

February 20, 2009

Dear Colleague:

In recent months, travel for meetings, events and performance incentives (ME&I) has come under attack from media and elected officials – including President Obama – who have sought to score “political points” by deterring corporate travel. As a result, businesses receiving taxpayer assistance and others concerned about becoming the next “easy target” are cancelling ME&I travel across the country.

We recognize that this toxic environment has created a serious threat to our industry, our employees and the communities where we do business and, therefore, have assembled a major, multi-faceted campaign to restore common sense to the debate.

It is vital that policymakers and the media hear directly from you, your company, customers and business partners about the value of ME&I travel and the impact of less travel on communities where you do business.

The attached toolkit includes: 1) documents to educate you on the value and economic impact of ME&I travel; and 2) resources to help you develop your own communications to policymakers and the media.

Here is what you can do to help protect American workers and local communities:

1. **Write Your Congressman!** Using the campaign talking points and sample letters to a member of Congress, send a letter to local members of Congress written in your own words to inform them of the value of travel and the victims when travel is deterred.
2. **Speak Out Locally!** Look for opportunities in your local newspaper to make your voice heard. Using the sample letters to the editor and the campaign talking points, draft and send your own letter to the editor of your local newspaper. It is important to keep your letter to about 150 words and follow the guidelines of your local paper.
3. **Get Others Involved!** Share this toolkit with your customers and business partners and ask them to get engaged.
4. Please send copies of all correspondence to Melissa Gong (mgong@ustravel.org) so that we can help document the strength of our industry.

We will soon launch a new Web site that will serve as the nerve center for this campaign. This site will include the toolkit and many other resources to help you deliver your message to policymakers and the media. We will follow-up with information about this new site soon.

If we don't take action, everyone in the travel community stands to lose. Thank you for your enthusiastic support of this important campaign.

Sincerely,



Roger Dow
President & CEO
U.S. Travel Association