

In recent months, an important program necessary to the continued success of the travel and tourism industry has come under fire for unfounded concerns about the ability of the program to keep the United States safe from the potential threats of terrorism and global health epidemics. As the [job title] of [company], which is based in [location], I write to express my support for the Visa Waiver Program and the importance of maintaining the program.

The Visa Waiver Program, which is overseen by the Department of Homeland Security, has allowed foreign travelers from 38 approved country to enter the U.S. using only their passport and remain in the U.S. for up to 90 days. The countries currently allowed to participate in the program have met rigorous standards for security as defined by the U.S. government. Prior to being cleared to travel to the U.S., travelers are screened though the Electronic System for Travel Authorization process to ensure that the traveler does not pose any law enforcement or security risk. The ESTA process was added to the Visa Waiver Program after 911 as an additional layer of scrutiny to zone in on potentially dangerous travelers who might attempt to travel through Visa Waiver Program-approved countries.

The Visa Waiver Program is an important tool used by the travel and tourism industry to drive and promote the United States as a destination for foreign travel. Successful maintenance of the program also has a significant impact on our nation's economy. As the nation's largest service export, travel and tourism generate upwards of \$2.1 trillion in economic output, support 14.9 million jobs and represent \$134 million in tax revenue. On average, travelers to the U.S. spend \$2.4 billion a day, \$101.4 million an hour, \$1.7 million a minute and \$28,154 a second.

Since the creation of the Visa Waiver Program in 1986, Congress and the administration have enhanced the security provisions of the program. In lieu of eliminating or halting the program, I would urge you and your colleagues to consider making further security enhancements to the program, such as those found in H.R. 158, the Visa Waiver Improvement Act of 2015, introduced by Rep. Candice Miller (R-CA).

I hope I can count on your support.