

Committee on Energy and Commerce

Opening Statement

of

Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce Chair Jan Schakowsky

Markup of H.R. 3851, the "Travel Promotion, Enhancement, and Modernization Act of 2019" and H.R. 4779, to extend the US SAFEWEB Act of 2006, and for other purposes.

November 14, 2019

Good morning and thank you all for joining us today as we reauthorize 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 clearer than today's mark-up, 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 marking up today was introduced by my friends Peter Welch and Gus Bilirakis. I thank you both for your leadership on this important issue.

I am sure that all my colleagues here would agree that their lives have been enriched by their own travels, and we all appreciate tourists coming to our districts and experiencing what we each love so much about the districts we represent. Our legislative hearing a few weeks back clearly indicated that.

Brand USA has been great for Chicago, so I am excited to be taking the first step towards reauthorizing this important program today.

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.

This bill, 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 bills, and I am glad we are moving them both towards consideration before the full committee.