it, will talk about the arts letter.

Domestic tourism has been a subject at a number of our meetings to date, and it has been a subject of robust debate. We now feel that we have a letter that works for all concerned parties.

The first part of the letter addresses whether or not the promotion of domestic travel is

part of the TTAB mission, and we conclude that it is. It also includes our recommendation that the Secretary of Commerce lead an interagency initiative to advance the promotion of domestic tourism. And we break down how to go about that into four basic steps.

The first is to establish a domestic tourism dashboard and aggregate and facilitate data to ensure the continual progress on the domestic tourism conversation. So, a dashboard would give us a tool and a mechanism to measure metrics. We know there's no shortage of sources of relevant data, but there is a shortage of aggregated or accessible data.

We further recommend working with a third party like U.S. Travel to capture data from the many existing sources. This, of course, is because often it came out in our conversations it was a good idea, but who is going to pay for it; who is going to do it? And we recommend going to somebody like the U.S. Travel Association to get that work done.

The second step would be to create the first-ever Domestic Tourism Summit. Now we appreciate the comment that it is hard to silo domestic and international travel, but domestic travel is important enough to the economy to deserved focused Summit of its own.

The third step would be to promote the multiple economic, social, and multi-cultural benefits of domestic travel and tourism with an included focus on diverse populations to communities to attract visitors and to our citizens to the National Travel and Tourism Office. We believe in opportunity to market the physical and mental health benefits of travel. So, again, looking not just at the immediate data around economic impact, but also around wellness and the effects of domestic travel on wellness in America.

The fourth step would be to bring to light the importance of minority and cultural sectors in domestic tourism. Our overall minority population in the U.S. is increasing, and we recommend data collection, tourism research, and

marketing efforts that are specific to these diverse populations. We again recommend working with a third party like U.S. Travel to try to aggregate that data.

We took the full TTAB comments into heart and incorporated most into our letters. I would be happy to go through, if asked, the specific edits.

But that is, more or less, my recommendation for today.

CHAIR GILLILAND: All right. Well, thanks, Jerry.

Were there any specific comments rejected that you might like to cover off?

MEMBER JACOBS: Sure. The only one that we did not work in dealt with the question around siloing, whether this should be specifically about domestic travel or should we include international travel. And again, as I stated in my comments, we felt that domestic was a large enough component of the economy, that it deserved a specific reference in our letter.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. So, I will, then, open it up for any comments, questions, concerns for Jerry and the Cultural and Natural Heritage Subcommittee. Questions? Comments?

Mike?

Can we get a microphone to Mike?

MEMBER GALLAGHER: So, to add to your domestic problem or stuff, yesterday we had this Project Time Off meeting with U.S. Travel. It has come a long way now where it really is a domestic program to help our program get more people to take their time off. We are taking less vacation now than anytime in our history; as a matter of fact, four days less. Twenty days we used to take about ten years ago. Now it is about 16 days.

So, U.S. Travel has a very intelligent and funded program to change the culture of America about using their paid time off. Now they don't necessarily have to go on vacation on that and travel. They can fix up their house or do whatever they want to do with it. But the main thing is it will be a domestic program that will help us.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. Excellent.
Thanks for that, Mike.

Any other questions or comments,
concerns about the contents of this letter?

Dean?

MEMBER RUNYAN: Thank you very much.

I want to commend the Natural Resources
Committee and the work they did on this. I think
this letter has come quite a ways from the initial
drafts. From my perspective, it really answers a
lot of the concerns I have.

You may have remembered at the last
meeting I didn't attend, but I submitted a letter
that I was not convinced that we should do a
domestic tourism goal at all. And I think at this
point it seems fine to me.

I just have a couple of little things
here. In particular, with regard to the Summit,
I am always worried that we are creating more
meetings that we don't really need. There's a
couple of national meetings that already occur that
seem to me that could be used in this function and

might be mentioned here as a possibility.

One is the Marketing Outlook Forum; for example, the other is the TTRA annual meetings that are both annual events that focus substantially on domestic travel and I think could be, at least initially, a forum for this kind of discussion. So, some sentence or something along those lines, it seems to me that would be beneficial.

But, otherwise, sure.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay, Jerry, are you amenable to perhaps referencing these other meetings maybe parenthetically as a possibility for offering up a forum like this?

MEMBER JACOBS: Yes. Yes, absolutely. We can work together to craft a sentence, subject to some sort of approval here, that we could work into that letter that would reference looking first to whether or not there are existing opportunities to add to the agenda of an existing conference to put this item on, as at least a way of initiating the conversation. Yes, I am happy to do that.

MEMBER RUNYAN: Okay.

CHAIR GILLILAND: All right. Well, terrific then.

Any other -- oh, Rossi?

MEMBER RALENKOTTER: Just one comment. When you get into domestic tourism, it is a big category. If you look at what we do at U.S. Travel, it is really three components of the advocacy. One is international; the other is domestic travel from point to point, and then, the other is meetings and conventions, which I think we need to include in this if we are going to move forward with the domestic side. It also folds over into, the meetings and conventions side, into international.

So, if this goes forward and is accepted, you need to think about what we would be doing or what we would direct Commerce to do relative to that. It also impacts the research side of it. So, trying to exclude those two, because a convention delegate is a visitor, so we have to remember that.

MEMBER JACOBS: Right.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. And, Rossi, you are suggesting we be mindful of that as opposed to necessarily editing the contents of the recommendation?

MEMBER RALENKOTTER: Well, I think that if you look at just that definition, are you just going to focus on those who take vacations versus the other side of the business which is conventions is 20 percent of the business, when you look at southern Nevada. So, it is a large chunk of economic impact as well as on the international side. We spend a lot of resources in the marketing and doing the research of that industry.

So, I think you can't exclude it because it is all interrelated. Somebody who comes to a convention can at some other time be a visitor for a vacation. So, any efforts that you would make to enhance or increase domestic travel on the leisure, you are also need see how it is going to impact the convention side.

MEMBER JACOBS: We don't reference vacation travel. We reference tourism. To us at

least, that would include what you are describing. But, if you would feel more comfortable, we can put in Aincluding@.

MEMBER RALENKOTTER: I think you need to identify it because that is the challenge. Meetings mean business, and we are all fighting the negative that is around some of the meeting activities that are held in the United States. So, it would help to further define what is domestic tourism.

MEMBER RUNYAN: Looking on the first page at the strategy statements, they really don't focus explicitly on convention and meetings travel. They appear more oriented to leisure travel. But it does make sense, it seems to me, to include that.

And then, the last paragraph, I think if one just inserted in the second line, Asignificant increases in domestic tourism across all 50 states,@ Adomestic tourism and meetings travel,@ or something along that line, then that would insert that objective into the letter.

PARTICIPANT: Could it be something as simple as defining domestic tourism in that same paragraph at that same place, A domestic tourism, including leisure and meetings and conventions, @ comma?

CHAIR GILLILAND: That sounds like a good -- Jerry, are you okay with that?

MEMBER JACOBS: I am punch-drunk at this point.

(Laughter.)

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. So, with that, any other comments, concerns, questions? I think we have two minor edits to make to this letter, which Jerry has said they will get accomplished. Anything else?

(No response.)

Okay. Well, then, I will again ask if there are any objections to adopting the new recommendations pending the agreed-upon edits? Any objections?

(No response.)

Okay. Hearing none, then I proclaim

the recommendations again with those pending edits adopted by the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board. Okay. Fantastic, yes.

(Applause.)

Again, another one that has been a long time in coming, and you have been persistent, resilient, and we really appreciate the work of the entire Subcommittee. So, thanks, and thanks for leading that, Jerry.

With that, we will move onto the second letter of recommendation on the arts from the Cultural and Natural Heritage Subcommittee, and Bob Lynch I believe is on the phone to walk us through that.

Bob, can you take us through that?

THE OPERATOR: Give us one moment. I believe he is still calling in right now and he will be available momentarily.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Oh, okay. Okay.

THE OPERATOR: Thank you.

(Pause.)

MS. SAHGAL: Hi, Bob, this is Archana.

I know that you can hear me, but, unfortunately, we cannot hear you. So, if you would be so kind as to call into the phone number that I just dialed. And if you are still having issues, feel free to text me or email and I will follow. I did get your email that said that Narric is also welcome to jump in along with Jerry Jacobs.

(Pause.)

CHAIR GILLILAND: We will give it just one more minute to see if we can make our way through this technical difficulty and, if not, then Jerry will walk us through the recommendations.

THE OPERATOR: Everything has been resolved. So, Bob should be joining us momentarily.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay.

MEMBER LYNCH: Hi, Jerry.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Bob, you're there?
We can hear you now.

MEMBER LYNCH: Sure.

CHAIR GILLILAND: We can hear you now.
This is Sam, and I had just a few moments ago

introduced you as offering up or providing the commentary and the recommendations for the second letter from the Culture and Natural Heritage Subcommittee specifically focused on the arts.

So, Bob, if you want to take it away, we are listening.

MEMBER LYNCH: Great. Actually, I just want to say that all I can hear is a slight echo of what anybody is saying. So, can you hear me okay? Am I clear?

CHAIR GILLILAND: Yes, we can hear you very well.

MEMBER LYNCH: All right.

Well, first, I thank Jerry for -- I am getting some feedback. So, I will just keep going unless somebody wants to yell and stop me.

So, thanks, Jerry, and to the whole Subcommittee.

And also, Narrić Rome should be there near Jerry in case any questions need to come up that need to be answered that I don=t hear.

I am out here in San Jose. Sorry I

can't be with you. But I am actually here at a Mayors meeting on, among other things, cultural tourism. So, I am doing the work, but out in the field.

So, our Subcommittee is pleased to present its next letter with a focus on arts, culture, and natural heritage. Recommendations included in this letter speak to leverage this economic strength of the arts and culture to help reach the President's goal of 100 million international visitors by 2020.

And the letter contains a set of recommendations that offer significant opportunities to both protect and enhance the arts and culture component as important drivers of our travel and tourism economy, participating as content and destination drivers.

The tourism market and the cultural product itself is something I just want to say a word about this and our letter. The arts, culture, and natural heritage destinations are somewhat unique in that they are very often nonprofit and

sometimes government entities, like our great city concert halls, for example, many of them.

Therefore, they depend on a mix of public and private sector investment. The typical nonprofit arts organization in the United States derives approximately 60 percent of its revenue from ticket sales and sponsorship, 30 percent from private sector contributions, individuals, foundations, corporations in that order, and 10 percent government, federal, state, and local.

That is actually what I am out here talking with the Mayors about because they need to figure out ways to help enhance that earned marketing, for example, or the government for that mix of support.

In the park area, the national area, without that same kind of ticket revenue, national and state parks have a much higher reliance on government funding. So, it is critical support from federal and state governments. Even small fluctuations in ticketed revenue can mean deficits for many of these entities which are major tourism

drivers and the contents that are attracting people to come here.

So, what we see is that with many of our most authentic and cherished tourism destinations, depending on this complex mosaic of funding sources, we think that both a better understanding and more rigorous tracking of this revenue picture will provide an early-warning system on their health, vitality, and ability.

And so, as part of this letter, we have a recommendation which dovetails with the domestic tourism letter which suggests a dashboard to provide early warning when resources are weakened.

So, let me first touch upon the federal funding for cultural content component. That includes national federal organizations like the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

The data paints a dramatic picture of the growth and strength of the entire arts sector in America. The BEA data of the Department of

Commerce is at the top of showing this dramatic growth.

The not-for-profit piece of this sector, which contains the nationwide treasure trove of authentic experiences in both rural and urban areas all across the country, has expanded to some 100,000 cultural organizations over the last half-century. And this not-for-profit sector, however, continues to be undercapitalized and at risk.

So, we have this treasure. It is attracting people, but it continues to need some help from that mix of funding sources. So, we recommend to the Secretary that she use the substantial influence of her office, through the Tourism Policy Council, for example, and with her colleagues leading the Office of Management and Budget, to champion -- and I use that word Achampion,@ not Afund,@ but Achampion@ -- increased funding levels for the programs of other federal agencies that support the destination content that visitors come to America

to enjoy.

And these include the programs of groups like the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, all of which support the contents that increases this demand. And they are all across America in many of those 100,000 arts, music, theater, dance, literary, and festival organizations.

You may recall that we had convened and reached out to 85 national arts service organizations to ask them for input on this recommendation. That was the main hope that they had for Department of Commerce basically using the bully pulpit to say that this is an important thing for tourism in America, to have this content supported.

You will notice that we have footnoted some further background relating to these funding levels, and I thank Sam for his questions on that, and we have put that in there, and footnoted the Administration=s history of support for these

funding levels.

The federal cultural agencies, in particular, could also be very potent partners to support content and demand initiatives. We suggest that that dialog be an important thing to think about.

For example, with BrandUSA in its own marketing campaign, you will notice in the Land of Dreams, the wonderful Land of Dreams marketing materials, that very prominently music and dance and public arts and festivals and diversity in our American cultural riches are all featured there.

You could also feature the National Park Service, for example, including arts projects that are funded through the Imagine Your Parks Grant Program that is celebrating the anniversaries of both parks and the National Endowment for the Arts this year.

Another set of cultural destinations to highlight could be based on the projects recognized in the Save America=s Treasures Program, which is already investing in saving some of the cultural

treasures that we have that are at risk of deterioration, for example.

Engage the Partners in Tourism Alliance more fully is another recommendation. This is an alliance of 29 federal and private sector partners, and the Department of Commerce very much helps with this. So, we are saying continue and maybe increase this partnership with these organizations who focus on cultural and natural heritage policies.

It is already supported, as I said, in part by the Commerce Department. The actions could include expanding the policy agenda, including a listening tour of state, local, and regional arts agencies, along with the 500 Cultural Districts across the country. These are districts designated by either Governors or Mayors that are Cultural Districts of multiple cultural attractions that, then, allow visitors to come and take advantage of that. And we can engage them on effective practices and ways to work through the implementation of the President's National

Strategy.

Also, just more engagement of the federal cultural agents in the National Park Service and the Forest Service in an interagency dialog around the use and development of social media tools, to tell the stories, interpretation of landscapes, collections, places, buildings, both in the cultural and in the natural areas, for example.

Then, engage everybody, including 18- to 30-year-olds in order to nurture a new audience and appreciation of our cultural assets.

This recommendation is aligned with the National Travel and Tourism Strategy suggestion to expand the use of new technology and new media to provide customized visitor information for different cultures, ages, languages, and interests.

We also seek further implementation of the National Travel and Tourism Strategy. The Board recognizes the value of the broad cross-cutting positions that were already

articulated in the National Travel and Tourism Strategy, completed in 2012. We feel efforts should continue and expand the following recommendations that are excerpted directly from the Strategy, so not new; it is just that we are highlighting a few things that is in that large volume of information.

So, we are emphasizing conduct research to public and private partners. Hold a summit on travel and tourism. Again, already recommended, and annual travel and tourism events among the federal agencies and leaders of travel offices, destination management organizations, and trade associations. That is one. We did three.

The second one was promote regional tourism. ADevelop community-based tourism collaborations in key strategic destination markets, especially those with scenic byways, cultural resources, National Scenic and Historic Trails, Wild and Scenic Rivers, other natural and cultural attractions.@ I=m quoting.

APartner with local communities and

engage the tribes to promote tourism and provide cultural experiences where welcome and in the manner sensitive to cultural traditions and beneficial of the communities visited.@ That is right in there.

And then, the third one. A Partner with state, local, tribal, and territorial governments. Join federal tourism authorities and faith-based and activity-based promotional campaigns. Provide grants and technical assistance to qualified public sector entities to support their efforts to attract and serve additional visitors.@

So, those things support everything that we are thinking about related to cultural and natural tourism activity, and we simply reiterate them there to give them a highlight.

A couple of things that we have there for thoughts to think about, not necessarily commit to, but to think about recommendations surrounding exploration of the Capitals of Culture Initiative.

A number of comments that came from Board members were about a city focus as opposed

or in addition to rural and suburban kinds of activities. So, we recommend that the National Travel and Tourism Industries Office explore the concept -- explore -- of an annual designation of two American cities, a large one and a small one, as cultural capitals. This is a European concept modeled on the successful European Capitals of Culture Initiative and designed to highlight the richness/diversity of cultures, celebrate the contributions and arts and culture of specific cities, raise and enhance the profiles of tourism opportunities for those selected cities.

National organizations for local and state government, such as the United States Conference of Mayors and the National Lieutenant Governors Association, have both expressed -- and others, too -- interest in similar nationwide destination-building cultural projects. And they would be, and they have told us that they would be, eager to participate in a concept such as this and maybe actually be the ones to carry it out. So, try.

To conclude, as we have said before, these recommendations have been presented to the Board before. We have had the opportunity to have this letter looked at in the last two meetings and got a lot of great impact and a lot of great input.

I believe that we have incorporated all of the suggestions and edits that have come to our Subcommittee over the course of the year. We have gotten many from our Committee itself, all incorporated. Some folks have been very helpful. Dean Runyan gave us many, many edits and suggestions, and we have tried to incorporate all of them and Sam Gilliland=s most recently helpful suggestions on further exploration of some of the numbers that are in here. That is incorporated.

So, we are confident that, through the successful implementation of all of these recommendations, our significant arts and cultural assets and natural assets will continue to be one of the most important drivers of international and domestic visitation in the United States.

And I end it there, but am happy to take

any questions or, if I can't hear them, I will ask Narric Rome to jump in on that.

So, Jerry, I hope you heard all of that.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Yes. Thank you, Bob. We can hear you very, very well.

I will ask for any comments, questions, concerns for Bob or for Narric, who is here in the room, Jerry, and the rest of the CNH team. Any questions, comments, concerns?

(No response.)

Okay. Well, hearing none, then I will ask again if there are any objections to adopting these new recommendations. Any objections?

(No response.)

Okay. Well, hearing none, I proclaim the recommendations adopted by the TTAB.

Again, I want to express my appreciation to the Cultural and Natural Heritage Subcommittee for all their work on these two letters and, again, also, for their patience and perseverance in getting these over the line. I know we have reviewed them several times over the

past couple of meetings, as Bob mentioned. We really appreciate the work that has gone into this.

Okay. Well, thank you, Bob.

We are going to continue on then. We are at the point in the meeting where we would ordinarily be asking for public comment. There were no requests to make public comment at this meeting.

So, we are going to move on, then, to our ex officio updates. The first of those will be from the Director of the Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs for the Department of the Interior, John Blair.

John, thanks for joining us.

MR. BLAIR: Hi, everybody.

Sorry about that. I apologize for being late to the meeting. It is one of those weeks in Washington.

First of all, an update on the Secretary. This last summer in July she took an extended trip across Asia that was primarily focused on trying to bring an end to illegal

wildlife trafficking and the trafficking of ivory. But, as part of that trip, she did a number of events around travel and tourism in China that were very successful.

She partnered. BrandUSA put together an event for her where they showed clips of the IMAX film that they are going to be premiering in February. She gave remarks. There was a Q&A. And she did a big push to promote Chinese tourism to U.S. National Parks.

She filmed a short videos for something that I am going to call Youku, which we will assume is true, which is China=s largest video-hosting service that would be screening to promote travel to the U.S. and to the National Parks and public lands.

And then, she also took part in a U.S. Embassy of Beijing Independence Day celebration, which was an annual event with a lot of high-level Chinese officials and foreign diplomats, where she also spoke and promoted about the need to travel to the U.S., how wonderful it is here, and trying

to increase that Chinese tourism into the United States.

We are up and swinging with the promotion of the National Park Service Centennial. We kicked off the PR campaign back in April of 2015. Since then, there have been 2.63 billion public relations impressions around the National Centennial and Find Your Park across print media, TV, social media. In particular, there have been 1.89 million what we call Aengagements@ around the Centennial since the public PR campaign kicked off, and we are expecting, as we get closer into 2016, that we will only grow, hopefully, exponentially.

In September, we announced a new initiative for President Obama and his Administration called Every Kid in a Park. What this does is this provides every fourth grader in the country and his or her family with a free entry into all of our National Parks and Waters, trying to reduce another hurdle or reason why people aren't getting out onto our public lands, into our National Parks.

What we are hoping that we will do is, clearly, initially, it will probably affected these fourth graders= parks that are close to them, but we are hoping that that will be motivation for these families to get out and travel across the country on their vacations and across the summer to experience National Parks all across the country.

Beyond that, I have mentioned in the past to you that the Rose Bowl Parade on January 1st is going to be celebrating the National Centennial of the National Park Service. The theme is AFind Your Adventure@. AFind Your Park@ is the branding for the Centennial itself, but AFind Your Adventure@ is the theme for the parade.

Just a few weeks ago, they announced that Ken Burns, the documentarian who also did a wonderful documentary series on the National Parks, is going to be the Grand Marshal. So, we are excited about that.

And then, I have placed a hold on the Secretary=s calendar in hopes that she will be able

to participate for the BrandUSA IMAX premiere in February. And I am working with Todd and my team, Vicky, and others, to try to get the Secretary to participate in IPW in 2016 as well.

So, that is my brief, succinct presentation, and I am happy to answer any questions that you all have.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. Well, thanks, John.

Any questions for John?

(No response.)

MR. BLAIR: Don=t forget on social media, hashtag AFind Your Park@. Go look at the photos. You will be amazed.

Thank you.

CHAIR GILLILAND: All right. All right. Thanks, John. I do appreciate it.

So, we will now move on to the Department of Homeland Security and an update from Assistant Secretary Raul Perales.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY PERALES: All right, Sam. Thank you so much for the invitation.

And again, my congratulations to this Board, and, Sam, your leadership has been fantastic. It has been a great partnership that we hope to continue with the Board, the leadership, et cetera.

And, Kelly, thanks for all of the work that you have done. You have really brought new life into this endeavor.

And thanks for the shoutout for all the things that we are doing together. It is really very exciting.

I want to jump very quickly to talk about giving us an update on where we are on some of the work that we are doing on CBP and TSA, but also get into some of the other substantive issues that we are dealing with, considering, as you said, it is one of those weeks in Washington. Well, tell me about it.

(Laughter.)

So, I am assuming that folks around the table will want to hear some updates on that. So, I will go very quickly go into this.

I have my colleague Dan Tanciar here and my colleagues from TSA around the table, who can also help answer any questions specific to those programs. So, I will just go through this very quickly.

On CBP, I wanted to start by giving some numbers. In 2014, we had more than 107 million travelers, international travelers, arriving at U.S. airports, which is an increase of 4.7 percent from the previous year. In spite of this increase in the number of international visitors, waiting times, average waiting times were down 13 percent at the top 10 U.S. airports in 2014. At JFK, for example, which receives the largest volume of international travelers, the average wait time was down 28 percent from 2013 levels.

Almost 4 million people have access to DHS Trusted Traveler Programs, which include, of course, CBP's Global Entry. Global Entry, of course, is now available to U.S. citizens, U.S. lawful permanent residents, Mexican Nationals, and the citizens of Germany, Netherlands, Panama,

South Korea, and just announced a couple of weeks ago, the citizens of the UK. Canadian citizens and residents can use Global Entry kiosks through membership in the NEXUS Program, as you all know.

CBP is, additionally, operating pilot programs in Israel, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, allowing a limited number of citizens from those countries to take advantage of Global Entry.

The program is now available at 59 airports, 46 domestic and 13 preclearance locations. And travelers have used these kiosks 181 million times since the program has started. We like those numbers.

Since the beginning of 2014, CBP has signed joint statements on Global Entry with Japan, Singapore, Peru, and Colombia. Colleagues are now working with these countries to develop the infrastructure to support this expansion.

CBP has also resumed Global Entry discussions with Brazil -- Ken, you have been a great help in this regard -- and has recently discussed a program with Costa Rica. CBP has also

had some level of engagement with Chile, Finland, France, India, Switzerland, Taiwan, and the United Arab Emirates on expanded Global Entry.

Switching very quickly to PreCheck, this past fiscal year, PreCheck operations began at 47 new airports. Today PreCheck has more than 463 lanes at 167 U.S. airports. In fiscal year >15, TSA screened over 200 million passengers through PreCheck expedited screening lanes.

The TSA continues efforts to dramatically expand the number of travelers enrolled in PreCheck or one of CBP=s Trusted Traveler Programs. For instance, as of early November, more than 5.9 million individuals were enrolled in PreCheck or one of DHS=s Trusted Traveler Programs, with combined enrollments up b nearly 1.8 million travelers in the last six months. So, we really have seen a good spike in the numbers.

Working with the existing enrollment service providers, TSA has been able to achieve a 20-percent increase in average daily enrollments,

which now exceeds 5,100 per day. And, of course, we want more. Why? On September 14, TSA discontinued Managed Inclusion II as a daily operational practice at all airports across the system.

Since the beginning of June, TSA has increased by nearly 30 percent the number of daily travelers receiving TSA PreCheck who are enrolled in a Trusted Traveler Program or are members of an eligible low-risk population, with a corresponding decrease of nearly 30 percent in the number of travelers receiving expedited screening from other means.

On October 21st, TSA issued a Request for Proposals to expand the number of private sector companies providing PreCheck enrollment services. Responses to this request are due in mid-December, and TSA anticipates beginning expanded enrollments within 12 months.

Today the airlines participating in TSA PreCheck account for a little more than 86 percent of air travelers, which limits the opportunity for

other travelers to take advantage of expedited screening. As you know, we are looking for additional partnerships across the travel and tourism industries. So, any assistance the travel industry can provide to convince the remaining domestic carriers and international air carriers to participate in the program would be greatly appreciated.

On your October 2015 Board conference call, you graciously gave time to representatives from TSA to discuss PreCheck expansion. There was even a suggestion of setting up a special subcommittee to help look at new ideas in this regard. So, we would love to pursue this offer. We are very much committed to this expansion and we know that we cannot do this without the support of industry, and especially this Board.

Let me turn very quickly to REAL ID, which is an issue that I am sure some of you are very concerned about. DHS recognizes the travel industry=s strong interest in how enforcement of the REAL ID Act for Boarding Aircraft will affect

the requirements for air travel. We have consistently striven to implement REAL ID, and proportionately, DHS is in the process of scheduling enforcement for boarding aircraft and will make an announcement by the end of this year.

Media reports that passports will be required in January 2016 for domestic air travel by driver=s license-holders from any states are unfounded. Until DHS sets a date for enforcement and that date arrives, TSA will continue to accept state-issued driver=s licenses and identification cards from all states.

We will ensure that the traveling public has ample notice of at least 120 days before any changes are made that could affect their travel planning. That notice will include information of the process for individuals with driver=s licenses or identification cards from a non-compliant state without an extension.

DHS is committed to working with airports, airlines, and other travel industry stakeholders in implementing this law as it applies

to boarding aircraft. We are working, in fact, with state officials to ensure compliance with the standards of the REAL ID Act. Where warranted due to progress and implementing on that requirement, DHS will continue to grant extensions to states. Federal agencies may accept driver=s licenses from non-compliant states with extension.

In Minnesota, State legislators voted in 2009 to bar the State from implementing REAL ID. Because Minnesota does not have a path forward to implement the REAL ID standards, DHS is unable to grant the State an extension.

Washington and New Mexico have not provided adequate justification for non-compliance warranting a further extension. So, as a result, beginning in January 10, 2016, driver=s licenses and identification cards issued by those states will not be accepted by federal agencies for official purposes. According to the enforcement schedule, that now includes military bases and secure federal facilities.

And again, as in many of our businesses,

the travel industry can assist in this process by supporting efforts in non-compliant states to become compliant.

Finally, I want to talk a little bit about the Visa Waiver Program. As you all know, it is an extremely valuable program for lawful trade and travel with our nation=s most trusted travel partners, but, obviously, there is more that we can do to enhance the security of these valuable programs. The Department of Homeland Security supports and is in the process of implementing many of the security enhancements in the Visa Waiver Security Enhancement Act.

In the U.S. Senate we have seen proposed language for the Visa Waiver Security Enhancement Act. The Department, however, has concerns with the proposed new biometric screening requirements, as a self-submission of biometrics by prospective VWP travelers would be impractical and the data unverifiable, resulting in little additional law enforcement value to DHS and the FBI. Ensuring that program countries have satisfactory departure

controls, however, is a top priority.

The introduction of biometrics would also make the ESTA process almost identical to the visa process and significantly reduce the benefit for program countries to participate in the VWP. Such countries represent our strongest allies, and their participation in the program results in increased security cooperation and information-sharing.

ESTA is a robust security measure in itself. Before an ESTA is approved, it is checked against multiple national security and law enforcement databases and Interpol=s international databases. Since ESTA=s inception in 2008, the CBP has denied nearly 6,000 ESTA applications as a result of vetting against the U.S. Government=s Known and Suspected Terrorist Watch List. During the same period of time, CBP denied more than 165,000 ESTA applications submitted by individuals with passports reported as lost or stolen. Just this fiscal year, since October 1st, 2015, 227 ESTA applicants have been denied as a result of security

concerns.

We built on the security in 2014, when DHS announced additional data fields to the ESTA and, again this past August, with additional security criteria for member countries. No Visa Waiver Program traveler may be admitted to the United States until all security checks are completed, to include checks conducted on all travelers, regardless of a visa or an ESTA.

Again, we will continue to work with Congress to improve this important program, and we count on the support of the travel industry to maintain our lawmakers informed about the importance of this program and the benefits that it confers to our allies and our Trusted Travelers Programs.

Thank you. And now, if you have any other questions, I would be more than happy to take them.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Yes, thank you, Raul.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY PERALES: And if

you want to talk about Syrian refugees, we can also talk about that as well.

CHAIR GILLILAND: That was a very densely-packed set of remarks.

Do we have questions for Raul?

(No response.)

I have. Maybe I will start with one quick question.

You had mentioned the January 2016 implementation for these non-compliant states. Which states were those again?

ASSISTANT SECRETARY PERALES: New Mexico and Washington.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY PERALES: Well, for Minnesota, we are still in the process of understanding. They passed this law. It is non-compliant. And now, the issue is back in the Minnesota legislature. It is a State law that they passed dealing with REAL ID. So, again, there is now legislative action ongoing in Minneapolis, or St. Paul I should say, and we are waiting to see

the outcome of that.

MEMBER McCORMICK: You had made the other comment, though, about the 120-day notice for any change affecting actual travelers. I am just trying to reconcile that with the January dates, to make sure I am clear.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY PERALES: Yes.

MR. REDLINGER: So, with New Mexico and Washington, these are states that in previous years have had waivers. They did not produce enough to warrant an additional waiver for the coming year. So, they were given a three-month period from October until January 10th, when their waiver will run out.

Minnesota has never had a waiver and has been non-compliant. So, there is no delayed enforcement period for Minnesota at this point.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. Other questions for Raul?

MEMBER ZUK: Just a quick question on Global Entry. Congratulations on adding all those countries. I am sure it is going to reduce the wait

times in our entry holds, but is it reciprocal? Like can we go to their systems and use their version of Global Entry in their countries?

MR. TANCIAR: So, yes, as part of the negotiations with those agreements, there is a reciprocity piece. That does not always mean, though, the country has that program right away for U.S. citizens. But I think in the case of the UK, they will be ready to go. So, yes.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. Other questions for Raul?

MS. BROKENBAUGH: It seems to me that Homeland Security could do a better job of getting out to the news media information about the Visa Waiver Program because you are taking a beating in all the shows that I have seen about it and making it seem like you are just opening your borders. If you are from Norway, you can come here anytime you want. If you are from the UK, you can come here anytime you want. And I think you all need to be educating the media about what you are talking about. I know that is a very simplistic way of

saying it, but that is what I am seeing.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY PERALES: No, it isn't. It is not that simplistic. It is actually a very true message, that we do need to be educating the media better.

The problem we have is that we are dealing with two issues at the same time. We are talking about the refugee process, which is where a lot of the fear and the concerns about travel are coming from, and then, looking all of a sudden at the case of the Visa Waiver Program which is something that, to be frank with you, people in the media and other cases have mostly taken for granted because we enjoy the same type of ease of travel to many other Visa Waiver countries that we were discussing.

We are in the process of changing that. Actually, because it is a very fast-moving piece of action that is up on Capitol Hill, our concern as a Department is that we don't want, as much as we want to educate the media on this, there is a law of diminishing returns with the ways in which

you can address the media over something that is hype and something that receives a lot of heat in the moment of deliberation.

And what we are hoping is that cooler heads prevail on the way that we go with the Visa Waiver Program, how we vet our travelers. Where comments have been made that there is absolutely no vetting of passengers coming from any of the countries and that they can just simply get on a plane and walk here as anybody, it is not true. We have clarified that for the media in person and we have clarified it through written statements. In fact, Secretary Johnson yesterday was on the Hill and was going on record with the media saying what actually involved in the Visa Waiver Program.

But, again, we cannot control how the media or how the message is out, how people want to turn it around. But I absolutely agree that there is a lot more education that we can do out there, that the Department can be more vocal about this. But, again, this is also one of those areas -- and again, I cannot state this

enough -- where we need the travel industry to state that case. The U.S. Travel Association and Patricia left a few minutes ago to go to the Hill to do this job precisely, to tell people, ALet me explain to you what this is all about, how this works, and the impact that it has on states, jurisdictions, cities, companies, everybody.@

So, we need you. We really do need you to be out there and explain this in the best way that people here can, which is get your constituents to talk to your Congress people about what this really is about, so that we can stop a bit of the craziness.

Thank you.

CHAIR GILLILAND: All right. Thanks, Raul. And thank you to the entire Department of Homeland Security team that is here today. We really appreciate your efforts to not only keep us all safe, but do that in a way that is welcoming to international visitors. So, we really appreciate your efforts on our behalf, on behalf of the travel industry and really all of us.

With that, we will move on to two updates from the Department of State. The first will come from Deputy Assistant Secretary Ed Ramotowski, also known as AER@, and Deputy Assistant Secretary Tom Engle.

So, why don=t we start with you, Ed?

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY RAMOTOWSKI:

Okay. Thanks, Sam. I really appreciate the kind words, but the folks who really deserve the credit for all of this are the very dedicated men and women of the Foreign Service who are on the frontline handling visa applications at over 220 embassies and consulates around the world.

It has been our privilege to host several members of the Board in our embassies and consulates. And I would like to just reiterate that invitation to all of you. If your schedule takes you abroad and you have an hour or two to spend with us, please do let me know and I will arrange for you to get an insider view of how this process works. I think those that have done it would say that it is well worth the investment in time.

I would also like to echo my colleague=s comments from DHS. You know, although you have carefully separated us here, there really is no distance between us at all on such measures as the Visa Waiver Program and border security.

And what he said about dealing with the media and Congress, I would just like to echo that, and not just Congress, but also State Governors, State Legislators, and Mayors. There have been a number of those who have been very outspoken about the program, and it is very important for them to hear from the private sector about the value of this program and about its security benefits as well. I agree U.S. Travel and others have done a very good job articulating both of those issues.

In your packet is a briefing sheet with Fast Facts on visas. If it is not in there, I have some extras here. I won=t repeat everything that is on it, but I will draw your attention to a couple of charts.

On the front on the left, you can see what we call the ABig Four,@ China, Mexico, India,

Brazil. And you can see the trendlines there. The China trend is dramatic.

But I would also call your attention to the India trendline. After being stable for a fairly long period, we are beginning to see robust growth in visa demand in India. That is a big challenge for us because, unlike the other three countries, the Indian Government will not allow us, at least up until now, to increase our staff. And that is an issue we are working with the Indian Government on through bilateral diplomatic contacts, but we also appreciate private sector input and support.

If you have operations in India or business there or contact with Indian officials, stressing the importance of increasing travel between our two countries and the importance of having a sufficiently large consular staff to handle the demand would help us a lot.

If you look at the chart on the far right, you can see the average wait times in the Big Four and, also, worldwide for the past year.

They are well below the presidentially-mandated standard.

And particularly in China, when you see that line relatively flat and the other line of demand increasing sharply, that was a tremendous effort and a credit to our Mission China staff.

If you look on the back page, there is some more detail about China. You can see the real increase began literally right after the two Presidents announced the 10-year visa agreement. Since then, the Chinese public has never looked back. The demand has increased by over 50 percent. And again, the wait times have remained stable.

If you see the two trendlines, applications received versus visas issued, they are very close together, and that is another good sign, too. It means most of the people coming into our embassies and consulates are found qualified for a visa and are issued one.

Our own anti-fraud studies and validation studies show that these Chinese travelers are good travelers. They come to the

United States. They enjoy everything our country has to offer, and then, they return to China just like they should.

A few other points to make. We are only a month and a half into the new fiscal year, and mid-fall is traditionally a slower period. But we are seeing global demand up by 5 percent, and Chinese demand continues at a robust pace.

A couple of comments on BrandUSA. We really appreciate the Board=s support for BrandUSA because BrandUSA and the Department of commerce have been helping us abroad to promote tourism. We cannot use visa fees that we collect for that purpose. They have to be used for border security purposes. So, BrandUSA=s assistance has helped our embassies and consulates, particularly in the UK and now Germany and China, where strategic tourism promotion plans are under development, to upgrade our consular waiting rooms with tourism information, promotional materials, and information about destinations in the U.S. that we couldn=t do with consular funds.

So, as you said, Sam, in your remarks, it has been an excellent public/private partnership. It is showing great results. As I have said before, the Department of State is committed to maintaining good service as well as the border security.

So, thank you, and I am happy to answer any questions.

MEMBER DAVIDSON: Ed, just one quick question. On the back of your Fast Facts page regarding the focus on China, first of all, amazing work, to be able to handle that kind of additional capacity, given the extended visa validity. I mean, you have nearly doubled the number of visas issued.

It wasn't lost on me, though, that it looked like also the gap between applications and visas issued has also, I will say, roughly doubled. I am looking at a fairly raw graph here, but it is certainly wider than it was a year ago. To what do we attribute that, and is there any work for future TTABs with you in helping address that?

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY RAMOTOWSKI:

The gap there, we traditionally see that, when there are large increases in visa demand and visa issuance, that it tends to begin attracting some less-qualified applicants. We have seen this pattern in other countries as well.

So, it is still a pretty small delta. The vast majority of Chinese applicants are found qualified for their visas, but there is a portion who aren't. It is not the result of people not understanding our regulations and rules for the most part. So, I don't really see a major role for the TTAB in that.

Certainly, with BrandUSA's help, you know, we are getting the word out to the Chinese public about what the requirements are to qualify for a U.S. visa, but there will always be individuals who perhaps have a criminal record or have immigration violations or some other issue that will prevent them from getting the visa that they are applying for. But I would emphasize again that is a small minority of the total number of

applicants.

PARTICIPANT: Dan, I just wanted to personally thank you for facilitating my visit to our Consulate Office in Buenos Aires this summer. You made it seem so simple, and they were so incredibly open and helpful.

If yo haven=t done this, do it. Get on his agenda and ask their help to do it. It was so informative in understanding what was motivating Argentinian travel and how this is a country that needs to apply for a visa. How incredibly fast and efficient our Consular Office was. It was just so great.

Thank you.

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY RAMOTOWSKI: Well, thank you for those words, and I will pass it on to the team down there. We have got a good team in Argentina.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. Other questions for Ed?

(No response.)

Okay. Then, we will move on to Tom.

Thanks again, Ed. We really appreciate it.

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ENGLE:
Thank you, Sam.

So, a real quick update on some recent successes in negotiating international aviation agreements and a note on some upcoming negotiations.

We initialed an Open Skies Agreement with Cote d'Ivoire, the West African country, in October. I should have started by saying we are up to 118 Open Skies Agreements now. Cote d'Ivoire becomes our 27th Open Skies partner in sub-Saharan Africa. We are proud of that.

And the point about sub-Saharan Africa I guess is, even in markets where U.S. carriers are not necessarily prepared to start offering service themselves now, Open Skies Agreements there do create increased opportunities for them to enter into cooperative marketing arrangements, like code-sharing with other carriers serving the region.

We also initialed recently an Open Skies Agreement or reached an Open Skies Agreement in principle with the Government of Azerbaijan. So, that should move along.

And with Mexico, you may recall, around about a year now, we initialed an agreement, a new bilateral aviation agreement. We don't call it an Open Skies Agreement with Mexico, but it is actually very close to one. It is kind of an illustration of how these things take some time to actually come into effect.

We have been answering a lot of questions that have come up from Mexican stakeholders via their Government about what does this provision mean; what does that provision mean? So, without renegotiating the agreement, we have had to answer a lot of questions about it, but have successfully done that without having to renegotiate any of the terms that are very advantageous to both sides.

And we think we are close to a formal signing of the Mexico agreement. It would then

have to be ratified by the Mexican Senate. Anyway, the process is churning along and this will be a very important agreement, once it takes effect.

So, then, in terms of some upcoming negotiations, we will be meeting here in Washington December 2nd and 3rd with a Japanese Government delegation to talk about expanded access to Tokyo Haneda Airport. We already have an Open Skies Agreement with Japan, but it has some very restrictive features that pertain to Haneda Airport.

You may be aware Tokyo has two airports, kind of analogous to Reagan National and Dulles, a close-in airport that is largely domestic, a farther-out one that has a lot more international traffic. But the Japanese Government wants to bring a lot more international traffic into Haneda, the close-in one, as they approach the Olympics in 2020. So, we want to eliminate the restrictive features in our current agreement that apply to that airport and make sure that U.S. carriers are able to robustly participate in the

internationalization of that airport.

So, we will be meeting a Japanese delegation here the first week of December. I am not going to forecast how likely we are to reach success, but we are going to give it our best shot.

And then, with Cuba, we are talking with the Government of Cuba as part of sort of the broader normalization process that is now underway with Cuba. We are talking with the Government of Cuba about reestablishing scheduled service.

We have had two rounds of technical consultations with the Cubans, first in D.C. in March and, then, we led a team down there to Havana in September. Tentatively, the Cubans will be coming back up to Washington the second week of December to continue that dialog, and we will see how far we get.

Again, the goal there is an informal arrangement on reestablishing scheduled service. We are not changing the laws that still restrict or govern travel to Cuba. You will be aware that there are 12 permitted categories that U.S.

travelers have to fall into in order to go to Cuba. So, that is U.S. law and that is not something we are changing. Tourism to Cuba is still prohibited, but in the roughly last 12 months since the two Presidents announced, you know, an opening and easing of U.S. regulations toward Cuba and easing of sanctions, there has been already a pretty sharp increase in travel to Cuba. And so, we want to make sure that the aviation relationship between the two countries supports what we expect will, then, be a growing travel within the confines of current regulations.

So, we will be meeting with the Cubans, we hope, again in December and, hopefully, in the near future get an informal arrangement that will reestablish scheduled service.

Any questions?

CHAIR GILLILAND: Questions for Tom?

(No response.)

Okay. Tom, we really appreciate that update and, also, your participation in the education session earlier this morning. It was

really helpful.

Okay. I had one maybe a question in terms of process, and I am going to make a few closing remarks. There has been a suggestion that perhaps this body, the TTAB, could offer up its support for the Visa Waiver Program, in light of pressures on it, in light of recent events.

Process-wise, to do something like that that would become official, we would need to author something, I presume, maybe Google Doc it, and we would have to have a Board call. I mean, unless we wrote it here in five minutes, we would have to have a Board call.

Yes, Bruce, could you get --

(Laughter.)

Bruce, do you have your laptop because my remarks are going to take a while, my closing remarks?

(Laughter.)

So, I presume that, if we wanted to do something like that, that is the process we would need to follow? If there were no objections from

the TTAB to putting forth something like that, I think a brief statement of support, that is how we would have to do it?

MS. SAHGAL: That is correct. If you are interested in moving a formal letter of recommendation from the full TTAB to Secretary Pritzker --

CHAIR GILLILAND: Right.

MS. SAHGAL: -- we will need to have that letter deliberated --

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay.

MS. SAHGAL: -- and potentially adopted at a formal meeting.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Yes. Okay. So, I guess what I would like to suggest --

MS. SAHGAL: Or on a call.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Right, on a call. Yes, I was presuming on a call.

Then, what I might suggest is that we -- the Awe,@ Bruce -- put together a few, and I don=t think this needs to be a long letter; it can be a brief letter of support, that we put that

together, that we Google Doc it, as we have with these other recommendations, and we get any comments and, then, we have a quick, hopefully, a relatively-quick call to hopefully get approval for the words that we put together on that.

Are there any objections from anybody on the TTAB to doing something like that?

(No response.)

Okay. Except Bruce?

(Laughter.)

Okay. Well, all right, excellent. We will work on that then.

Let me just see where we are in the agenda. I think we really are getting to the closing moments of this agenda. I wanted to offer up a few closing remarks and comments around the TTAB 2016 to 2018 term. And so, a few things about that.

But let me just make a few closing comments. We will see; I don't know if John Sprouls is connected or not. He may have a few things to say once I get done. We will see. I know it has

been a challenging technology situation with our phone lines.

So, just a few comments. As we wind down this term, one of the final important things that is on my agenda, and that I have discussed with John Sprouls, is writing a letter to the next Board leadership that summarizes what we have done, what we have left undone, and what lessons we have learned along the way.

It is our intention to have that letter prepared before the end of the year and, once completed, we will share it with you. This will not be an official work product of the TTAB, meaning we won't submit it as a set of recommendations to the Secretary. So, we won't need to fire up Archana's Google Docs and have the letter voted on by the Board.

But, still, over the term, many of you have shared with me your thoughts about what you think should change about the TTAB to make it stronger and better. And certainly, I would welcome and encourage your comments here over the

next week or two around improvements that we could make that we can include in that letter.

I know the Department of Commerce is currently planning to publish a Federal Register notice for Board applications in December for this next term. And if the past is any guide, there will be, I think, about 60 days, maybe a little bit more of a window for submitting applications.

The Department will, then, choose Board members from that applicant pool. Archana, correct me if I am wrong here. I think the target for the first meeting of the next term is April. March?

MS. SAHGAL: The end of quarter one.

CHAIR GILLILAND: The end of quarter one? March? Okay.

Surely many of you will submit applications for reappointment; others will choose to roll off the Board. I am hopeful we will end up with a good mix of continuity and new blood.

I would ask everybody to think about who is not on this Board who should be because they have

expertise in our priority areas or because they have perspective that should be heard on the Board or because they have a reputation for getting stuff done. That is always good.

One thing is clear. Secretary Pritzker will have a very short tenure remaining in office once the new Board reconvenes in April. I suspect the pressure to prioritize will be even greater in the remaining months of her tenure than it has ever been, and the next Board is going to need to come out of the gate really fast, ready to roll up its sleeves and help the Secretary push the travel and tourism agenda forward.

There will be a window of opportunity to advance the industry=s priority agenda and, then, a period of transition to whomever the new team will be in the White House and in this building. So, if you are of a mind to reapply for the next term, get ready to front-end-load your work effort for the TTAB.

Undoubtedly, we need to make substantial progress on our five priority issues,

but we also need to be thinking about what else might qualify as a priority as we head into the next term.

As you know, our industry isn't static, nor should the TTAB be static in what it tackles. So, there should be room to incubate new issues and new approaches as circumstances change.

One person that won't be making the journey into the 2016-to-2018 term of the TTAB is me. After eight years of working on this Board and the last two chairing it, the time has come for me to step aside and let someone else have the chance to lead and build on the success of the TTAB over the years.

It has been an absolute pleasure working with all of you. This Board has evolved into something that I think is really incredibly special. It has become a place where private and public sectors meet and collaborate on how to improve an industry that has developed a prominence and maybe even a little bit, just a tad bit of a swagger in recent years.

(Laughter.)

The appreciation throughout government for what we do and what we contribute to exports, to jobs, to GDP, has never been stronger. The President of the United States, who, as you may recall, started his term with a few unfortunate comments about travel and tourism, has since become the architect of a national strategy to promote it. And I think that is just awesome.

And I know in my bones that we have served our Secretary, our President, and our country well with our recommendations and our willingness to be partners in translating those recommendations into policy achievements.

Thanks to all of the Committee Co-Chairs for your leadership, and, of course, thanks to Kathleen Matthews and John Sprouls who have been two of the best Vice Chairs anybody could ever hope to have.

And finally, my heartfelt thanks to Bruce Charendoff, who tells me where I need to be, what I need to say, when I should get there,

sometimes tells me where to go.

(Laughter.)

And I simply couldn't have done this gig without him, and I will be sending him and his new wife on a golf and spa weekend very soon.

(Laughter.)

As you can see, Bruce was the author of my remarks today.

(Laughter.)

So, I really do appreciate it, Bruce, and again, appreciation to the entire TTAB.

John Sprouls, if you can hear us, any other closing remarks or comments?

(No response.)

Okay. He is speaking into a muted phone, I think. I am sure it was very, very good.

So, with that, unless there are any other items -- Archana, anything else that we need to cover off logistically?

You will be hearing from us on this support for the Visa Waiver Program, and we really appreciate -- we are going to need to do that on

a short timeline. And so, we really need to see any edits or comments you are going to have on that very quickly once we publish. So, appreciate that.

It sounds like a few more comments, one from Dean and one from Mike.

Mike, go ahead.

MEMBER GALLAGHER: Just it is a great idea to support visa waiver. Roger is proposing to change the name to more appropriately what it really is.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Yes.

MEMBER GALLAGHER: I forgot what the --

CHAIR GILLILAND: Secured Travel Partnership. That might be something that we could consider as a part of this very brief --

MEMBER GALLAGHER: Secured Travel Partnership.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Yes, Secured Travel Partnership.

Okay. Dean?

MEMBER RUNYAN: If our Subcommittee has suggestions for priority topics for the next Board, where do we submit those?

CHAIR GILLILAND: You can send those to me.

MEMBER RUNYAN: Just in the next week or two?

CHAIR GILLILAND: Yes, yes. And any other comments or improvements, ideas for improvement for the next term would be welcome as well.

Kelly? Oh, John? So, are you thinking we will hear from John? Okay.

I don=t have much left to cover.

(Laughter.)

Speak amongst yourselves and we will be hearing from John here very shortly.

MEMBER RUNYAN: While we are waiting for John, maybe I can just take a moment?

CHAIR GILLILAND: Yes. Yes.

MEMBER RUNYAN: From all of us on the Board and all the other members that are here, I

think we owe Sam a big round of applause for all his good work.

(Applause.)

CHAIR GILLILAND: If you still don't have John, please, the applause can continue.

(Laughter.)

John, are you there? All right, we will give John a moment.

Where is everyone traveling for Thanksgiving? We will send a microphone around.

(Laughter.)

(Pause.)

Dan, take it away, Bud. Give that man a microphone. Give the man a microphone.

(Laughter.)

John, you just let somebody know here when you feel like you are connected in, but Dan is going to give us some --

MR. TINCIAR: I will just give you three bullet points --

CHAIR GILLILAND: Yes.

MR. TINCIAR: -- because I think it is

interesting.

As you know, the recommendation was that CBP increase the frequency of the surveys, change the surveys. As Kelly already indicated, we adopted that.

This survey does not reflect those changes, but it is still kind of telling on what is going on. So, if you will permit me to just read these?

The number of travelers who perceived waiting 15 minutes or less increased from 63 percent in 2012 to 88 percent in 2015. So, that was good news.

Ninety-three percent of travelers felt welcomed to the United States. Approximately 80 percent of the travelers were satisfied with the CBP officer attributes, which is professionalism, welcoming, and whatnot. And about 91 percent of travelers were satisfied with the overall inspection area.

We used to do 20 airports. We now do 25. That was about a 25-30,000 sample, and they

are doing that survey again right now, which will be with the old instrument. And then, the new one will go after that.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. Excellent. Thanks, Dan. We appreciate that. Yes, yes, terrific.

Okay, I think we have our Vice Chair John Sprouls now available to provide a few closing comments.

John, are you there?

VICE CHAIR SPROULS: Sam, I am. Can you hear me?

CHAIR GILLILAND: We can hear you.

VICE CHAIR SPROULS: Okay. Interesting, the prior number I was on I could hear you clear as a bell, but you couldn't hear me. Now I can barely hear you, but now at least I can get through.

I have very brief comments. I just want to echo what other people have said throughout the meeting and just thank you for your stewardship of this Board. I am, as you are, a veteran of prior

Boards, and I feel it is safe to say that this Board has been incredibly active, incredibly productive, and incredibly impactful. And I think that is all a tribute to your vision and your leadership.

So, on behalf of all of the TTAB Board members, I just want to say thank you for everything that you have done in terms of leading us the last couple of years.

And you probably won't be able to hear me, but I would ask everybody to join me in a round of applause.

(Applause.)

CHAIR GILLILAND: All right. Well, thank you. Thank you, John, for the kind words and, Greg, for your kind words earlier. I really do appreciate it. Again, it has been a pleasure working with everybody.

John, anything else before we adjourn the meeting?

VICE CHAIR SPROULS: No, that's it.

CHAIR GILLILAND: Okay. All right. I hope everybody has a great holiday here that is

coming up next week, and I will hope to cross paths at some point in the future.

So, thanks, everybody.

We are adjourned.

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, at 12:26 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.)