

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL ACT OF 1961

[Public Law 87–63; Enacted June 29, 1961]

[As Amended Through P.L. 117–286, Enacted December 27, 2022]

【Currency: This publication is a compilation of the text of Public Law 87–63. It was last amended by the public law listed in the As Amended Through note above and below at the bottom of each page of the pdf version and reflects current law through the date of the enactment of the public law listed at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/comps/>】

【Note: While this publication does not represent an official version of any Federal statute, substantial efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of its contents. The official version of Federal law is found in the United States Statutes at Large and in the United States Code. The legal effect to be given to the Statutes at Large and the United States Code is established by statute (1 U.S.C. 112, 204).】

AN ACT To strengthen the domestic and foreign commerce of the United States by providing for the establishment of a United States Travel Service within the Department of Commerce.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the “International Travel Act of 1961”.

【22 U.S.C. 2121 note】

TITLE I—NATIONAL TOURISM POLICY

SEC. 101. (a) The Congress finds that—

(1) the tourism and recreation industries are important to the United States, not only because of the numbers of people they serve and the vast human, financial, and physical resources they employ, but because of the great benefits tourism, recreation, and related activities confer on individuals and on society as a whole;

(2) the Federal Government for many years has encouraged tourism and recreation implicitly in its statutory commitments to the shorter workyear and to the national passenger transportation system, and explicitly in a number of legislative enactments to promote tourism and support development of outdoor recreation, cultural attractions, and historic and natural heritage resources;

(3) as incomes and leisure time continue to increase, and as our economic and political systems develop more complex global relationships, tourism and recreation will become ever more important aspects of our daily lives; and

(4) the existing extensive Federal Government involvement in tourism, recreation, and other related activities needs to be better coordinated to effectively respond to the national interest in tourism and recreation and, where appropriate, to meet

the needs of State and local governments and the private sector.

(b) There is established a national tourism policy to—

(1) optimize the contributions of the tourism and recreation industries to the position of the United States with respect to international competitiveness, economic prosperity, full employment, and the balance of payments;

(2) increase United States export earnings from United States tourism and transportation services traded internationally;

(3) ensure the orderly growth and development of tourism;

(4) coordinate and encourage the development of the tourism industry in rural communities which—

(A) have been severely affected by the decline of agriculture, family farming, or the extraction or manufacturing industries, or by the closing of military bases; and

(B) have the potential necessary to support and sustain an economy based on tourism;

(5) promote increased and more effective investment in international tourism by the States, local governments, and cooperative tourism marketing programs;

(6) make the opportunity for and benefits of tourism and recreation of the United States universally accessible to residents of the United States and foreign countries and insure that present and future generations are afforded adequate tourism and recreation resources;

(7) contribute to personal growth, health, education, and intercultural appreciation of the geography, history, and ethnicity of the United States;

(8) encourage the free and welcome entry of individuals traveling to the United States, in order to enhance international understanding and goodwill, consistent with immigration laws, the laws protecting the public health, and laws governing the importation of goods into the United States;

(9) eliminate unnecessary trade barriers to the United States tourism industry operating throughout the world;

(10) encourage competition in the tourism industry and maximum consumer choice through the continued viability of the retail travel agent industry and the independent tour operator industry;

(11) promote the continued development and availability of alternative personal payment mechanisms which facilitate national and international travel;

(12) promote quality, integrity, and reliability in all tourism and tourism-related services offered to visitors to the United States;

(13) preserve the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation as a living part of community life and development, and insure future generations an opportunity to appreciate and enjoy the rich heritage of the Nation;

(14) insure the compatibility of tourism and recreation with other national interests in energy development and conservation, environmental protection, and the judicious use of natural resources;

(15) assist in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data which accurately measure the economic and social impact of tourism to and within the United States, in order to facilitate planning in the public and private sectors; and

(16) harmonize, to the maximum extent possible, all Federal activities in support of tourism and recreation with the needs of the general public and the States, territories, local governments, and the tourism and recreation industry, and to give leadership to all concerned with tourism, recreation, and national heritage preservation in the United States.

[22 U.S.C. 2121]

TITLE II—DUTIES

SEC. 201. In order to carry out the national tourism policy established in section 101(b) and by the United States National Tourism Organization Act of 1996, the Secretary of Commerce (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “Secretary”) shall develop and implement a comprehensive plan to perform critical tourism functions which, in the determination of the Secretary, are not being carried out by the United States National Tourism Organization or other private sector entities or State governments. Such plan may include programs to—

(1) collect and publish comprehensive international travel and tourism statistics and other marketing information;

(2) design, implement, and publish international travel and tourism forecasting models;

(3) facilitate the reduction or elimination of barriers to international travel and tourism; and

(4) work with the United States National Tourism Organization, the Tourism Policy Council, State tourism agencies, and Federal agencies in—

(A) coordinating the Federal implementation of a national travel and tourism policy;

(B) representing the United States’ international travel and tourism interests to foreign governments; and

(C) maintaining United States participation in international travel and tourism trade shows and fairs until such activities can be transferred to such Organization and other private sector entities.

[22 U.S.C. 2122]

SEC. 202. OFFICE OF TRAVEL PROMOTION.

(a) OFFICE ESTABLISHED.—There is established within the Department of Commerce an office to be known as the Office of Travel Promotion.

(b) DIRECTOR.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The Office shall be headed by a Director who shall be appointed by the Secretary.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Director shall be a citizen of the United States and have experience in a field directly related to the promotion of travel to and within the United States.

(3) DUTIES.—The Director shall be responsible for ensuring the office is carrying out its functions effectively and shall report to the Secretary.

(c) FUNCTIONS.—The Office shall—

(1) serve as liaison to the Corporation for Travel Promotion established by subsection (b) of section 11 of the Travel Promotion Act of 2009 and support and encourage the development of programs to increase the number of international visitors to the United States for business, leisure, educational, medical, exchange, and other purposes;

(2) work with the Corporation, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security—

(A) to disseminate information more effectively to potential international visitors about documentation and procedures required for admission to the United States as a visitor;

(B) to ensure that arriving international visitors are generally welcomed with accurate information and in an inviting manner;

(C) to collect accurate data on the total number of international visitors that visit each State; and

(D) enhance the entry and departure experience for international visitors through the use of advertising, signage, and customer service; and

(3) support State, regional, and private sector initiatives to promote travel to and within the United States.

(d) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Within a year after the date of enactment of the Travel Promotion Act of 2009, and periodically thereafter as appropriate, the Secretary shall transmit a report to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, the House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce, the House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, and the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs describing the Office's work with the Corporation, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security to carry out subsection (c)(2).

[22 U.S.C. 2123]

SEC. 203. RESEARCH PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Office of Travel and Tourism Industries shall expand and continue its research and development activities in connection with the promotion of international travel to the United States, including—

(1) expanding access to the official Mexican travel surveys data to provide the States with traveler characteristics and visitation estimates for targeted marketing programs;

(2) expanding the number of inbound air travelers sampled by the Commerce Department's Survey of International Travelers to reach a 1 percent sample size and revising the design and format of questionnaires to accommodate a new survey instrument, improve response rates to at least double the number of States and cities with reliable international visitor estimates and improve market coverage;

(3) developing estimates of international travel exports (expenditures) on a State-by-State basis to enable each State to compare its comparative position to national totals and other States;

(4) evaluate the success of the Corporation in achieving its objectives and carrying out the purposes of the Travel Promotion Act of 2009; and

(5) research to support the annual reports required by section 202(d) of this Act.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Commerce for fiscal years 2010 through 2014 such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

【22 U.S.C. 2123a】

TITLE III—ADMINISTRATION

SEC. 301. (a) In order to ensure that the United States' national interest in tourism is fully considered in Federal decision making, there is established a coordinating council to be known as the Tourism Policy Council (hereafter in this Act referred to as the "Council").

(b) The Council shall consist of the following individuals:

(1) The Secretary of Commerce, who shall serve as the Chairman of the Council.

(2) The Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade.

(3) The Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

(4) The Secretary of State.

(5) The Secretary of the Interior.

(6) The Secretary of Labor.

(7) The Secretary of Transportation.

(8) The Commissioner of the United States Customs Service.

(9) The President of the United States National Tourism Organization.

(10) The Commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

(11) Representatives of other Federal agencies which have affected interests at each meeting as deemed appropriate and invited by the Chairman.

(c) Members of the Council shall serve without additional compensation.

(d) The Council shall conduct its first meeting not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of the United States National Tourism Organization Act of 1996. Thereafter the Council shall meet not less than 2 times each year.

(e)(1) The Council shall coordinate national policies and programs relating to international travel and tourism, recreation, and national heritage resources, which involve Federal agencies;

(2) The Council may request directly from any Federal department or agency such personnel, information, services, or facilities as deemed necessary by the Chairman and to the extent permitted by law and within the limits of available funds.

(3) Federal departments and agencies may, in their discretion, detail to temporary duty with the Council such personnel as the Chairman may request for carrying out the functions of the Council. Each such detail of personnel shall be without loss of seniority, pay, or other employee status.

(f) Where necessary to prevent the public disclosure of non-public information which may be presented by a Council member, the Council may hold, at the discretion of the Chairman, a closed meeting which may exclude any individual who is not an officer or employee of the United States.

(g) The Council shall submit an annual report for the preceding fiscal year to the President for transmittal to the Congress on or before December 31 of each year. The report shall include—

(1) a comprehensive and detailed report of the activities and accomplishments of the Council;

(2) the results of Council efforts to coordinate the policies and programs of member's agencies that have a significant effect on international travel and tourism, recreation, and national heritage resources, including progress toward resolving interagency conflicts and development of cooperative program activity;

(3) an analysis of problems referred to the Council by State and local governments, the tourism industry, the United States National Tourism Organization, the Secretary of Commerce, along with a detailed summary of any action taken or anticipated to resolve such problems; and

(4) any recommendation as deemed appropriate by the Council.

(h) The membership of the President of the United States National Tourism Organization on the Council shall not in itself make chapter 10 of title 5, United States Code, applicable to the Council.

【22 U.S.C. 2124】