

## SEPTEMBER 2022 | QUICK MESSAGING GUIDE

### VISA PROCESSING [UPDATE TO COME FOLLOWING STATE DEPT. MEETING]

- **Wait times for visitor visas have soared** due to pandemic delays at consulates worldwide, **harming recovery** by dissuading visitation.
- **Lowering visa wait times to less than 30 days worldwide could bring an additional 2.2 million international visitors and \$5.2 billion in spending** through the end of 2022. (U.S. Travel Association and Tourism Economics, June)

### SUSTAINABILITY

- **Sustainability is central to the travel industry's future.** Near-term policy priorities include securing tax credits for sustainable aviation fuels and expanding EV charging stations in all regions of the country.
- The newly launched **Sustainable Travel Coalition** has brought together the travel, transportation and technology ecosystem to work collectively and **advance opportunities for sustainable travel.**
- The September 20 **Future of Travel Mobility event** in Washington, D.C. is just one opportunity where we are bringing policymakers and business and industry leaders together to **spotlight progress and innovative technologies in this space.**

### TRAVEL SENTIMENT

#### Leisure Travel

- Despite a slight decline in travel demand as we move from the peak summer season into fall, **American travelers remain enthusiastic about traveling**, with 9 in 10 (88%) having trips planned in the next 6 months. ([Longwoods International](#))
- While inflation is a challenge to the full recovery of the travel industry, **people are seeking out alternatives before canceling trips altogether**, namely looking into less expensive options, but they continue to travel.

#### Business Travel

- **Federal leaders could jumpstart the slow-to-return business travel** segment by ensuring any year-end tax package restores the deductibility of entertainment business expenses and extends full expensing for business meals beyond 2022.
- **Business travel demand is picking up**, and over 80% of business travelers expect to take at least 1 trip to attend a conference, convention or trade show in the next 6 months. (U.S. Travel Association, JD Power, Tourism Economics)
- **Still, hurdles persist in the form of restrictive corporate travel policies** and tightening budgets.
- Over **half of large-company executives agree** that reducing business travel may represent short-term savings but will bring long-term negative impacts on revenue. (June 29, U.S. Travel Association, J.D. Power and Tourism Economics)

### FORECAST AND PERFORMANCE

- Despite numerous pressures, **travel has been resilient and is expected to remain so**, at least in the short term.
- **Gas prices have continued to decline**—a benefit to travelers.
- Yet, **headwinds such as inflation and price strains** that impact domestic travel increases the need to focus on policies to boost international inbound travel and the sector's economic benefits.
- It is estimated that \$1.05 trillion (in 2019 dollars, adjusted for inflation) will be spent on travel in the U.S. in 2022, but **this is still 10% below 2019 levels and 16% below where it should be in 2022** if not for the pandemic. (U.S. Travel Association)
- **Demand for all segments of travel is projected to soften**, and other factors (e.g., inflation and a possible recession) will **lead to slower growth** in the later years of U.S. Travel's forecast.

## WORKFORCE

- **There are 1.5 million travel jobs open at present** and about the same number of reasons why a worker should seriously look at a career in this exciting industry.
- **Travel jobs are available at all levels of the ladder**, whether you're entering the workforce, returning, or seeking an advanced opportunity.
- **Time spent working in the travel industry builds transferable skills** that many find useful in other areas of employment too. (Heart + Mind July 2022)
- The problem isn't a lack of openings but a lack of available workers. **For every 100 job openings there are only 55 available workers.**
- To staff more Leisure & Hospitality positions, **we must expand access to temporary worker programs** and increase immigrant labor, including releasing all authorized H-2B visas.