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May 12, 2021

Honorable Nydia Velazquez
Chairwoman
House Committee on Small Business
Washington, DC20515

Dear Chairwoman Velazquez:

We represent inbound tour operators based in New York City and across the country, who promote international travel and tourism to New York and the U.S. They facilitate inbound travel services for both independent and group travelers with their business partners - international tour operators, corporate travel buyers and travel agents. They provide everything from hotel bookings to full-service itineraries that include accommodations, transportation, dining, and attractions.

These inbound tour companies have been without any business since the federally-mandated shutdown in March 2020. While some domestic travel may have begun to pick up, there has not been a single international traveler visiting the U.S. through the travel trade.

The inbound travel sector produces a positive trade balance, in fact the largest portion of the positive trade equation. Every dollar generated by international visitation goes 100% to exports to the benefit of the U.S. in terms of jobs, economic impact, and balance of trade. We should note that New York is the number one destination visited by international travelers when visiting America, and inbound tour operators drive international business to other travel and hospitality sectors, like hotels and restaurants.

We seek your assistance in seeing that two bills HR 1757, sponsored by Representative Sean Patrick Maloney of New York, and HR 2120, sponsored by Representatives Mark Amodei of Nevada, Charlie Crist of Florida, Dina Titus of Nevada, and Bill Pascrell of New Jersey, are reported out of your committee for a floor vote as part of any additional stimulus actions.

These bills provide more resources for SVOGs and specifically make it possible that companies like inbound tour operators are eligible, which is the purpose of HR 2120. Like live venues, theaters, museums and others currently eligible for SVOGs, inbound tour operators (the vast majority of which are small businesses) have been completely shut down since March 2020 when international travel bans and lockdowns first went into effect. We should note, we promote and sell live venues, theaters, museums and other attractions to our international partners.

Our New York members are willing to visit one of your New York offices or do a Zoom meeting with your DC office staff for further discussion. Or we can bring together inbound operators from around the U.S. to meet with the committee majority staff.

Velazquez
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You may reach either of us at headquarters@inboundtravel.org or 859-955-9098.
You will also find contact information for our New York-member co-signers below.
Thank you.

Best regards,



Peter van Berkel
Chair



Lisa Simon
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The below organizations, as inbound operators and other members of the International Inbound Travel Association, support the above request.

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