

Opening Statement
Chair Jan Schakowsky
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Hearing on “Reauthorizing Brand USA and the U.S. SAFE WEB Act”
October 29, 2019

Good morning and thank you all for joining us today for a hearing on reauthorizing two important programs in this subcommittee’s jurisdiction.

When I talk to constituents about my role here in the Energy and Commerce Committee, I often tell them that Energy and Commerce has the broadest jurisdiction of any standing committee in the House, and that this subcommittee has the broadest jurisdiction of any Energy and Commerce Subcommittee.

And nothing makes this more clear than today’s hearing, where we will discuss legislation to promote inbound travel and tourism to the United States, and legislation to help the Federal Trade Commission protect Americans from fraud that originates overseas.

Brand USA was authorized to work directly with the United States’ tourism and travel industry to maximize the social and economic benefits of travel. The bill we are considering today was introduced by my friend and colleague Peter Welch, and I thank him for his leadership on this important issue.

I am sure that all of my colleagues here would agree that their lives have been enriched by their own travels, and we all appreciate tourists coming to our district and experiencing what we each love so much about the districts we represent.

Brand USA has been great for Chicago, so I am excited to make sure that the program is reauthorized.

I also am pleased that we are reauthorizing the U.S. SAFE WEB Act. Congress amended the Federal Trade Commission Act in 2006 to bolster the FTC’s ability to combat fraud that originates overseas. Doing so strengthened the FTC in four key ways:

1. It confirmed the agency’s jurisdiction extends to foreign wrongdoers that harm U.S. consumers.
2. It authorized limited but proper collaboration with foreign law enforcement, including investigative assistance and the sharing of information.
3. It enhanced the FTC’s ability to receive information from foreign counterparts by allowing confidential treatment of information received.
4. It promoted relationship building by allowing the FTC to participate in staff exchanges with their foreign counterparts.

The bill we are discussing today, which would reauthorize these authorities for another seven years, was introduced by my friend, colleague, and Ranking Member Cathy McMorris Rogers. Thank you for your leadership on this, and your partnership on the subcommittee, Ranking Member Rogers.

I am a proud cosponsor of both of these bills, and I look forward to working with stakeholders and colleagues to advance these important reauthorizations promptly.