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American Workers, Local Communities Unintended Victims of Cuts in Meetings, Events and Incentive Travel Programs

Travel Community to Issue 'Best Practice Standards' to Corporate America

Washington, D.C. – Leaders from key organizations representing the travel, meetings and events industries today issued the following statement regarding federal government efforts to curtail meetings, events and incentive travel programs among companies that have received emergency government lending:

“Americans expect Congress and the Obama Administration to responsibly and effectively oversee the use of taxpayer dollars to companies receiving emergency government lending. Americans also expect the business community and elected leaders to protect jobs and help the country rebound as quickly as possible from the current economic crisis.

“We are extremely concerned about the unintended consequences of unnecessarily restricting corporate meetings, events and incentive travel programs. Business-related travel generates 2.4 million American jobs, \$244 billion in spending and \$39 billion in tax revenue at the federal, state and local level. State and local governments rely on this revenue to fund basic government programs such as education, health care and unemployment insurance.

“At a time when the Department of Labor reports a loss of nearly 200,000 travel related jobs in 2008 and U.S. Commerce Department data predicts a loss of an additional 247,000 travel related jobs in 2009, elected officials and corporate America must take a thoughtful approach to managing the use of taxpayer dollars. Prudent organizations already have in-place travel and meeting management policies that ensure an effective return on investment for stakeholders. In the coming days, the travel, meetings and events industries will provide the business community with additional standards for meetings, events and incentives that demand transparency and accountability.

“Travelers are an important solution to the economic problems that ail our country. The travel community looks forward to working with America’s elected leaders and businesses to ensure that we keep America moving.”

***American Hotel and Lodging Association
Destination Marketing Association International
Meeting Professionals International
National Business Travel Association
Professional Convention Management Association
Society of Incentive Travel Executives (SITE)
U.S. Travel Association***

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