

Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H.R. 6965, With an Amendment

(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a new text)

117TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 6965

To promote travel and tourism in the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 7, 2022

Ms. TITUS (for herself, Mr. CASE, and Mr. YOUNG) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To promote travel and tourism in the United States, and
for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Visit America Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR TRAVEL AND TOURISM.**

6 Section 2(d) of the Reorganization Plan Numbered
7 3 of 1979 (93 Stat. 1382; 5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

1 (1) by striking “There shall be in the Depart-
2 ment two additional Assistant Secretaries” and in-
3 serting “(1) There shall be in the Department 3 ad-
4 ditional Assistant Secretaries, including the Assist-
5 ant Secretary of Commerce for Travel and Tour-
6 ism,”; and

7 (2) by adding at the end the following:

8 “(2) The Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Travel
9 and Tourism shall—

10 “(A) be appointed by the President, subject to
11 the advice and consent of the Senate; and

12 “(B) report directly to the Under Secretary for
13 International Trade.”.

14 **SEC. 3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY**
15 **OF COMMERCE FOR TRAVEL AND TOURISM.**

16 (a) VISITATION GOALS.—The Assistant Secretary of
17 Commerce for Travel and Tourism (referred to in this sec-
18 tion as the “Assistant Secretary”), appointed pursuant to
19 section 2(d) of the Reorganization Plan Numbered 3 of
20 1979, as amended by section 2, shall—

21 (1) in consultation with relevant Federal agen-
22 cies, establish an annual visitation goal, consistent
23 with the goals of the travel and tourism strategy de-
24 veloped pursuant to section 4(1), for—

1 (A) the number of international visitors to
2 the United States; and

3 (B) the value of travel and tourism com-
4 merce;

5 (2) develop recommendations for achieving the
6 annual goals established pursuant to paragraph (1);

7 (3) ensure that travel and tourism policy is de-
8 veloped in consultation with—

9 (A) the Tourism Policy Council;

10 (B) the Secretary of State;

11 (C) the Secretary of Homeland Security;

12 (D) the National Travel and Tourism Of-
13 fice;

14 (E) Brand USA;

15 (F) the United States Travel and Tourism
16 Advisory Board; and

17 (G) travel industry partners, including
18 public and private destination marketing orga-
19 nizations, travel and tourism suppliers, and
20 labor representatives from these industries;

21 (4) establish short-, medium-, and long-term
22 timelines for implementing the recommendations de-
23 veloped pursuant to paragraph (2);

24 (5) conduct Federal agency needs assessments,
25 in consultation with the Office of Management and

1 Budget and other relevant Federal agencies, to iden-
2 tify the resources, statutory or regulatory changes,
3 and private sector engagement needed to achieve the
4 annual visitation goals; and

5 (6) provide assessments and recommendations
6 to—

7 (A) the Committee on Commerce, Science,
8 and Transportation of the Senate;

9 (B) the Committee on Energy and Com-
10 merce of the House of Representatives; and

11 (C) the public through a publicly accessible
12 website.

13 (b) DOMESTIC TRAVEL AND TOURISM.—The Assist-
14 ant Secretary, to the extent feasible, shall—

15 (1) evaluate, on an ongoing basis, domestic pol-
16 icy options for supporting competitiveness with re-
17 spect to the strengths, weaknesses, and growth of
18 the domestic travel industry;

19 (2) develop recommendations and goals to sup-
20 port and enhance domestic tourism, separated by
21 business and leisure; and

22 (3) engage public and private stakeholders to
23 support domestic tourism.

24 (c) WORKFORCE.—The Assistant Secretary shall—

1 (1) consult with the Secretary of Labor to de-
2 velop strategies and best practices for improving the
3 timeliness and reliability of travel and tourism work-
4 force data;

5 (2) work with the Secretary of Labor and the
6 Bureau of Economic Analysis to improve travel and
7 tourism industry data; and

8 (3) provide recommendations for policy en-
9 hancements and efficiencies.

10 (d) INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVEL FACILITA-
11 TION.—The Assistant Secretary, in coordination with rel-
12 evant Federal agencies, shall work to increase and facili-
13 tate international business travel to the United States and
14 ensure competitiveness by engaging in, at a minimum—

15 (1) facilitating large meetings, incentives, con-
16 ferences, and exhibitions to be hosted in the United
17 States;

18 (2) emphasizing rural and other destinations
19 rich in cultural heritage or ecological tourism,
20 among other uniquely American destinations, as lo-
21 cations for hosting international meetings, incen-
22 tives, conferences, and exhibitions in the United
23 States; and

1 (3) facilitating sports and recreation events and
2 activities, which shall be hosted in the United
3 States.

4 (e) RECOVERY STRATEGY.—

5 (1) INITIAL RECOVERY STRATEGY.—Not later
6 than 1 year after amounts are appropriated to ac-
7 complish the purposes of this section, the Assistant
8 Secretary, in consultation with public and private
9 stakeholders identified in subsection (a)(3) and pub-
10 lic health officials, shall develop and implement a
11 COVID–19 public health emergency recovery strat-
12 egy to assist the United States travel and tourism
13 industry to quickly recover from the pandemic.

14 (2) FUTURE RECOVERY STRATEGIES.—After
15 assisting in the implementation of the strategy de-
16 veloped pursuant to paragraph (1), the Assistant
17 Secretary, in consultation with appropriate public
18 and private stakeholders, shall develop additional re-
19 covery strategies for the travel and tourism industry
20 in anticipation of other unforeseen catastrophic
21 events that would significantly affect the travel and
22 tourism industry, such as hurricanes, floods,
23 tsunamis, tornadoes, terrorist attacks, and
24 pandemics.

1 (3) COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS.—In developing
2 the COVID–19 public health emergency recovery
3 strategy under paragraph (1) and additional recov-
4 ery strategies for the travel and tourism industry
5 under paragraph (2), the Assistant Secretary shall
6 conduct cost-benefit analyses that take into account
7 the health and economic effects of public health
8 mitigation measures on the travel and tourism in-
9 dustry.

10 (f) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

11 (1) ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—The Assistant
12 Secretary shall produce an annual forecasting report
13 on the travel and tourism industry, to the extent
14 feasible, which shall include current and antici-
15 pated—

16 (A) domestic employment needs;

17 (B) international inbound volume and
18 spending, taking into account the lasting effects
19 of the COVID–19 public health emergency and
20 the impact of the recovery strategy implemented
21 pursuant to subsection (e)(1); and

22 (C) domestic volume and spending, includ-
23 ing Federal and State public land travel and
24 tourism data.

1 (2) BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS.—The Di-
2 rector of the Bureau of Economic Analysis should
3 annually update, to the extent feasible, the Travel
4 and Tourism Satellite Accounts, including—

5 (A) State level travel and tourism spending
6 data;

7 (B) travel and tourism workforce data for
8 full-time and part-time employment; and

9 (C) Federal and State public lands outdoor
10 recreational activity and tourism spending data.

11 (3) NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM OF-
12 FICE.—The Director of the National Travel and
13 Tourism Office—

14 (A) in partnership with the Bureau of Eco-
15 nomic Analysis and other relevant Federal
16 agencies, shall report international arrival and
17 spending data on a regular monthly schedule,
18 which shall be made available to the Travel and
19 Tourism Advisory Board and to the public
20 through a publicly available website; and

21 (B) shall include questions in the Survey
22 of International Air Travelers regarding wait-
23 times, visits to public lands, and State data, to
24 the extent applicable.

1 **SEC. 4. TRAVEL AND TOURISM STRATEGY.**

2 Not less frequently than once every 10 years, the Sec-
3 retary of Commerce, in consultation with the United
4 States Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, the Tourism
5 Policy Council, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary
6 of Homeland Security, shall develop and submit to Con-
7 gress a 10-year travel and tourism strategy, which shall
8 include—

9 (1) the establishment of goals with respect to
10 the number of annual international visitors to the
11 United States and the annual value of travel and
12 tourism commerce in the United States during such
13 10-year period;

14 (2) the resources needed to achieve the goals es-
15 tablished pursuant to paragraph (1); and

16 (3) recommendations for statutory or regulatory
17 changes that would be necessary to achieve such
18 goals.

19 **SEC. 5. UNITED STATES TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVISORY**
20 **BOARD.**

21 Section 3 of the Act of July 19, 1940, entitled “An
22 Act to encourage travel in the United States, and for other
23 purposes” (15 U.S.C. 1546) is amended—

24 (1) by striking “**SEC. 3**” and all that follows
25 through “The Secretary of the Interior is author-
26 ized” and inserting the following:

1 **“SEC. 3. UNITED STATES TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVISORY**
2 **BOARD; ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**

3 “(a) UNITED STATES TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVI-
4 SORY BOARD.—

5 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established the
6 United States Travel and Tourism Advisory Board
7 (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Board’), the
8 members of which shall be appointed by the Sec-
9 retary of Commerce for 2-year terms from among
10 companies and organizations in the travel and tour-
11 ism industry.

12 “(2) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.—The Assistant
13 Secretary for Travel and Tourism shall serve as the
14 Executive Director of the Board.

15 “(3) EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT.—The Director
16 of the National Travel and Tourism Office of the
17 International Trade Administration shall serve as
18 the Executive Secretariat for the Board.

19 “(4) FUNCTIONS.—The Board’s Charter shall
20 specify that the Board will—

21 “(A) serve as the advisory body to the Sec-
22 retary of Commerce on matters relating to the
23 travel and tourism industry in the United
24 States;

1 “(B) advise the Secretary of Commerce on
2 Government policies and programs that affect
3 the United States travel and tourism industry;

4 “(C) offer counsel on current and emerg-
5 ing issues;

6 “(D) provide a forum for discussing and
7 proposing solutions to problems related to the
8 travel and tourism industry; and

9 “(E) provide advice regarding the domestic
10 travel and tourism industry as an economic en-
11 gine.

12 “(5) RECOVERY STRATEGY.—The Board shall
13 assist the Assistant Secretary in the development
14 and implementation of the COVID–19 public health
15 emergency recovery strategy required under section
16 3(e)(1) of the Visit America Act.

17 “(b) ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PROMOTION OF
18 TOURIST TRAVEL.—The Secretary of Commerce is au-
19 thorized”; and

20 (2) by striking “the Secretary of the Interior to
21 serve” and inserting “the Secretary of Commerce to
22 serve”.

1 **SEC. 6. DATA ON DOMESTIC TRAVEL AND TOURISM.**

2 The Secretary of Commerce, subject to the avail-
3 ability of appropriations, shall collect and make public ag-
4 gregate data on domestic travel and tourism trends.

5 **SEC. 7. COMPLETION OF PROCEEDING.**

6 If the Secretary of Commerce has, before the date
7 of the enactment of this Act, taken action that in whole
8 or in part implements this Act or the amendments made
9 by this Act, the Secretary is not required to revisit such
10 action, but only to the extent such action is consistent with
11 this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

12 **SEC. 8. DEFINED TERM.**

13 In this Act, the term “COVID–19 public health emer-
14 gency”—

15 (1) means the public health emergency first de-
16 clared on January 31, 2020, by the Secretary of
17 Health and Human Services under section 319 of
18 the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d) with
19 respect to COVID–19; and

20 (2) includes any renewal of such declaration
21 pursuant to such section 319.