

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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FRIDAY

DECEMBER 3, 2021

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The Board met via Video

Teleconference, at 2:01 p.m. EST, Brad Dean, Vice  
Chair, presiding.

**PRESENT**

**BRAD DEAN, Discover Puerto Rico, PR, Vice Chair**  
**CAROLINE BETETA, Visit California**  
**DAVID GILBERT, Destination Cleveland and Greater  
Cleveland Sports Commission**  
**RUSSELL HEDGE, Hostelling International USA**  
**BILL HORNBUCKLE, MGM Resorts**  
**DEBBIE JOHNSON, Arizona Office of Tourism**  
**STEPHANIE JONES, Cultural Heritage Economic  
Alliance**  
**ROLF LUNDBERG, Choice Hotels International**  
**WILL MOREY, Morey's Piers**  
**MARY MOTSENBOCKER, International Tourism  
Marketing, Inc.**  
**VINAY PATEL, Fairbrook Hotels, VA**  
**CATHERINE PRATHER, National Tour Association**  
**TRICIA PRIMROSE, Marriott International**  
**BRIAN QUINN, Domio**  
**OLGA RAMUDO, Express Travel**  
**STEPHEN REVETRIA, Giants Enterprise**  
**DANIEL RICHARDS, Global Rescue LLC**  
**MONICA SMITH, Southeast Tourism Society**  
**ROB TORRES, Google, Inc.**

**ALSO PRESENT**

**JENNIFER AGUINAGA, Designated Federal Officer,  
U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**SARAH MORGENTHAU, Deputy Assistant Secretary for  
Travel and Tourism, U.S. Department of  
Commerce**

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 2:01 p.m.

3 MS. AGUINAGA: All right. It looks  
4 like it slowed down so let's go ahead and get  
5 started. Good morning, good afternoon everyone.  
6 Happy Friday. Welcome to this meeting of the  
7 Travel and Tourism Advisory Board.

8 As the Designated Federal Officer for  
9 the Board, the meeting is now officially open.  
10 Just a few logistical notes before we begin.  
11 Please ensure to keep your lines on mute if you  
12 are not speak.

13 When there's the opportunity for Board  
14 discussion, please use the raise your hand  
15 feature or, if you're on the phone and that  
16 feature isn't working, feel free to send me an  
17 email or just unmute your line. As a reminder,  
18 the only section for members of the public to  
19 speak is during the public comment portion of the  
20 agenda.

21 Now I will do a quick member roll call  
22 so please just unmute your line when I call your

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name.

Brad Dean.

VICE CHAIR DEAN: Present.

MS. AGUINAGA: Caroline Beteta.

MEMBER BETETA: Here.

MS. AGUINAGA: Brian Chesky.

Christine Duffy. Elliott Ferguson. Liz  
Fitzsimmons. David Gilbert.

MEMBER GILBERT: Here.

MS. AGUINAGA: Russ Hedge.

MEMBER HEDGE: Here.

MS. AGUINAGA: Bill Hornbuckle.

MS. AGUINAGA: Debbie Johnson.

MEMBER JOHNSON: Here.

MS. AGUINAGA: Stephanie Jones.

MEMBER JONES: Present.

MS. AGUINAGA: Peter Kern. Rolf

Lundberg.

MEMBER LUNDBERG: Present.

MS. AGUINAGA: Glenda McNeal. Duff

Milkie. Will Morey.

MEMBER MOREY: Here.

1 MS. AGUINAGA: Mary Motsenbocker.  
2 MEMBER MOTSENBOCKER: Here.  
3 MS. AGUINAGA: Chris Nassetta. Vinay  
4 Patel.  
5 MEMBER PATEL: Here.  
6 MS. AGUINAGA: Catherine Prather.  
7 MEMBER PRATHER: Here.  
8 MS. AGUINAGA: Tricia Primrose.  
9 MEMBER PRIMROSE: Here.  
10 MS. AGUINAGA: Brian Quinn. Olga  
11 Ramudo.  
12 MEMBER RAMUDO: Here.  
13 MS. AGUINAGA: Stephen Revetria.  
14 MEMBER REVETRIA: Present.  
15 MS. AGUINAGA: Dan Richards.  
16 MEMBER RICHARDS: Here.  
17 MS. AGUINAGA: Adam Sacks. Monica  
18 Smith.  
19 MEMBER SMITH: Here.  
20 MS. AGUINAGA: D. Taylor. Rob Torres.  
21 MEMBER TORRES: Here.  
22 MS. AGUINAGA: Ron Vlastic. And Greg

1 Webb. If I missed you, or if you're joining  
2 late, please just shoot me an email and let me  
3 know you are on the line.

4 With that, I turn it over to Board  
5 Vice Chair Brad Dean.

6 VICE CHAIR DEAN: Thank you, Jennifer.

7 Good afternoon, or good morning,  
8 wherever we may find you this afternoon. Thank  
9 you for making time to join this important  
10 meeting of the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory  
11 Board. I think every meeting the TTAB holds is  
12 important, but I can't think in my time on the  
13 TTAB of more important, more necessary, and more  
14 consequential work than what we've been doing of  
15 late.

16 I want to take this opportunity to  
17 thank the members of the U.S. Travel and Tourism  
18 Advisory Board for the determination, dedication,  
19 and perseverance you've shown on tackling some  
20 really, really important issues and  
21 opportunities.

22 I would be remiss if we didn't give

1 our appreciation to Jennifer, Isabel Hill, and  
2 the entire team at the National Travel and  
3 Tourism Office for the unwavering support that  
4 you provide in our efforts to do that.

5 When you think about just the  
6 developments that have taken place just since we  
7 last met, it's pretty clear that we are still in  
8 a very dynamic environment that continues to  
9 present unprecedented challenges, but also  
10 opportunities for us so all the more reason why  
11 we're taking on this work and working at the pace  
12 we are, and also investing the time and the  
13 talents that you and others who are participating  
14 from outside TTAB to make these recommendations.

15 When I think of the two letters that  
16 we recently sent to the Secretary, and the two  
17 letters that we have today, I'm encouraged and  
18 I'm inspired that I think we are laying the  
19 ground work for some very profound progress that  
20 will take place. Thank you, again, to everyone  
21 who is assisting with this and making this  
22 possible.



1                   So today we're going to address two  
2 charges given by the Secretary. We did take some  
3 extra time because these are such big, massive  
4 topics. In some cases they extend beyond our  
5 industry and our nation, but very, very important  
6 and potentially very, very impactful.

7                   Of course, our goal is to take  
8 advantage of the leadership and the enthusiasm  
9 that Secretary Raimondo, Deputy Assistant  
10 Secretary Morgenthau, and the team at NTTO and  
11 Commerce are bringing to this so that we can  
12 galvanize efforts and really make significant  
13 progress.

14                   I want to take this opportunity to  
15 thank the Climate Subcommittee and also the  
16 Employment Subcommittee for the time, talents,  
17 and energy that you've invested in this. For any  
18 members outside of TTAB who are -- I shouldn't  
19 say members. Anyone outside of TTAB just  
20 spending the day that played a role in this as  
21 well, thank you for your efforts for that.

22                   In particular, I want to thank our

1 colleague Caroline Beteta and Russ Hedge for  
2 leading these efforts. Neither one of these were  
3 easy or simple and Caroline and Russ did an  
4 excellent job at leading the charge.

5 I'm confident that after today we'll  
6 not only meet but hopefully exceed the  
7 Secretary's expectations and give her and the  
8 team at Commerce and NTTO what they need to begin  
9 pushing forward and making progress in these very  
10 important issues.

11 With that said, we'll go ahead and  
12 dive into the first set of recommendations.  
13 We'll begin with the Climate Subcommittee. I do  
14 want to make one clarification. We are going to  
15 review the version of the letter that was  
16 distributed earlier by Jennifer. There were some  
17 minor but meaningful edits that were proposed by  
18 our colleague.

19 We saw the revised letter earlier  
20 today. It's not substantive changes in terms of  
21 the spirit or the contents of the recommendation  
22 but there were a couple very meaningful

1 recommendations made so those have been  
2 incorporated into the revised letter.

3 I also want to offer one observation  
4 as we begin with this particular topic, in  
5 particular for the members of TTAB that are new  
6 to our organization. Typically we are striving  
7 to develop some very actionable recommendations  
8 that are summarized in very tight, well-  
9 documented letters. We size up problems and  
10 offer specific solutions. We identify  
11 opportunities and marry those with succinct  
12 tactics or strategies that will optimize  
13 outcomes.

14 This first set of recommendations is  
15 distinctly different from that traditional  
16 approach. Instead, what we're doing is to  
17 develop recommendations that really serve as a  
18 starting point for the National Travel and  
19 Tourism Office and Secretary Raimondo and the  
20 team.

21 This is an incredibly important topic.  
22 It's massive in size and scope. As I mentioned

1 earlier, this extends beyond our industry, and  
2 even beyond our nation in many respects. Today  
3 we are not coming to the Secretary with a  
4 solution to specific problems. Rather, we're  
5 looking for a starting point.

6 When you consider what Caroline is  
7 about to share with you, I would encourage you to  
8 ask yourself is this an adequate starting point  
9 for the Secretary and the team at NTTO to begin  
10 working on this charge. Simply stated, it's  
11 intended to be a beginning, not an ending point.

12 So, with that in mind, I'm pleased to  
13 turn the meeting over to our colleague, my dear  
14 friend from the Golden State, Caroline Beteta.

15 MEMBER BETETA: Thanks, Brad, and all  
16 of our fellow Board members for the opportunity  
17 to present this work of the Climate Change  
18 Subcommittee. Brad, I'm glad you clarified that.  
19 That was part of the complexity of us trying to  
20 get that focus on what we are presenting to you  
21 today that we are really breaking this off in a  
22 couple steps.

1 I also want to thank Sarah, Isabel,  
2 Jennifer, and the rest of the Department staff  
3 for your incredible guidance and support. We  
4 certainly had a lot of time in between meetings,  
5 even with you, Isabel, Linda, etc., really trying  
6 to shape and distill this into some solid  
7 recommendations and initiatives going forward.

8 With that said, stating the obvious,  
9 this was very highly engaged. It included  
10 several representatives from cruise ships,  
11 vacation rentals, travel services. I do want to  
12 thank them because they were on the phone in  
13 between and during this; Brian Chesky from  
14 Airbnb, Christine Duffy from Carnival Cruise  
15 Lines, Debbie Johnson from Arizona Tourism, Mary  
16 Motsenbocker from the International Tourism  
17 Marketing Organization, and Dan Richards of  
18 Global Rescue.

19 And we had a guest with us, Joe  
20 D'Alessandro, the President and CEO of San  
21 Francisco Travel. It was really a great --  
22 specifically to identify -- data specifically can

1 help the industry. Stating the obvious, climate  
2 change affects every segment of our tourism  
3 industry in some way and it certainly does  
4 present the long-term challenges for all of us.

5 As we wrote in the preamble of the  
6 proposed letter to the Secretary, climate change  
7 is a profound threat to the stability of  
8 America's travel and tourism economy potentially  
9 affecting how much tourists travel, when they  
10 travel, and how much they spend. Some of us see  
11 these impacts almost every day.

12 I can say personally that in  
13 California and the rest of the western United  
14 States, climate-fueled wild fires have  
15 accelerated. We've experienced the eight worst  
16 wild fires in California history and they've  
17 occurred in the last four years, for example.

18 If it weren't for our truly heroic  
19 fire fighting efforts this past summer, we would  
20 have lost the city of South Lake Tahoe which all  
21 of you know is an iconic visitor destination.  
22 Meanwhile, 2021 was the third most active

1 hurricane season on record in the East and  
2 Southeast, a total of 21 storms garnering \$70  
3 billion in damage.

4 With that background, the Subcommittee  
5 identified three major impacts that are detailed  
6 in our proposed letter to the Secretary and I'll  
7 walk you through them now. First and foremost,  
8 extreme weather events. This includes heat and  
9 multi-year droughts that prompt wildfires and  
10 smoky skies in the West, and an increase of  
11 severe hurricanes and storms in the East and  
12 Southeast. This has implications not only on  
13 visitation but travel and tourism infrastructure.

14 The second of those was sea level  
15 rise. Climate change we know is increasing sea  
16 levels from Miami to San Francisco. This  
17 threatens billions of dollars in infrastructure  
18 for private tourism entities and public  
19 facilities and it's expected to be about 400  
20 billion by 2060.

21 Finally, changes in seasonalities.  
22 Summers are getting longer and other seasons are

1 getting shorter. The tourism and outdoor  
2 recreation economies are significantly affected.  
3 Ski seasons are shorter, migration patterns for  
4 both wildlife and plant life are obviously  
5 shifting.

6 The Subcommittee came up with three  
7 areas of inquiry for NOAA specifically. The  
8 first is risk mitigation. More precise  
9 projections of travel-related climate impacts by  
10 region and subregion. This can help the industry  
11 meet the challenge of rising insurance costs.

12 It also will help the industry and  
13 government accurately inform with optimal  
14 decisions such as those related to seasonality  
15 challenges. The second of those was education.  
16 Specifically, the help in framing specific  
17 climate impacts on travel and tourism for  
18 millennial and Gen Z consumers, and school-age  
19 preconsumers that can elevate the issue and  
20 promote sustainable behavior.

21 Finally, assessing carbon emissions.  
22 By developing a set of basic tools that the



1 industry members can use to measure the level of  
2 carbon in the atmosphere at the destination level  
3 would be a great first step. In the longer term,  
4 NOAA methodologies could allow individual  
5 businesses such as restaurants, hotels, and small  
6 and medium-size enterprises to assess carbon  
7 markets to offset those impacts.

8 So that's a quick summary of the work  
9 that's been done over the last several weeks.  
10 Thank you again for the opportunity to make these  
11 recommendations on behalf of the Board. Such a  
12 critical issue for the travel and tourism  
13 industry and we are happy to answer any  
14 questions. Thanks, Brad.

15 VICE CHAIR DEAN: Caroline, thank you  
16 to you and the Subcommittee and all the others  
17 who participated in this. You provided a very  
18 succinct summary of a lot of major work with  
19 tremendous potential consequences for our  
20 industry. Thank you for your leadership and also  
21 thank you to the subcommittee members for the  
22 effort.

1                   We're going to take a few minutes now  
2                   for the TTAB members to discuss the  
3                   recommendations put forth by the Subcommittee.  
4                   If you have any questions or comments, even those  
5                   who are on the Subcommittee who may want to add  
6                   some color or context to Caroline's comments, you  
7                   are certainly welcome to chime in as well.

8                   As Jennifer mentioned earlier, if you  
9                   can, try to use the raise-your-hand function.  
10                  Jennifer, who is better at monitoring that than I  
11                  am, will guide us through there. If you're on  
12                  the phone, or you don't have the raise-your-hand  
13                  function available, just try to time your  
14                  comments maybe when someone else is finished  
15                  speaking so we're not talking over each other.  
16                  If you're not speaking, please keep it on mute.

17                  I will say for those who are not TTAB  
18                  members, this section of the agenda is really  
19                  just for the TTAB members to discuss the  
20                  recommendations. In the next portion of our  
21                  meeting there will be an opportunity for public  
22                  comment.

1                   With that said, we'll open it up for  
2 discussion on the Climate Subcommittee's  
3 recommendations.

4                   Jennifer, I'm not seeing or hearing  
5 any comments.

6                   MS. AGUINAGA: I don't see any.

7                   VICE CHAIR DEAN: Okay. Last call for  
8 any comments or questions. If not, it's  
9 certainly okay. We'll move on but don't want to  
10 cut short any meaningful discussion or answering  
11 any questions. We'll be moving on to public  
12 input shortly and then voting on the  
13 recommendations later in the meeting. Last call  
14 for any comments or questions.

15                   All right. Caroline, you made that  
16 look awful easy. Congratulations. We'll be  
17 voting on that shortly.

18                   We're going to go ahead and move into  
19 the next set of recommendations. This is from  
20 the Employment Subcommittee. I suspect we all  
21 recognize that the work force related issues are  
22 some would argue the greatest impediment to our

1 recovery long term. I can speak to it from here  
2 in Puerto Rico.

3 We are having the all-time-record  
4 level of visitation in the history of Puerto Rico  
5 tourism. We are probably 15 to 20 percent above  
6 pre-pandemic levels. Yet, employment is still  
7 6,000 full-time jobs below pre-pandemic levels.

8 It doesn't take an economist to figure  
9 out that's just not sustainable and we're a round  
10 error in the larger national numbers. I think if  
11 we're honest with each other, we can admit that  
12 there are many work force related challenges that  
13 existed pre-pandemic and, to some degree, the  
14 pandemic has exacerbated those.

15 Then you look at some that were  
16 secondary concerns two or three years ago that  
17 are now becoming major issues disrupting the flow  
18 of converse and really hindering the travel  
19 planning process and stalling or impeding the  
20 recovery.

21 This was no easy task for the  
22 Employment Subcommittee and they have done a

1 splendid job at identifying a lot of issues and  
2 opportunities trying to identify which ones  
3 should be prioritized into recommendations and  
4 then sizing them up into both short-term and  
5 medium-term recommendations and a credit to the  
6 Subcommittee for not shying away from some very  
7 important and what some might perceive to be a  
8 controversial topic in the interest of the enemy  
9 -- in the interest of the industry. Excuse me.

10 Let me, if I can, turn this over to  
11 our colleague Russ Hedge who has led the  
12 employment Subcommittee to lead us through this  
13 discussion, and then we'll proceed to have a TTAB  
14 discussion on the recommendations.

15 Russ.

16 MEMBER HEDGE: Thanks, Brad. So this  
17 was a terrific group and I would like to begin by  
18 naming them; Liz Fitzsimmons, Maryland Office of  
19 Tourism, David Gilbert, Destination Cleveland;  
20 Stephanie Jones; Cultural Heritage Economic  
21 Alliance; Rolf Lundberg; Choice Hotels; Will  
22 Morey, Morey's Piers; Catherine Prather, National

1 Tour Association;

2 Olga Ramudo, Express Travel; Monica  
3 Smith, Southeast Tourism Society; and D. Taylor,  
4 UNITE HERE. I just received word that D. Taylor  
5 won't be joining us today because his daughter  
6 had a baby boy, first grandchild. D., thank you  
7 for your commitment and glad you are where you  
8 belong.

9 The Subcommittee held seven meetings  
10 over the last eight weeks. I've heard from 10  
11 outside presenters and I would like to give them  
12 a shout out as well. Destination Analysts  
13 supported by the U.S. Travel Association; The  
14 American Hotel and Lodging Association;  
15 Hospitality Program at Florida Atlantic  
16 University; the American Business Immigration  
17 Council;

18 IAAPA, the Global Association for the  
19 Attractions Industry; United Airlines; the  
20 Hospitality Program at Virginia State University;  
21 MGM Resorts; and the National Society of  
22 Minorities and Hospitality.

1 I would also like to thank the Bureau of Labor  
2 Statistics for a written submission.

3 So our letter frames the  
4 recommendations. We had three elements to our  
5 charge. Our first element was to identify the  
6 drivers, the key drivers in the current labor  
7 force shortage to make recommendations where the  
8 public and private sectors can work together to  
9 address the challenges. And then to take account  
10 the disproportionate effect of the pandemic on  
11 women and minorities.

12 With regard to the drivers, the letter  
13 summarizes eight drivers and three sets or three  
14 buckets. The first set of drivers frankly have  
15 been around awhile and they have discouraged  
16 labor force participation prior to COVID. These  
17 include the availability of child and elder care,  
18 transportation to work, competitive wages, and  
19 how employers take into account criminal records.

20 The effect of these for drivers is to  
21 narrow the available worker pool and once hired  
22 issues like family care responsibilities and

1                   difficult transportation to work can lead to  
2                   absenteeism and to job loss.

3                   The second set of drivers, there are  
4                   three. They are routed in the pandemic and how  
5                   workers are responding. The first is changes in  
6                   personal priorities. Surveys have shown workers  
7                   placing a higher value on low stress jobs and  
8                   work/life balance, which is not always true with  
9                   public facing jobs like we have within travel and  
10                  tourism.

11                  There's also a desire for job change  
12                  and higher satisfaction based on survey results.  
13                  Finally, a desire for job security which can be a  
14                  difficult sell for an industry that needed to  
15                  downsize during the pandemic.

16                  The third is one driver related to the  
17                  federal agency response to operational  
18                  challenges, confronted by it and created by  
19                  COVID, and that's the decline in processing of J-  
20                  1 and H-2B visa applications which compounded a  
21                  seasonal labor shortage last summer.

22                  The letter indicates that different



1 drivers impact different sectors and regions  
2 differently but if we look across all eight,  
3 we've got a formidable challenge at a time when  
4 there's a low national unemployment rate overall.

5 The travel and tourism industry has a  
6 quick rate about double the norm and about 1.6  
7 million unfilled jobs which we all know is  
8 painful to each of us and each of our  
9 organizations personally. This is also painful  
10 to the national economy.

11 The good news is that the Subcommittee  
12 learned of efforts already underway within the  
13 industry to address the challenges. An  
14 interesting BLS report in October reported that  
15 average hourly wages or earnings for leisure and  
16 hospitality employees increased 13.9 percent over  
17 October 2019 which was more than 50 percent  
18 greater than the average increase across the  
19 private sector over all.

20 There are other examples as well.  
21 U.S. travel is underwriting survey research to  
22 help us all better understand the employment

1 challenges. AHLA is redoubling its efforts to  
2 map career pathways within the hospitality  
3 industry. I think the willingness of the other  
4 outside presenters to participate in the  
5 Subcommittee's work sends an amazing message as  
6 well.

7 Yet, I think the Subcommittee felt  
8 like we're dealing with a massive complicated  
9 unprecedented challenge which really goes to the  
10 heart of the Secretary's request. The letter  
11 contains three core recommendations to the  
12 Secretary with 10 sub-recommendations -- I'm not  
13 going to go through them all -- at a high level.

14 The first set of recommendations  
15 envisions the Secretary as a convener of two  
16 summit-like meetings of the industry or sectors  
17 within it. One to address impediments to a  
18 stable competitively paid work force.

19 The other mapping career pathways to  
20 secure long-term well-paying jobs. In both cases  
21 the focus we feel ought to be on addressing the  
22 disparities faced by women and minorities both

1 during the pandemic and prior to the pandemic.

2 Second, we are recommending that tools  
3 and funding be used which are already available  
4 under federal infrastructure and relief programs  
5 to address some of the structural work force  
6 challenges that were identified as drivers  
7 earlier in the letter. These are challenges that  
8 have persisted especially for women, minority,  
9 and low wage workers and includes childcare,  
10 elder care, training, and worker transportation.

11 Third, to invest in raising the public  
12 profile of travel and tourism as a source of  
13 income and jobs for local communities, and as a  
14 pipeline for talented workers. All that said,  
15 the current worker shortages are so large that we  
16 felt the need to recommend measures that in the  
17 meantime would widen the pool of available  
18 workers and we are suggesting that we do that  
19 through existing seasonable worker visa programs  
20 and through a new look at immigration policy.

21 The first would involve investing in  
22 the proper functioning of the J-1 and H-2B visa

1 programs which have been interrupted by the  
2 pandemic, and also in their expansion. Then,  
3 secondly, to bring fully into the work force the  
4 11 million immigrants already in the U.S. without  
5 legal status. These are put forth as pragmatic  
6 responses to support a business recovery at a  
7 critical time.

8 Brad, I'll turn it back to you with  
9 thanks to the Secretary for her foresight and  
10 leadership in requesting this set of  
11 recommendations. I also appreciate Isabel Hill  
12 and her team for counsel and support. And Sarah  
13 Morgenthau, thank you for your leadership and we  
14 appreciate your team. Thank you.

15 VICE CHAIR DEAN: Thank to you, Russ,  
16 and the Subcommittee for some really, really fine  
17 work, not only on a big important topic but with  
18 the way in which you approached it involving  
19 many, many voices which helps us to build a set  
20 of recommendations that brings a variety of  
21 perspectives.

22 We're going to take this time now for

1 the TTAB members to discuss these  
2 recommendations, ask any questions, or seek  
3 clarifications. As I mentioned earlier, if the  
4 members of the Subcommittee have anything they  
5 want to add to this, I certainly welcome  
6 that.

7 For those who are not TTAB members,  
8 give us just a few minutes and we'll get to the  
9 next part of the agenda where we'll have public  
10 comments. We'll open it up for comments or  
11 questions from the TTAB members.

12 I am not hearing or seeing any. We'll  
13 give it just another moment in case anybody has  
14 any questions or comments. If not, we'll move on  
15 to the next part of the agenda.

16 Okay. I think we're moving through  
17 this very expeditiously so we'll go ahead. Thank  
18 you, again, to Russ, To Caroline, and to your  
19 Subcommittees for the great work.

20 We are going to now move into public  
21 comment. For those who are not a member of TTAB  
22 who have an interest in this today, we certainly

1 welcome your participation. We would ask, if you  
2 can, to introduce yourself and also who you are  
3 representing. If you can, we would really  
4 appreciate you keeping your comments within two  
5 minutes and we'll open it up now.

6 If you can use the raise-your-hand  
7 function. If you are not able to do that and you  
8 are calling via phone, just make sure that we're  
9 not talking over each other. Let the previous  
10 speaker finish and then we'll welcome your  
11 comments. We'll open the discussion up for  
12 public comment.

13 Jennifer, I am not hearing or seeing  
14 anyone and I don't think anyone had previously  
15 requested to speak. Is that correct?

16 MS. AGUINAGA: No, I don't see  
17 anything. Everyone is anxious to get the weekend  
18 started.

19 VICE CHAIR DEAN: All right. Far be  
20 it for me to stand in the way of that. We'll go  
21 ahead and move on to the next part of the agenda  
22 which is voting on the recommendations. We are

1 going to vote on the two letters that have been  
2 presented individually so we would ask for the  
3 TTAB members to go ahead and unmute yourself and  
4 we'll vote on these just in unison.

5 The first letter presented by Caroline  
6 Beteta on behalf of the Climate Subcommittee. I  
7 would ask all in favor to say aye.

8 (Chorus of aye)

9 VICE CHAIR DEAN: Any opposed to the  
10 letter? So the Climate Subcommittee letter has  
11 been affirmed. Thank you to Caroline and the  
12 Subcommittee.

13 We'll now move on to the Employment  
14 Subcommittee's recommendations. All in favor say  
15 aye.

16 (Chorus of aye)

17 Any opposed? Okay. So the Employment  
18 Subcommittee's letter has also been affirmed.  
19 Both have been accepted and will be finalized and  
20 sent to the Secretary.

21 Again, thank you to the members of the  
22 TTAB for the fine work on both the two letters

1 approved today and also the two letters approved  
2 previously. These are such big and important  
3 topics. I suspect we might see some of these  
4 come forth in future efforts and charges issued  
5 by the Secretary.

6 It's certainly not an ending point on  
7 any of these, but the work that has been done is  
8 going to lay the foundation for some great  
9 progress ahead. Thank you to all who have  
10 invested the time and your talents in this. Very  
11 important and great progress.

12 Looking forward to the next TTAB  
13 meeting, we do expect that we'll be convening a  
14 meeting at some point, likely in the spring of  
15 2022, hopefully in person. We do not have a date  
16 as of yet but, as always, Jennifer will keep us  
17 apprized and update us on that once we do have a  
18 date.

19 Now I would like to turn the meeting  
20 over to our Deputy Assistant Secretary Sarah  
21 Morgenthau for a brief update from her.

22 Madam Deputy Assistant Secretary.



1 DEPUTY ASSIST. SEC. MORGENTHAU: Thank  
2 you, Brad. Greetings to everyone. These are  
3 really terrific recommendations. As Brad said,  
4 this is not an end point by any means. We are  
5 delving into our national strategy which I'll  
6 talk about in a minute, but they will be  
7 definitely incorporated.

8 Really just thanks is never enough for  
9 how grateful we are to all of you for your time  
10 and commitment. We know that both are really  
11 precious commodities. Thank you not only from  
12 me, but from Secretary Raimondo who routinely  
13 mentions how grateful she is to each and every  
14 one of you.

15 A quick update on Omicron, which I  
16 know has been top of mind. I wanted to just  
17 provide you with an update, something I know  
18 we've all been focused on starting over the  
19 Thanksgiving weekend when the news broke about  
20 the new variant.

21 The CDC actually just went up on their  
22 website with the amended global testing order

1 which is reducing the timing for pre-departure  
2 testing for all travelers entering the United  
3 States regardless of country of origin and  
4 vaccination status from three days to one day.  
5 That will go into effect at 12:01 a.m. on Monday  
6 December 6th for all flights that are leaving on  
7 or before that time.

8 This will not put an additional burden  
9 on the airlines. They are already doing this for  
10 unvaccinated travelers who need a negative COVID  
11 test one day before departure. Additionally, the  
12 transportation mask mandate was to expire January  
13 18th. It will be extended for 60 days to March  
14 18th.

15 Heightening the pre-departure testing  
16 timeline to the day before travel is being done  
17 as a recommendation by public health experts,  
18 this step in addition to previous restrictions  
19 that require foreign travelers to be fully  
20 vaccinated will help protect the American people  
21 and bide some time as the CDC learns more and the  
22 science about Omicron develops.

1                   The 212(f) restrictions that were  
2 reinstated in the Presidential Proclamation from  
3 South Africa and the seven other African  
4 countries are still in place. These include  
5 Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini,  
6 Mozambique, and Malawi. The policy does not  
7 apply to American citizens, lawful permanent  
8 residents, or other exempt individuals. As with  
9 all international travelers, they must still test  
10 negative prior to travel.

11                   Under the Presidential Proclamation  
12 the policy will be reviewed by the Secretary of  
13 HHS within 30 days and by the final day of every  
14 calendar month thereafter. The Secretary will  
15 make recommendations to the President as to  
16 continuing, modifying, or terminating the  
17 proclamation.

18                   Convening the Tourism Policy Council.  
19 Last month, Secretary Raimondo convened a Tourism  
20 Policy Council meeting to kick off development of  
21 the new travel and tourism strategy so we are  
22 onward and looking forward.

1                   The last strategy was completed in  
2                   2012 and updated in 2019. To support the  
3                   development of this new strategy, my office and  
4                   the interagency kicked off a round of Tourism  
5                   Policy Council working Group meetings which are  
6                   underway.

7                   In addition to the marketing,  
8                   facilitation, and visitor services section found  
9                   in the 2012 strategy, we offer new chapters on  
10                  preparing the sector for the effects of climate  
11                  change, as well as response and recovery from  
12                  natural disasters and public health threats.  
13                  Your letters and input will feed into the process  
14                  which we hope to complete with the final strategy  
15                  in March.

16                  Again, thanks is really not enough to  
17                  tell you for all the incredible work that you  
18                  have done this past year. Your engagement and  
19                  the quality of your work are held in the highest  
20                  esteem by the Secretary and the Department.

21                  Brad, thank you for your leadership as  
22                  the acting chair. And really thanks to all of

1 you and I hope you have a wonderful holiday.

2 As Brad mentioned, we will -- we are  
3 planning to have another TTAB meeting in the  
4 first quarter of 2022 and we will get you that  
5 date as soon as we have it. Thank you again,  
6 everybody.

7 VICE CHAIR DEAN: Thank you, Madam  
8 Deputy Assistant Secretary. Thanks for all the  
9 energy, enthusiasm, and activity that you're  
10 bringing to this role. We are excited and  
11 looking forward to 2022 and doing some great  
12 things together.

13 On that, we are able to now end our  
14 meeting. I want to wish everybody a wonderful  
15 holiday season. Thank you again for the great  
16 work that you're doing and we look forward to  
17 convening, hopefully in person, in 2022. I will  
18 now hand the meeting back over to our Designated  
19 Federal Officer Jennifer Aguinaga.

20 MS. AGUINAGA: Thank you, Mr.  
21 Chairman. Thank you all for participating in  
22 today's meeting. With that, the meeting is

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officially closed. Have a great weekend,  
everyone. Happy Holidays and we'll see you in  
the new year, hopefully in person.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
went off the record at 2:37 p.m.)

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Before: US DOC

Date: 12-03-21

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Court Reporter

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