UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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U.S. TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD

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MEETING

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THURSDAY
OCTOBER 11, 2018

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The Board met in the U.S. Department
of Commerce, Room 3407, 1401 Constitution Avenue,
N.W., Washington, D.C., at 2:00 p.m., John
Sprouls, Chair, presiding.

PRESENT

JOHN SPROULS, Universal Parks and Resorts, Chair
TODD DAVIDSON, Travel Oregon
BRAD DEAN, Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
DEREK DECROSS, IHG
JAMES HAGEN, South Dakota Department of Tourism
RUSS HEDGE, Hosteling International USA
PAM INMAN, National Tour Association
DEBBIE JOHNSON, Arizona Office of Tourism
THOMAS KLEIN, Canyon Ranch
STEPHEN MORRISSEY, United Airlines
MARY MOTSENBOCKER, International Tourism
Marketing, Inc.
SUSAN PRESBY, Mt. Washington Cog Railway
TRICIA PRIMROSE, Marriott International
STEPHEN REVETRIA, San Francisco Giants Baseball
Club
BRIAN ROTHERY, Enterprise Holdings
ADAM SACKS, Tourism Economics
BRYAN SALTZBURG, TripAdvisor
WILLIAM TALBERT, Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau
ROB TORRES, Google

ALSO PRESENT

WILBUR ROSS, Secretary of Commerce
NAZAK NIKAKHTAR, Assistant Secretary for Industry and Analysis (I&A), U.S. Department of Commerce
PHIL LOVAS, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Travel and Tourism, U.S. Department of Commerce
ISABEL HILL, Director, National Travel and Tourism Office, U.S. Department of Commerce
BRIAN BEALL, Designated Federal Officer
MATT HAYDEN, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
ED RAMOTOWSKI, U.S. Department of State
HOWARD KASS, CLEAR
AARON WODIN-SCHWARTZ, Brand USA
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MR. BEALL: Good afternoon, everybody.

Welcome to the Department of Commerce for the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board Meeting. As a designated federal officer for the TTAB, I'd like to welcome you and officially call our meeting to order. And with that, it is my honor to introduce Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross.

SECRETARY ROSS: Thank you, Brian, for that introduction, and thank you to all of you for the work you do to make this advisory board a big success. This is the first meeting of the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board for the two-year term ending in 2020.

And today is an auspicious day in and in a lot of will help your businesses in that the President signed this morning the Clean Oceans Bill, which is going to have a major impact on cleaning up the beaches and the waters in around this country. And he's going to be starting to put tremendous pressure on other countries for
the pollution that they do to the water, so
hopefully that's one the tourist attracts that
will get a good comeuppance.

And it's interesting it was passed
unanimously in both houses, so it's even possible
to do something on a consensual basis. And even
stranger today, we also -- he also signed the
Music Royalty Bill, which is not of that much use
to your fellas, but was also passed unanimously
in both houses. I wouldn't say that means it's a
precedent that'll be repeated a lot, but at least
we had a good day and now we have this good
session with you folks.

So, it's good to see some familiar
faces back and I welcome the contributions that
will be made by the new members of the board.
And thank you for your civic engagement and for
taking the time out of your busy schedules to
work together in this public/private partnership
aimed at making U.S. Travel and Tourism Industry
the strongest it can be.

This board represents a diverse
selection of industry's sub-sectors and travel
destinations from across our country. We
appreciate your expertise and we look forward to
your advice on improving the competitiveness of
the industry.

Your industry, as you know, supports
1.2 million jobs across the country, so it's
really important. National Travel and Tourism
Office just reported that there were nearly
77 million international visitors to the U.S. in
2017, up 1 percent from 2016. And I think given
all the business going on with border security,
that's quite an achievement to have had an up
year in physical volume.

The visitors, those 77 million, spent
a record $251.4 billion in 2017. And the number
of foreign visitors to the U.S. this year remains
strong and they continue spending at a record-
setting pace, up by 3 percent for the seven
months ended July year-over-year, so it sounds
like we're having, if anything, some acceleration
of what went on in the prior year.
Spending by international visitors has actually set records in eight out of the last ten years and all of that in travel means that your industry's generated a trade surplus of more than $77.4 billion last year. We need more industries performing. And foreign visitors are a very valuable component of the American economy.

As chair of the Federal Government's Tourism Policy Council, I'm committed to working with you to support and grow your industry. We want to attract millions of more visitors to our country, and boost the wages and job prospects for thousands of American workers.

Everything is in place for more growth. We have the most spectacular and diverse geography of any country on the planet. We have cultural attractions second to none and we have an infrastructure to get people to where they want to be. Still, we must be sure to press our advantage to assure a new era of growth for your workers and businesses.

We're pleased to have with us today
Nazak Nikakhtar, right here on my right, our Assistant Secretary for Industry & Analysis in the ITA. She's been instrumental in the Commerce Department's work on trade issues. And later in the meeting, Nazak will share her thoughts with you on current trends and trade policy.

We're also pleased to have with us our new Deputy Assistant Secretary for Travel and Tourism, Phil Lovas, on my left. I hope you've all had a chance to meet him. Phil's background, as you know, includes something like 15 years in the hotel business, so he's well acquainted with the issues you will address and we're fortunate to have someone with his expertise on our team.

So, without too much further ado, I'd just like to say we want to do even better job of communicating to the world that the U.S. is a welcome and open destination for legitimate visitors. And I look forward to working with you and receiving your recommendations on how we can help support the competitiveness of your industry. Thank you.
CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you. Thank you, Secretary Ross. Thank you for being here. Thank you for welcoming everyone here to the next version of the Tourism and Travel Advisory Board. Also, thank you for your remarks about your willingness and the willingness of Commerce to listen to the industry and hear what we believe are the significant issues and the solutions to getting us to being even more competitive internationally.

It is truly important for tourism, the U.S. economy. I know you stated the statistics, but not only do we significantly increase exports, not only are we a positive force on the trade deficits, but we also provide many Americans with their first job and it's very important to be that first rung on the ladder. And so, we want to continue to do that.

I'm glad you confirmed -- because there were some data issues earlier in the year -- that actually 2017 was a good year for tourism for the United States.
SECRETARY ROSS: Well, you would know better if it was a good year.

CHAIR SPROULS: Well, it depends on who you ask. I thought it was a very good year. So, I want to thank everybody who worked on those data issues and we got them to the point where now we have full confidence in the number.

I'd like to thank the members of the board here today, the folks that volunteered, both the veterans and the rookies, for your willingness to serve. I've been privileged to serve on this board for the last several years.

I can assure you this experience will probably be unlike any you have ever encountered under similar circumstances. This board actually works for a living. We're privileged to be in a position to directly influence governmental policy on travel and tourism in a profound way.

Secretary Ross and his predecessors have not been shy to ask us to roll up our sleeves, get to work and tell them what we believe the solutions are for us to drive
forward. We're relied upon not only to identify
the issues facing the industry, but we need to
come up with solutions. They expect us to
deliver things that are realistic and actionable
and have a positive effect.

We've been fortunate to see many of
the recommendations over the last several years
put into place by Commerce, DHS, State
Department, and other executive departments that
have delivered positive results for our industry.

This board has been instrumental on
issues such as visa wait times, focus on more
visa waiver countries, the National Travel Goal,
staffing and training improvements in CBP and
TSA. And that's just a few of the issues that
we've dealt with over the last six to eight
years.

You'll find we also work very quickly
around here. The Secretary and the Commerce
staff expect a lot from us. They value our
opinion and they look for actionable work product
to be produced as quickly as we can. And for
those of us who were on the board in the last round, you know of what I speak. My guess is that that's not going to change.

SECRETARY ROSS: You're right.

CHAIR SPROULS: When I think about International Tourism and Travel, I'm heartened to know our visitors to the U.S. continue to grow. But I also know that when you look at statistics, despite those successes, there are many countries and regions around the globe that are growing their visitation faster than we are.

I want us to regain our fair share of global tourism. In fact, I don't really mean that statement. I want us to get an unfair share the global tourism. That's how you compete.

We live in the greatest country in the world. Everyone wants to visit the United States. So we have to ensure that, while recognizing that security is and always will be the first priority, we do everything we can to make the process and experience of visiting this country as easy and as satisfying as possible.
I was fortunate to be part of a group of industry executives who visited the White House a few weeks ago. We met with the President and White House staff to discuss issues and opportunities for travel and tourism. I am very pleased to report that the President and his staff are not only well aware of the importance and impact that our industry has on the U.S. economy, the confirmed that they stand ready to help us any way they can.

So, at this point, I would turn the microphone back to Secretary Ross so you can tell us what you expect from this board.

SECRETARY ROSS: Thank you, John and members of the board, for sharing your views on opportunities and challenges for the U.S. Travel and Tourism industry and how we can work together. I will ask the board to develop specific recommendations around three main areas related to the competitiveness of the industry.

As the first task, please review the recommendations made by the previous board
concerning numerical goals for international visitors and spending from now through 2027. We should be able to do this now that we have newly revised date from the National Travel and Tourism Office.

Believe it or not, we haven't updated our international visitation and spending goals since 2012, so we're kind of severely out of date. I would like the board to recommend a national goal on annual international visitor spending and arrivals through 2027. Once we have a common target, the public and private sectors can work together on priorities to achieve those goals.

As a second task for the board, please explore how the Government can accelerate progress on implementing the Biometric Entry and Exit System for travelers. This effort as you know is read by the Department of Homeland Security.

It aims to improve security and create an efficient, seamless and secure experience for
travelers entering and exiting the U.S. Please provide us with recommendations on how the public and private sectors can work together to accelerate progress on implementing the system.

Third task for the board is to develop a set of recommendations on issues associated with the workforce and with skills development. This past July, President Trump signed an executive order creating the National Council for the American Worker.

I co-chair this interagency council with Ivanka Trump, Labor Secretary Costa and White House Domestic Policy Council Director Andrew Bremberg. We have been charged with creating a national workforce strategy. I seek your input in developing this strategy, especially as it relates to education and training programs.

The apprenticeships being introduced by the lodging and restaurant industries seem to me to offer a good example of ideas that can be implemented nationally. The board can provide
recommendations on how technology will affect your workforce and how workers can take advantage of opportunities presented by the adoption of new technologies.

Please also capture best practices in state, local and private sector tourism workforce development. These best practices will be used in developing the administration's larger goals of workforce development overhaul.

I look forward to receiving your recommendations on the national goal for visitors and spending by mid-December. The recommendations on biometric and workforce development can follow in February 2019.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Lovas and the National Travel and Tourism Office are available to facilitate your work. I look forward to your recommendations and pledge to help you grow our industry. I hope you continue to have a productive session and that your two-year term on this board will be extremely successful. Thank you for your attention.
CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you.

SECRETARY ROSS: Now I'm afraid I have to get to other work. Good to see you.

CHAIR SPROULS: Good to see and thank you. Okay. So, I would turn this over to you, Nazak, and to give us the current trade landscape.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY NIKAKHTAR: Sure. So, first I -- thank you again for the invitation to be here. Jane here? Oh, hi. That's Jane Sanders over there, our senior advisor in the front office in addition to the wonderful team that you guys work with. I just wanted you guys to know Jane's here. We're here to help.

You know, I -- we wanted to underscore the tremendous engine of growth that your industry represents. Oh, and I should first really thank you guys all, the season ones and the rookies here, for your contributions to the advisory board.

We utilize you guys in a really important way and I really want to underscore the
importance of your time. You are an incredibly useful way for us to collect data.

We're in this building all the time and so, aside from sort of events we do, we rely on you to help us put a finger on the pulse of what's happening so we can shape policies and do what's needed to make sure that your industries grow and thrive. So, it's very important that you guys understand how important we value -- we review and value your contributions to the advisory board.

Sort of the underscore the importance of your industry, I mean, certainly, we talked about the impact on the economy, but you are helping us strengthen our bilateral relationships with really key, important trading partners. That's critically important for alliances with trading partners or with our allies, and certainly it's important for the national security aspect of it. That significance certainly isn't lost on us.

Your industry is helping us with our
allies and trading partners encourage shared
cultures and values. When we can mesh, sort of,
our values together, we become so much more
deeply integrated in the world landscape and it
promotes an understand of where we're all coming
from and, certainly, it promotes an understanding
of, kind of, an -- what's the word I'm looking
for? Just a recognition of the importance of
kind of being one team working in the same
direction in goals with our allies.

You help us share our experiences with
our trading partners, our values. The
proliferation of what is traditionally American,
how that's proliferated around other countries,
and people come here and they can't get enough.
And they come here to seek more of it. You are
facilitating that. You are driving that.

And so, when we see notions of America
that are transported abroad, it's because you've
encouraged those people to come here, experience
those values and take those abroad. And that's
critically important in terms of shaping our
relationship internationally.

    What we'd like to really know from you
in terms of how we can do as Secretary Ross said
through workforce development. How can the
Commerce Department collaborate with you, hear
your ideas. We have advisory boards, too, and
they also have really good ideas that may be
useful to you.

    So, what we'd like to do is
collaborate on that in terms of hearing your
needs and giving you our input on improvements to
workforce development, understanding the
direction that you see your industry needs to
take it.

    Where in the United States are obvious
and non-obvious places to grow travel and
tourism? How do we utilize innovation, as the
Secretary said, to streamline and expedite
growth? What are the things that we're currently
working on? And where would kind of see -- like
to see the next generation of streamlining the
traveler's experience through the United States?
Things that we may not have thought of
but, maybe in terms of your work, you've kind of
batted around ideas. Think from our perspective,
nothing is impossible. And so, we can lay down
those markers for future work.

I think in terms of -- you know, we
all kind of know what trade policies are
happening and what's in the news, but we are
working on our end to really make America a
tremendous engine of growth and create economic
opportunities. Certainly, your industry would
benefit from that as well not just directly, but
in terms of visitors seeking to take part in that
growth engine of growth and really, truly just to
continue making America a magnificent place to
visit.

We have gems around this country that
are discovered and so many gems around this
country that have yet to be fully discovered.
And so, we're looking for you to help us find
creative ways to make, sort of, America
accessible to all and the number one tourist
destination around the world.

And again, just the point that you had mentioned, Mr. Sprouls, about other countries really promoting travel and tourism. Having had the opportunity and privilege from working in international trade for 20 years, to visit at all sorts of places around the world, there's nothing that beats what we've got here.

So, we're happy to do everything we can to make sure that we stay the number one travel destination and the center of gravity where everybody wants to come travel to. So, we look forward to working with you in the coming weeks and months.

CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you. Great. Thank you very much. I would now turn it over to Phil to give us an update on the National Travel and Tourism Office.

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LOVAS: Well, thank you, Chairman Sprouls. I appreciate it. And I appreciate everybody coming for the meeting today. It's great to see so many
familiar faces and friends. Let me just add my
welcome to all of you for being here today.

As the Secretary mentioned, I'm Phil
Lovas, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Travel and
Tourism in the International Trade
Administration's Industry & Analysis Unit. The
administration appointed me to this role because
it understands the importance of travel and
tourism to the economy and creating jobs.

A little bit about my background, as
Debbie Johnson knows from Arizona, I was in
Arizona politics for a number of years. I served
in the Arizona legislature there as a state
representative for several years.

And in the private sector, my
background is in franchise development in the
hotel industry where I worked for about 15 years
developing properties throughout the western U.S.
So, I understand this industry. It means a lot
to me and I will certainly be doing everything I
can in this role to promote it, to increase
travel and tourism in our great country.
With the National Travel and Tourism Office team, or the NTTO, I'll be working to advance the policies and programs that foster the competitiveness of the U.S. Travel and Tourism industry in collaboration with the private sector and other federal agencies. I really look forward to working with the board to accomplish this work.

And today, we also have with us a number of representatives from other departments and agencies within the Federal Government. Travel and tourism, you know, is not just a business unique to the Department of Commerce or the NTTO.

It touches across the entire government spectrum whether that be State Department-issued visa, Homeland Security ensuring our planes and our borders are secure, Department of Interior manage National Parks, or even everything that the Department of Transportation does, just to give a few examples.

So, I want to take a few minutes now
just to give you an overview of what NTTO does, especially for those members who are new to the board. One of NTTO's primary functions is to produce the Nation Travel and Tourism Statistics to inform policy and private sector decision making. These data are used for the following:

For the balance of trade calculation by the Bureau of Economic Analysis; to measure economic impacts of National Security policy; but industry to assess export markets, develop marketing strategies and measure performance; by the Center for Disease Control to assess travel flows for pandemic; and to measure customer experience with the international arrivals process.

As the Secretary stated, from this data, we know that the U.S. welcomed 77 million international visitors in 2017 and these visitors collectively spent a record-setting $251.4 billion, up 2 percent over 2016. Many of you are also aware that in April of 2018, the NTTO temporarily suspended publication of monthly
arrivals data.

    The team worked closely with U.S.

Customs and Border Protection to resolve the data

coding issue. And as many of you know, the NTTO

began regularly -- regular publication of

international arrivals data in September and we
greatly appreciated the industry's support and

patience while we addressed the issue. This

recently-released data will be integral to the

board's work to recommend a new national goal for

international visitation and spending requested

by Secretary Ross.

    On the policy side, the NTTO has

several functions, but a few of those are --
serves a single point of contact to which the

travel and tourism industry can bring its

concerns and priorities, improves

intergovernmental communications and coordination

on travel and tourism policy, and serves as the

conduit between the board and the U.S.

Government.

    Specifically, the NTTO brings private
sector input into federal travel and tourism
government deliberations through the advice received
from this board. The NTTO also manages the
federal interagency Tourism Policy Council, or
what we call the TPC. That TPC is chaired by
Secretary Ross and coordinates policies and
programs related to travel and tourism,
recreation and national heritage resources that
involve federal agencies.

Additionally, the NTTO is the federal
liaison to Brand USA under the Travel Promotion
Act. The NTTO advises the Secretary on Brand USA
board appointments, processes matching funds
requests and ensures communication of U.S. entry
requirements.

I recognize how important your time is
as industry leaders. I very much appreciate you
being here and I want to ensure you, as the
Secretary mentioned and as Nazak mentioned, that
your work plays a critical role in shaping the
Department of Commerce's work in travel and
tourism.
This has been an ongoing thing, obviously, since the board was formed, the importance of this. And believe me, in this administration, under the Secretary and Nazak's leadership and my role here, we absolutely want to hear from you and we take your input very seriously in putting it into action.

The board's recommendations help to set the priorities for the NTTO as well as the priorities for our work with our interagency partners through the TPC and I want to share a few recent examples of that.

At the request of the Secretary, the previous board provided recommendations on how the public and private sectors can work together to accelerate economic recovery in destinations affected by natural disasters. Following these recommendations, the NTTO developed a framework to accelerate the recovery of the visitor economy in areas impacted by disasters.

The goal of this framework is to help connect travel and tourism industry stakeholders.
with federal resources before, during and after disasters to accelerate travel and tourism recovery. The NTTO has also worked with the Economic Development Administration and FEMA to assist with the recovery of the visitor economy in Puerto Rico. We are currently tracking the latest storm and stand ready to put the framework into effect in Florida and elsewhere if necessary.

The previous board also recommended to Secretary Ross that he support the implementation of facial recognition biometric and U.S. airports of entry. The NTTO has been collaborating with the Department of Homeland Security at the staff level to increase awareness of the benefits of biometric to the travel process.

To further elevate this issue, the Secretary has asked for this board to explore how the Department of Commerce can work with the public and private sectors to accelerate progress on the implementation of the Biometric Entry/Exit System.
Finally, the NTTO is working with the Departments of State and Homeland Security at the staff level to encourage welcoming language and messaging by principles as recommended by the board.

So, I want to say I look forward to working closely with each of you on the charges put forth by the Secretary to reach our common goals of economic growth and job creation through travel and tourism. We greatly appreciate the work you do.

As Chairman Sprouls said, let's go get more than our fair share. Let's get our unfair share. And I want to thank you again, all, for being here today.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY NIKAKHTAR:
Chairman Sprouls, with our permission and -- you're in wonderful hands with Deputy Assistant Security Phil Lovas, Isabel and the entire team, as you know. With your permission, my senior advisor, Jane, and I --

(Simultaneous Speaking)
CHAIR SPROULS: Of course.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY NIKAKHTAR: -- make the economy strong so you guys can bring more tourists here.

CHAIR SPROULS: So, at this point, what we'd like to do is open the floor for comments with respect to what we've heard from Secretary Ross and the rest of the Commerce Department about what they want us to do as a board.

And I was not remiss, but I knew we only had Secretary Ross for a few minutes. Normally, we would've started by going around the table and have everybody say who they are so everyone else could know the faces that they didn't recognize when they got here.

So, if we could do that very quickly so we can reserve as much time as possible to hear from the board with respect to the issues, that would be great. I am John Sprouls from Universal Parks and Resorts.

MR. BEALL: And I'm Brian. I'll be
working with you as a designated federal officer.

MEMBER TORRES: Good afternoon. I'm Rob Torres. I'm with Google's travel group.

MEMBER TALBERT: Bill Talbert, Miami CVB.

MEMBER SALTZBURG: Bryan Saltzburg, TripAdvisor media group.

MEMBER SACKS: Adam Sacks with Tourism Economics.

MEMBER ROTHERY: Brian Rothery, Enterprise Holdings.


MEMBER PRIMROSE: Tricia Primrose, Marriott International.


MEMBER MOTSENBOCKER: Mary Motsenbocker, International Tourism Marketing.

MEMBER MORRISSEY: Good afternoon. Steve Morrisey, United Airlines.

MEMBER KLEIN: Tom Klein, Canyon
Ranch. Good afternoon.

MS. HILL: Oh, hello, everybody.

Isabel Hill. I'm the Director of the National Travel and Tourism Office. I work with Phil and the team here.

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY HAYDEN:

Matt Hayden, Homeland Security, Deputy Secretary of the Private Sector Office.

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY RAMOTOWSKI: Ed Ramotowski, Department of State.

MEMBER JOHNSON: Debbie Johnson, Director of the Arizona Office of Tourism.

MEMBER INMAN: Pam Inman, National Tour Association.

MEMBER HEDGE: Russ Hedge, Hosteling International USA.

MEMBER HAGEN: Jim Hagen, South Dakota Department of Tourism.

MEMBER DECROSS: Derek DeCross, Intercontinental Hotels Group.

MEMBER DEAN: I'm Brad Dean, Discover Puerto Rico.
MEMBER DAVIDSON: Good afternoon, everyone. Todd Davidson with Travel Oregon.

CHAIR SPROULS: Great. Thank you.

And as I said earlier, thank you all for being here. So, I would open the floor. We've already got some assignments, several of which are due before the end of the year. Thoughts? Comments?

MEMBER PRIMROSE: Mr. Chairman, first, thanks so much. I'm not a rookie. I know I'm a sophomore, that we can borrow from that analogy.

I was so glad to hear the international arrivals be our top assignment. I think what's going on, from my perspective, is we're really building on the momentum of that good White House meeting, which, Mr. Chairman, you were at. And I didn't know if there was any more color you'd want to share, but I think that assignment is important.

What I'd love to know, maybe from a process standpoint, is how much can we build on the work that was done in terms of the goal? How should we -- you know, we have to move quickly to
hit this December deadline.

And while we didn't get this guidance, is there an opportunity, maybe, to showcase some of the ways in which we're going to get there? I'm thinking about Brand USA and its importance in this process. So, just throw that out for some discussion.

CHAIR SPROULS: No. I mean, I absolutely agree with you. I think, clearly, we've done a lot of work in that area, in that space. And I think the sense I got from the Secretary is build upon that work and actually recommend what we think the update to the National Travel Goal should be.

And I think that's probably -- and you can correct me, Phil, if I'm incorrect. But I think that's what he's looking for quickly. I think beyond that, then this board can work on, "And here's how we think we need to get there," to your point.

So, I would want to get through that first process quickly and say, "This is what we
believe a legitimate goal by 2027 should be," and whether it should be equally focused on visitors and money or one or the other as a higher priority. And then come back as a second task of this board to talk about, "Okay, and here's how we believe the best way to get there is." So, that's what I would hope we would do.

MEMBER DEAN: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIR SPROULS: Yes?

MEMBER DEAN: Mr. Chairman, let me, I'm sure on behalf of everybody, express our appreciation for you and your leadership --

(Simultaneous Speaking)

CHAIR SPROULS: Oh, thank you.

MEMBER DEAN: Thank you. It's an honor to serve this and it's an honor to serve under you. Two quick comments.

I'm incredibly excited to hear the direction from the Secretary and also the comment from the Assistant Secretary with regard to workforce. I suspect we could all go around this room today and talk about the challenges therein.
And I know if we're feeling it and a destination's been devastated, and yet all the good work that's being done by the Federal Government and the private sector there won't amount to much if we can't get people to return the island. And I'm sure we can all talk about that.

And I would hope that part of the scope of that is not just about touting the jobs we create, but the careers that we launch. I think sometimes as an industry, we cheapen our impact a little bit when we talk about job creation. It's important.

But we launch careers. This room is a great example of people who probably started off in an hourly position or level-up position. And you look at the leadership and influence here, and I think we could probably duplicate that same kind of analysis in a Fortune 100 C Suite or a Fortune 500 C Suite. So, hopefully, part of the scope of what will be to also talk about the careers we launch.
I also want to pick up on the comment made by the Deputy Assistant Secretary. And on behalf of your fellow American citizens in Puerto Rico, I -- words just can articulate the impact that I've seen in just the few months I've been there by the work that's been done by the Federal Government.

We all know the role FEMA plays, but having seen firsthand the impact that NTTO and EDA and Department of Commerce has had, it has bene amazing. Transformational would be the one word that I would use.

I was sharing earlier, I was in a meeting just a couple weeks ago and someone from a remote part of the island, the small part of the visitor economy was having this philosophical discussion about infrastructure funds and how they need to aligned synergistically with other industries.

This person was quoting Isabel, but had not been in the meeting with Isabel, so her comments had been translated several times over.
and this person was bringing that influence in to try to shape government policy. And I thought wasn't it great that NTTO's influence is being felt outside of the normal sector, the visitor economy, with the private sector leadership trying to influence government policy?

And it just reminded me of the very, very significant impact that you're having. We often laugh or joke or smirk about the comment, "I'm here from the Federal Government, I'm here to help." But I can tell you in the last five months, wearing a different hat now, I'm seeing the impact that the leadership, the Federal Government and particularly this agency, and it is nothing short of transformational.

So, I appreciate your comments and I just want to echo you're spot-on, and we thank you for that support and impact that you and your team are having.

MEMBER TALBERT: John?

CHAIR SPROULS: Yes. Go ahead.

MEMBER TALBERT: Congratulations.
Thank you for your leadership and going from a
golf community to a -- because I don't get to
play golf there anymore. But thank you, John,
for your leadership, again.

I guess I'm a semi-rookie here. But,
you know, just when you -- you know, you go
through cycles of being positive and negative.
When I come here and hear the Secretary speak
like this, talk about the value of this industry,
and his new team and the old team, I get
energized. We're in sales, so we're pretty
energized all the time.

CHAIR SPROULS: You tend to be pretty
energized.

MEMBER TALBERT: Yes. But we go
through cycles of we're up, we're down, you hear
stuff. But when I hear this stuff, you know, I'm
ready to rock and roll. And thank the Secretary
for us way down in Florida. But the new team,
we're workhorses. We'll make it all happen for
you. But thank you for your leadership. Thank
you.
CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you. Anyone else?

MEMBER SACKS: Last year when we did some initial work on those goals and we wound up holding those back due to data issues, we thought about the possibility of kind of baking in a certain set of assumptions.

So, while not exploring and fully recommending things, at least indicating that certain things would be required in order to hit that goal related to Brand USA or visa waiver or other berms that might at least get earmarked in those initial targets. But of course for fuller exploration and development later on.

CHAIR SPROULS: No, I think that makes sense. I wouldn't want to hold up trying to deliver on the timeline that the Secretary wants to get too in-depth, but I think we absolutely should show those pillars and, to your point, those berms that we think are going to be critical and we're not going to get there. So, sir, I see it as a two-step process for the
MEMBER DAVIDSON: Mr. Chairman, if I could? First of all, thank you again for your leadership.

CHAIR SPROULS: Okay. You all have to stop that. You're making me blush.

MEMBER DAVIDSON: Glad I got to go last. And as somebody who started his career in the travel and tourism industry at a theme park, but not as a character and not running a ride, but cleaning the bathrooms, I can tell you I -- you know, I get it. There are careers that can be launched in this industry for sure.

I just wanted to dovetail on the Secretary's comments and Adam's comments just now about the goal and especially your comments, Mr. Chair. Just clarification that the TTAB's not being asked to put together a forecast, but rather to put together a legitimate goal for visitation and/or spending for the U.S. Travel and Tourism industry as it relates to international visitation and spending for 2027.
And that clarification is incredibly helpful. I know the work that was done by the previous board included some caveats, a couple of levers that we thought needed to be pulled in order to make that goal happen. And I think, going forward, that could be seen as, maybe, some foundational work, then, for subsequent work that this board could then take on.

So, I appreciate your work here and the Secretary's comments. And, Phil, it's just great to meet you.

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LOVAS:

Thank you.

CHAIR SPROULS: Anyone else? Isabel, do you have any comments?

MS. HILL: No. I just -- I'm thrilled we're back in business and I'm very excited, I think, about the opportunities to have that goal and bring that work. You know, I think you're absolutely correct that those key assumptions need to be clarified because you can't just throw a goal out there without those kinds of
assumptions.

So, very much looking forward to working with all of you. Certainly, the team is available. And I know that when we were talking about this before, we knew there were some challenges in the data. And I know, Adam, that you were very clear about that.

And so, I think, in terms of the timing, I know that there -- that some of that was already baked into the work, moving forward, so I think that that will help shorten time-to-market on that. But so super excited to have you all here. Thank you.

CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you.

MR. KASS: John?

CHAIR SPROULS: Yes?

MR. KASS: Can I speak from the back for a moment?

CHAIR SPROULS: Sure.

MR. KASS: Thank you. I just want to introduce myself. I'm Howard Kass with CLEAR. Our CO, Caryn Seidman Becker, couldn't be here.
But you had six or seven people speak about the goals -- the travel and tourism goal, and the workforce, but I wanted to just bring up the biometric goal for a minute.

We think it's a terrific goal to work towards. We know that it's a mandated CVP and we think it's terrific. And biometrics are the future. They're here in that scale. And all of the companies around the table in this room, biometrics can be part of your solution to improving your companies. And we're delighted at CLEAR to be part of this and work on that project and to be a part of this.

CHAIR SPROULS: Great. Thank you.

MR. KASS: Thanks.

CHAIR SPROULS: Yes? Yes, we don't want to leave that one out. That one's important as well. I don't know. Matt or Ed? If you guys want to add -- anything you wanted to add?

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY HAYDEN:

We're just here to make sure that the Homeland Security assets are brought to bear to see where
we can assist in our partnerships with Commerce and NTTO. And make sure that if it's a bit of information as well as to make sure that we hear from the industry the same sense of value point of view, that we can trust it as well.

CHAIR SPROULS: Yes. And I can say with respect to that, because I have been on this board for a few years, we really appreciate that because, early on in this process, both -- and I realize I'm talking eight, nine, ten years ago. Both from a DHS point of view and also from a state point of view, it was kind of hard to find people that wanted to listen and understand, and understand that you could pair security with welcome.

And it has changed completely. We have had great working relationships. We have had great opportunity to impact things that are going on. Ed's my hero. Everyone else in the State Department was saying that it couldn't be done, that we could get down to single digits in terms of the biggest countries, in terms of their
visa waits. And it happened.

So, I really appreciate you're here
and we're going to be calling upon you and
wanting to talk about a lot of different issues,
biometrics particularly, because I do think
there's a lot going on in biometrics throughout a
number of industries, especially travel and
tourism.

So, we'd love to see that happen
because it does make a big difference. So, Ed,
I'm sorry.

(Simultaneous Speaking)

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY RAMOTOWSKI:
Yes. Let me just add that the State Department
is going to continue its productive partnership
with the board. As you pointed out, we've been
doing that for a number of years now and it's
been a real success story.

We believe in it. We've always said
that national security and legitimate travel are
not contradictory goals, and we remain committed
to that. So, you can count on us.
CHAIR SPROULS: Great. Did I miss anybody, because I don't want to do that. Okay. Then we need to see if there's any public comment. I think we have one public comment registered in advance. Aaron Wodin-Schwartz from Brand USA. You're going to have to take a seat at the table for your comment.

(Laughter)

MR. WODIN-SCHWARTZ: Well, thank you for having us here. I'm also here with my colleague, Chief Strategy Communications Officer, Anne Madison, at Brand USA and our CEO, Chris Thompson, of course, loves to come to this meeting.

He wishes he could be here today. He's actually in Tallahassee right now both for personally reasons and also checking in on the folks there. Of course, you know, all of our thoughts and prayers go out to the people in Florida, in Georgia, and in the Carolinas that are being affected by this.

Obviously, the framework that's been
put in place by this board and by NTTO will, I'm sure, be very useful. We, of course, reached out to our counterparts with all of our offers of help that we can, and look forward to amplifying their messaging in particular when we get to the open for business message, but anything we can do in the meantime as well.

So, I am Aaron Wodin-Schwartz, our VP of Public Policy, Public Affairs at Brand USA and we've had a great partnership with this board for the last couple of boards. Nice to see so many familiar faces and some new faces, some of whom we've been around the world with in the last couple of months.

And I would just say in general, you know, we're very pleased to see the productive work of this board going forward and pleased to see, of course, the new data we've had come out. We're very happy and proud of that.

And, you know, you should consider us a resource as you're putting the recommendations together. You know, we are the -- for those that
don't know, we are the destination marketing organization for the USA. And our job is really to be signally focused on promoting USA as a destination, all 50 states, five territories, District of Columbia, to, through, and beyond the gateways.

And we have a lot of resources and marketing opportunities and communications on policy that we have in place around the world. And so, you know, whether it is our view on the global travel and tourism landscape or whether it's on market-specific issues or whether it's on deploying messaging and marketing opportunities, we hope this board will continue to consider us a resource and build us into those recommendations.

And please call us on any time that you would like to and we look forward to working with everybody. So, thank you, Brian, and thank you, everybody.

CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you. Are there any other members of the public that wanted to make a comment during the meeting? No? I think
we're good. Good. Great.

Well, the next item is next steps for the board. And we have found great success for those who have been around here by setting up committees that go against each of the charges that we've been given over the years. And that's where a lot of the work gets done for the board is within these committees.

And I would propose, unless somebody has a better idea, that we continue that process. What I would like to do is get a committee against each of the three focus areas that Secretary Ross asked us to focus on. And what would be best for us is if there was something that is really your passion and you want to be a part of, if you could let us know -- I guess, Brian, if they could let you know?

If you can send Brian and email and say -- what I hope you would say is, "I will do anything you want me to do, but I really want to work on this one." And we will as much as possible try to do that by balancing out the
resources and the companies you have and the
expertise as much as possible so that we have
three really strong teams to go against these
areas.

Now, once we go against these areas, by February there will be more charges. I have
found with this Commerce Department that no good deed goes unpunished, and so there will be more
work for us to do. But at least initially, I'd like to get everybody working on -- because mid-
December is right around the corner.

The good thing is, with respect to both of those, we're not starting from scratch.
So, if you could let us know the things that work for you, we will have a meeting, my guess is, probably next week by phone. We'll include Kurt from Carlson who couldn't -- unfortunately couldn't be here today because he is in Singapore, who is the vice chair of the board, and the folks from Commerce to decide how do we align this.

We will ask some of you to serve as
chairman, again, trying to figure out our best way forward to get the work done. We have been very successful in doing that and I think we'll be very successful again. And that would culminate probably in -- we will probably end up deliberating and approving our submissions against the first two objectives before our next meeting. So, the next meeting would probably be sometime in the first quarter.

MR. BEALL: You know, we'd have a meeting by phone.

CHAIR SPROULS: Right. We'd have a meeting by phone in order to review what's been proposed by the committees. And obviously, we'll circulate everything around. We've got a very efficient circulation process to get comments from everyone with respect to the letters that we would deliver. And we work as quickly as we can.

Any comments, questions, ideas with respect to how we'll process our work going forward? Great. Do you have something?

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LOVAS:
Yes. Just in the NTTO, we'll follow-up with additional information. Glad to see Chairman Sprouls is already setting dates for the next call.

(Simultaneous Speaking)

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LOVAS:
He'll make my job very easy here, I think, which is great. But we will certainly be holding some teleconferences in the not-too-distance future.

Brian Beall and Jennifer Aguinaga will be your points of contact here for the National Travel and Tourism Office and the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, so they'll be able to help you with anything that you need going forward. And again, just want to thank you for your willingness to serve and being here today.

It means a lot.

MS. HILL: Oh, thank you. Just a couple of, sort of, housekeeping key points, particularly for those of you who are new to the board.

As I'm sure you are aware, but just to
reiterate, when recommendations come forward, these are consensus recommendations, so it is important that the deliberation happen in public, which is why we have a telephone call and everybody joins that call. But obviously, Brian and the team will circulate all the paperwork and facilitate that process moving forward.

Second is that, you know, as Brand USA mentioned, there are resources throughout the Federal Government and back, obviously, within the private sector that the teams can bring forward into the work.

Obviously, you all are representative, but if you all need any assistance in reaching into government to find anybody in the departments to talk to, to inform your work, I think that's one of the real values of the deep dive that you all do, then please be sure that you reach out to us. And we're here to help facilitate that process.

CHAIR SPROULS: Great.

MEMBER KLEIN: Chairman, can I -- Tom
Klein, Canyon Ranch. I'm a freshman, so I can ask any question --

(Simultaneous Speaking)

MEMBER KLEIN: How are new initiatives introduced into this committee or how -- what's the process for that?

CHAIR SPROULS: New initiatives other than the focus areas we've been given by --

(Simultaneous Speaking)

MEMBER KLEIN: -- focus two, three areas that we --

(Simultaneous Speaking)

CHAIR SPROULS: We would surface it within our meetings and --

(Simultaneous Speaking)

MEMBER KLEIN: And is this is the format to do --

CHAIR SPROULS: This is the format, sure.

MEMBER KLEIN: And may I raise an issue, then?

CHAIR SPROULS: Absolutely.
MEMBER KLEIN: Look. I just returned from the Global Wellness Summit, which took place in Bologna, Italy, this past week. And most of us in this room know wellness is huge and it's at the forefront. It's a $4.2 trillion business globally in 2017.

For North America alone in 2017, the same year, $241.7 billion were spent in the wellness space, which represents about 204 million trips in North America. That's a significant and material number.

And I think with the high cost of health care in this country, if we as -- and I'm only putting it out there for discussion, you know, and maybe we can do something with it. But if we could take wellness to the forefront of -- within this committee or this group and start to promote wellness into the U.S.

And wellness tourism is something that is not a buzzword anymore. It's really letting people live younger longer. And as a consequence of that or a positive byproduct I think one will
see a significant drop in the health care costs in this country and we'll get people living better lives.

How would -- I guess the question is, how do we -- how could I table this and bring it to chair, and support the committee in whatever way possible to see how we can make that a way of life in, you know, sort of, for this organization.

CHAIR SPROULS: Well, I think you tabled it. And what I would ask is -- I'm assuming that -- I'm sure you have more in-depth information.

MEMBER KLEIN: I have all the statistics.

CHAIR SPROULS: Yes. Could you -- yes. So, if you could share that with the members of the board, and then we can then come back and figure out what we think is the best way forward for the board to be able to approach that.

MEMBER KLEIN: That's right. Thank
you. And I will make sure you get that
information.

CHAIR SPROULS: That'd be great.

Thank you.

MEMBER KLEIN: Thank you.

CHAIR SPROULS: Then I will turn it
over to you, Brian, for ethics information.

MR. BEALL: Sure. This is a very
brief orientation, really. In your folder, there
is a handout from our general council's ethics
teams. Just wanted to provide that for you, if
you want to take a look --

MEMBER TALBERT: This something new?

Did we do this before?

MR. BEALL: No ethics.

MEMBER TALBERT: Did we do this
before?

MR. BEALL: It normally happens at the
beginning.

(Simultaneous Speaking)

MS. HILL: -- you should say I'm
deploy familiar.
MEMBER TALBERT: I guess I won't get reappointed again.

(Simultaneous Speaking)

MR. BEALL: Yes. This happens at the beginning of every board.

MEMBER TALBERT: Yes, I do remember rit.

MR. BEALL: Yes, of course.

(Laughter)

MR. BEALL: So, just take a look when you have a chance. If you have any questions, as member of the board, you serve in a representative capacity, which is different than another version, which is a special government employee, which is subject to different ethics rules.

So, this is specifically to you as representatives on the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board. If you have any questions, please let me know. Our ethics team can help you with any questions --

MEMBER TALBERT: Do we sign something?
MR. BEALL: No, there's nothing to sign. It's just for you to be aware and to --

MEMBER TALBERT: I'll sign it now.

(Laughter)

MR. BEALL: No pressure.

CHAIR SPROULS: In your case, Bill.

(Laughter)

MR. BEALL: And please let us know if you do have any questions. We appreciate it.

Thank you.

CHAIR SPROULS: Great. Anything else that needs to come before us today? If not, then, Brian?

MR. BEALL: Well, if nothing further, as the Designated Federal Officer, we'll call the meeting adjourned. Thank you all so much for coming to D.C. today.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter was concluded at 3:03 p.m.)
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: US Tourism and Travel Advisory Board

Before: US DOC

Date: 10-11-18

Place: Washington, DC

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

[Signature]

Court Reporter