

U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

February 11, 2015

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW, Room 7226
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, 9th Floor,
Washington, D.C. 20590

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretaries Kerry, Foxx and Pritzker:

The U.S. Travel Association, a national non-profit with more than 1,300 member organizations from all aspects of the American travel industry, strongly supports the U.S. government's decades-long policy of Open Skies, which has created ladders of opportunity for millions of Americans and generated substantial job creation and economic growth in communities across the country.

The U.S. travel industry, which generates \$2.1 trillion in economic output, is an engine that is driving job creation across the United States, and is a top 10 employer in 49 states and the District of Columbia. One-in-nine American jobs – nearly 15 million jobs across the country – is supported by the travel industry. International visitation to the United States continues to drive growth opportunities for our economy by serving as our country's top services export and second-largest industry export. The United States is welcoming to our shores a record number of international travelers who, on average, stay longer and spend more.

A key component of the continued job and economic growth spurred by the U.S. travel industry has been the federal government's pursuit of Open Skies agreements with more than 100 nations across the globe. Open Skies agreements have sought to open international aviation markets, enable healthy competition among airlines, promote consumer choice among air travelers, and eliminate archaic government intervention in the commercial aviation marketplace. The policy of deregulating international aviation through Open Skies has been tremendously successful for American consumers, who have found it easier and cheaper to travel abroad, our domestic airports, that have reaped the benefits of expanded lucrative inbound international travel, and our domestic airlines, which have grown and profited from the opening on a global scale of markets that previously were restricted.

Despite the many pro-consumer, pro-growth aspects of our Open Skies policy, some are seeking to undermine the advances made and return to the era of greater government intervention in international aviation markets. U.S. Travel believes any move to alter Open Skies would fly in the face of competition and consumer choice, harm demand for travel to the U.S., and ultimately weaken the overall economy.

The U.S. Travel Association strongly supports the policy of Open Skies and encourages the Departments of State, Transportation and Commerce to reject attempts to weaken or undermine the advances made in the liberalization of international aviation markets.

I look forward to working with you on this and other important issues to increase travel to and within the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger J. Dow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Roger J. Dow
President and CEO
U.S. Travel Association