



Office of
Immigrant Affairs
Nisha Agarwal
Commissioner

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Testimony of Assistant Commissioner Bitta Mostofi

NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

Before a hearing of the New York City Council Committee on Economic Development:

“Oversight: Preparing for the Impact of Federal Travel Bans on New York City’s Economy”

Thank you to Chair Garodnick and the members of the Committee on Economic Development. My name is Bitta Mostofi and I am the Assistant Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs.

This testimony will provide an overview of the impacts on New Yorkers, both economic and otherwise, of President Trump's executive orders restricting travel and immigration to the United States.

I will describe how the City has responded to these repercussions under the leadership of Mayor de Blasio, who has repeatedly affirmed the City's commitment to protect and serve all New Yorkers, regardless of race, religion, national origin, or immigration status.

Background

President Trump signed the first version of an executive order suspending immigration from seven countries on January 27, 2017. This order banned entry for nationals from seven Muslim-majority countries (Iraq, Iran, Syria, Somalia, Libya, Yemen, and Sudan) for at least 90 days, banned entry for Syrian refugees indefinitely, and suspended the refugee resettlement program for at least 120 days, while also significantly reducing the quota of refugees to be resettled in the United States for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2017.

This order caused chaos and confusion in the immediate aftermath of its signing. Some individuals who had already boarded flights to the United States before the order was signed were detained at U.S. airports. Some were denied entry and sent back to their countries of origin. Refugees who had passed all of their security checks and screenings and were prepared to come to the United States after months or even years of waiting were told that they were no longer able to enter. In some cases, even legal permanent residents and others with lawful U.S. immigration status, such as those with student visas or work visas, were subject to detention. After several lawsuits, the major provisions of the EO were enjoined by district courts less than two days after its signing.

In response to these decisions, the Trump administration issued a second EO, on March 6, with similar objectives. This time, however, the order suspended entry from the same countries except Iraq, did not single out Syrian refugees for indefinite suspension, provided clearer instructions for implementation, and explicitly listed classes of individuals who would be exempt from the order, including those with valid immigration status. Federal courts have enjoined key provisions of this EO nationwide, and the federal government has appealed these decisions. While the future of the second order is uncertain, the impacts of both EOs have been far-reaching. In conjunction with the numerous other actions by the federal government designed to ramp up immigration

enforcement, these orders have contributed to an overall climate of xenophobic sentiments, the realities of which are felt not just in our city but nationwide and even internationally.

Impact on New Yorkers

Despite the injunctions, both orders have significantly impacted immigrant communities in New York City. Over 26,000 New Yorkers were born in the six countries affected by the second version of the EO and nearly 40,000 claim ancestry from these countries. Even if these individuals were not directly affected by the ban due to legal status or citizenship, their family members, employees, or business associates could be affected. The executive orders also call for enhanced vetting of immigrants and travelers, raising fears among individuals from the named countries and beyond. Many people have been understandably afraid to travel or enter the country from abroad even though the orders have been halted. Many have remained separated from their families due to fear that the courts' injunctions might be overturned. Many more have expressed fears that their country of origin could be added to the list of suspended countries.

These fears are not baseless. Many individuals were stranded abroad or unable to leave the country during the first iteration of the EO. Families were separated, international students were unable to return to their universities, doctors could not return to practice, and employees of many global corporations were forced to remain abroad. These incidents only served to amplify the fear that many people felt and continue to feel regarding international travel. They have created a fertile ground for false rumors about what the executive orders entail and how they may be expanded. As a result, even individuals who were not born in one of the six banned countries and individuals who hold US citizenship have reported fear of travel.

This culture of fear also increases the susceptibility of immigrants to the unauthorized practice of immigration law. Immigrants in this city have long contended with immigration service provider fraud, or notario fraud, in which an individual who is neither a licensed attorney nor accredited to provide legal advice offers legal services to immigrants, often targeting those who are undocumented and charging steep prices for these fraudulent services. People's willingness to trust these individuals is likely to increase as a result of the fear and confusion generated by the EOs.

The administration's actions have also been correlated with a notable uptick in the occurrence of bias crimes—especially due to religious motivation. Last year, President Trump's frequent use of xenophobic rhetoric during his campaign was correlated with an upward trend in the incidence of bias and hate crimes. The City's Commission on Human Rights saw a 30 percent increase in reports of national origin, race, religion, and alienage/citizenship status discrimination in 2016, with nearly 1,500 reports of alleged discrimination in these areas in 2016 compared to

approximately 1,100 reports in 2015. The increase only become more drastic after the President took office and signed the first travel ban order one week later. NYPD Hate Crime Task Force data show 168 incidents of bias crime have occurred in the city from the start of the year to April 16—more than double the number of crimes reported in the same timeframe the year before.

All of these impacts give rise to broader economic consequences that can be placed into two categories: first, the impacts on NYC residents and, second, the impacts on international travelers who may consider visiting New York. The executive orders have had, and could continue to have, negative effects on immigrants' economic output and consumption, by causing immigrant communities to feel excluded and divided from the rest of society. These feelings—of fear and confusion, of isolation and division—naturally detract from individuals' willingness, and in some cases their ability, to engage with local economies and to continue to see themselves as a necessary part of our larger community. Moreover, the perception of unwelcoming policies and intolerance that these anti-immigrant policies risks creating a downturn in the interest of individuals to visit and stay in New York City. This impact is disproportionately concentrated in New York. According to data compiled by my colleagues at NYC & Company, NYC is the initial destination for 30% of all international visitors to the U.S., and for nearly 50% of all visitors nationwide from the countries singled out by the President's executive orders. NYC & Company will speak more about the impacts of these EOs on travel and tourism during their testimony.

The City's Response

In light of these serious impacts on the immigrant communities of New York, the City has responded forcefully to continue protecting and serving all New Yorkers.

First, we have directly responded to and contested the orders. In the immediate aftermath of the first order, our Commissioner and staff were at JFK airport, helping to coordinate responses from attorneys and members of Congress in order to advocate with federal officials for the release of those detained.

Additionally, through our national coalition of mayors, called Cities for Action, we've responded strongly against federal anti-immigrant policies by leading legal efforts, releasing coordinated statements and letters by municipal leaders, and meeting with inter-governmental partners. The coalition also developed a shared strategy amongst cities nationwide to coordinate and amplify the voices and efforts of municipal leaders who advocate for immigrant inclusion.

We most notably leveraged this coalition by filing amicus briefs in cases filed to challenge both executive orders. In the case of *Darweesh v. Trump*, in the Eastern District of New York, we

filed jointly with coalition partners from 34 cities and counties, representing 23 million people, the brief argued that the first EO would deeply harm millions of residents by interfering with local economies, immigrant integration, and public safety efforts. To quote directly from the brief, “In the short time that the Executive Order’s restrictions were in place, those restrictions stranded students, separated families, disrupted travel and commerce, spread fear among our residents and visitors, and projected a message of intolerance and distrust toward members of our communities.”

The brief makes a strong statement that the economies and cultures of our city, along with so many other cities across America, depend on openness to immigrants and visitors. New York City is one of the country’s largest ports of entry and holds symbolic weight as the origin point for many immigrant stories in this nation. Nearly half of the city’s workforce is foreign-born and more than half of the city’s business-owners are immigrants. Neither New York City’s economy nor its cultural makeup can exist without our foreign-born residents, and it was immensely important for us to communicate this fact directly in argument against the harmful actions of the federal administration.

We also joined other cities in filing amicus briefs in support of state lawsuits against the executive orders. Washington and Minnesota’s suit against the first EO resulted in the issuance of a nationwide injunction that was affirmed by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. We joined an amicus brief in support of Hawaii’s challenge to the second EO, and will continue to explore opportunities to advocate for the City and our residents’ interests in the courts.

We have worked on gathering crucial information and disseminating it to key populations and groups. We have briefed various faith and community leaders, along with the staff of our sister agencies, private attorneys, and numerous community-based organizations. We have focused on distributing this information out to the community—through informational campaigns and days of action coordinated with our sister agencies, presence at community town halls, and numerous Know Your Rights Forums. We’ve also communicated through a comprehensive one-pager translated into over ten languages that the City’s resources—hospitals, schools, shelter, emergency assistance, and more—remain accessible to New Yorkers regardless of their immigration status. Finally, our program ActionNYC has been instrumental in ensuring that we connect vulnerable immigrants to safe and free legal services.

Conclusion

These executive orders run counter to the values of our city and our nation. They have had starkly negative impacts on our city’s immigrant communities and on our city as a whole. If allowed to go into effect, the executive order would cause far greater harm still. We will continue

to use every tool at our disposal to maintain our commitment to serve and protect all New Yorkers regardless of status, national origin, religion, or race. New York City's immigrant communities are vital to the fabric of our city and make us who we are. They are our friends and neighbors, our teachers and our colleagues. Any action taken to curtail their ability to live safely and comfortably erodes that which makes us great.

The executive orders banning entry into our country and suspending refugee resettlement have had, and may continue to have, harmful negative consequences on these communities. We look forward to further discussion of the impacts on the economies of New York City from our colleagues at NYC & Company. Thank you.



Testimony of Fred Dixon (President & CEO)

Delivered by Donna Keren (SVP, Research and Analysis)

New York City Council Committee on Economic Development

Oversight Hearing: Preparing for the Impact of Federal Travel Bans on New York City's
Economy

April 20, 2017

Hello. Thank you to Committee Chair Garodnick and committee members for giving this important topic your attention, as well as the opportunity for NYC & Company to share its insight via testimony. I am Donna Keren, Senior Vice President of Research and Analysis at NYC & Company. I am here to share the testimony of NYC & Company's President and CEO, Fred Dixon, who is currently attending the US Travel Association's Secure Tourism Summit here in NYC, where the issues related to how security and policy decisions could affect visitation will be discussed by industry leaders, destinations, and businesses from across the country.

As many of you know, NYC & Company is a membership-based, 501(c)(6) not-for-profit. We work closely with the City to provide certain destination marketing services via a procurement contract with the Department of Small Business Services. We fund approximately half of our operating budget via private revenue streams, and all of it is dedicated to supporting our City's tourism economy. As the official destination marketing organization for all five boroughs, our primary mission is to create urgency among leisure and business visitors to travel to NYC now.

Leisure travel is a choice, and we work diligently year-round to showcase New York City as a leading destination. But new barriers to entering the U.S., such as federal travel bans, have the opposite effect, damaging the image and appeal of our country and City and making it easy for a potential visitor to look past NYC in favor of destinations in other countries, ones that make visiting easy and less stressful, with a more welcoming environment. That has the potential to have a significant negative effect on our city's strongest industries and biggest employers.

Travel and tourism is NYC's sixth largest employer. More than 375,000 people have jobs supported by visitor spending across the five boroughs, which generates more than \$5.8 billion in tax revenue for the City and State each year. Collectively, visitors spent more than \$42 billion at businesses across the city in 2016, which generated an additional \$21 billion in economic activity. In total, travel and tourism is responsible for an economic impact of over \$62 billion in NYC each year. Swiftly responding to changes in travel patterns is key to sustaining tourism's economic impact, which is why we and the 1,800 tourism and hospitality businesses that compose our private membership base were immediately outspoken about the potential economic impact travel bans could have.

Last year, our City welcomed 60.7 million visitors. 12.7 million of them were from outside the United States and spent, on average, \$2,000 each while here. The economic impact of the international traveler versus that of the domestic traveler cannot be overstated. Although international visitors make up just 20% of all visitation to NYC, they are responsible for more than half of all visitor spending. To put it another way: it takes four domestic visitors to equal the spending of one international visitor. That is because they stay for longer, spend more and explore more of our City's boroughs and neighborhoods while here.

As you know, New York City is the #1 point of entry into the United States for all international travelers. We are also the top international destination, welcoming nearly 30% of all international visitors entering the United States each year. The U.S. city with the next largest market share is Los Angeles, with 12%. We rely more on international visitation to fuel our



economy than almost any other U.S. destination. Therefore we pay close attention to fluctuations in international sentiment and visitation, working closely with Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics company, to track and predict travel to NYC on a regular basis.

At the end of 2016, NYC & Company and Tourism Economics predicted that international visitation would grow by 3% in 2017, even taking into account the continued strengthening of the US dollar and other variables that are known to slow travel. In light of the proposed travel ban, increased scrutiny of visa and at the border, and the President's aggressive "America First" rhetoric, we saw a significant shift on the horizon when we revisited the forecast with our economists after the issuance of the travel ban in February. Our revised forecast now indicates a drop of more than 2% in international visitation in 2017, not the increase we had predicted under different circumstances. If this forecast holds, while less than the 3% drop predicted for the U.S. overall, 2017 will mark the first drop in international visitation to NYC since the economic downturn in 2008.

In hard numbers, a 2% decline translates to 300,000 fewer international visitors sleeping in hotels, shopping, dining in restaurants, exploring neighborhoods in the boroughs and visiting museums, galleries, and theaters this year than last year. Even at this modest level of decline, we estimate that at an average spend of \$2,000 each, overall spending by international visitors could drop by \$600 million, resulting in the City and State collectively earning \$120 million less in tax revenue related to international visitor spending this year.

The news isn't all bad, however. We also predict that 2017 domestic visitation to NYC will increase by 1.3 million visitors compared to last year, or 2.7%. As a result, overall visitation and visitor spending in NYC should increase this year compared to last year, but is unlikely to reach its full potential under the existing conditions.

Variables affecting international travel range from economic to personal perception and sentiment. It goes without saying that new travel restrictions (including bans, limited or reduced access to visas, and "extreme vetting") will limit the number of people who are permitted to enter our country. Similarly, the perception that new policies will make international inbound travel to the U.S. more burdensome may cause visitors to choose destinations that facilitate entry instead. For example, the Toronto School Board recently announced the cancellation of all student trips to the United States for 2017, as did educational groups from Mexico. This was in direct response to several incidents involving bus-loads of school-aged children on class trips to the US from Canada. When stopped at a border crossing, some of the children on the bus were denied entry. School officials were left with no choice but to turn around with the entire class because they could not leave those denied entry behind. To avoid any future uncertainty, the school board took the extraordinary step of cancelling all student trips to the United States.

Consider the lengths corporations go to to mitigate PR crises and avoid consumers' negative brand associations. Like any other consumer product, visitor sentiment and public perception have a significant impact on market demand. Federal policy and political rhetoric affect the international community's perception of our country's values, culture and welcoming nature.



When policy and rhetoric become protectionist or discriminatory, our destination is perceived to be unwelcoming and hostile.

As I stated earlier, consumers have many choices. We believe if the United States is perceived as hostile, or if visitors lose confidence with our entry process or are unfairly denied entry, they will choose to spend their money visiting and exploring destinations in other countries that are easier to enter, welcoming, and inclusive. Important travel destinations like NYC would suffer disproportionately. Security and a warm welcome are not mutually exclusive, and striking a balance between the two is essential to our country and City's economy. In the absence of that balance, meeting planners, conventions, and leisure travelers will take their business elsewhere; already, recent data provided by Tourism Economics point to a drop in ticket purchases and online travel planning by international visitors, indicating that their interest in visiting the United States is waning.

Until this point, my testimony has focused only on a *potential* decline. This is because changes in international visitor behavior take time to materialize: on average, international visitors begin to make travel plans 90 days in advance of their travel date. As an example: if in late January visitors chose not to book flights and hotel rooms for a late April vacation, the drop of in-market spending on hotels, restaurants, and retail wouldn't be felt until late April. We may soon begin to notice lower hotel occupancy rates or fewer Broadway ticket sales compared to last year at the same time.

It is important to note that the challenges facing our City cannot be solved by PR or tourism marketing alone. However, NYC & Company takes its role in influencing visitor perception very seriously. Thankfully, we already have media and industry footholds in 28 international markets. Our city-to-city partnerships provide access to valuable in-market media, aiding in our ability to speak to and influence residents of each partner city. Our convention development team attracts and facilitates meetings and conventions in New York City, which carry significant visitor spending. Our global communications team works with media from around the world to maintain our city's competitive edge as a destination, and our tourism development team works directly with tour operators, travel agents, and other members of the travel trade to inform and strengthen their ability to sell NYC to their customers.

In response to the potential drop in international visitation, NYC & Company is leveraging all its assets to mitigate any possible negative impact:

First, we introduced a new \$3 million advertising campaign in four international markets that announced "ALL ARE WELCOME" in New York City. So in the UK, our largest international feeder market, Germany, Mexico, and Spain, we are telling visitors that New York City is open to all and we welcome them to book a trip here.

Second, we renewed our City-to-City partnership with Mexico City. This cross-promotional program provides us with valuable in-market media assets. At a time when residents of that city do not perceive the United States as welcoming, we are telling them that they are always welcome here.



Third, NYC & Company is making sure that domestic visitation remains strong. This spring, in partnership with JC Decaux, we are increasing our domestic tourism efforts by increasing our nationwide marketing assets by 18%. This coming summer, we will increase our nationwide marketing assets by 30%. Campaigns promoting the 25th anniversary of NYC Restaurant Week, the city's family-friendly attractions, and brand new travel and tourism messaging will be seen by more people than ever before in cities and towns throughout the United States. In addition, we are expanding our convention and meeting business development with potential clients on the West Coast.

Lastly, we are working to make the federal government aware of how travel bans and hostile "America First" rhetoric affect our city and country's economies. President and CEO Fred Dixon represents NYC & Company and is active on the United States Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, which advises the U.S. Secretary of Commerce on matters related to our industry. He is also an executive board member of U.S. Travel Association, which represents and advocates for our country's travel and tourism industry in Washington D.C. NYC & Company's Chief Operating Officer, Bryan Grimaldi, represents us on the National Advisory Committee of Travel and Transportation Infrastructure, which makes federal infrastructure recommendations to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. Our message to federal representatives is clear and consistent: security and open borders can and must co-exist – and maintaining a positive image of the United States around the world is critical. We are encouraging the Administration in Washington to communicate that the U.S. is open for business and we welcome visitors with open arms.

In closing, it is important to stress again that much of the data in this testimony are forecasts based on the current political climate, indicators of visitor perception, and policy landscape. Over the coming weeks and months, that landscape may change. Visitor perception may change. We hope that it does, and for the better, and are committed to doing all we can to affect that change for a positive impact on New York City.

Thank you for your time and consideration. NYC & Company looks forward to continuing to work with the City of New York and our member businesses to preserve the 375,000 industry jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars of tax revenue supported by tourism.



April 20, 2017

Testimony before the New York City Council Committee on Economic Development

Topic: Oversight - Preparing for the Impact of Federal Travel Bans on New York City's Economy.

Thank you Chairman Garodnick and Members of the Committee for convening this important hearing.

My name is Anthony Figliola, I am Vice President of Empire Government Strategies and I represent the online travel company Hostelworld.

Hostelworld.com is the largest booking website for hostels in the world, listing over 35,000 properties in more than 180 countries. Located in Dublin, Ireland, they do not own any property and serve primarily as a placer of youth travelers in various venues in which they do business.

Hosteling is a \$320 billion global industry, which has begun to expand into the U.S. Hostel travelers are mostly budget conscious, social young college age people who are seeking to visit new places and want to stay in a dormitory style accommodation. Their goal is to experience the local flavor of new cities with meet people of different cultures and backgrounds. As multi-cultural travelers, they would rather spend less on accommodations and more money on restaurants, events and places of interest. In fact hostel travelers are seen to spend less on their beds but more in the city than your average traveler. The relationship between the hostel and hotel industry is very strong, since hostels service a different level of customer (e.g., young, solo, budget conscious social traveler). Many hotel chains are seeking to invest in developing a hostel brand as another level of accommodation.

Tourism is a main pillar on which New York City's economic development strategy sits, generating over \$42 billion into the city's economy through direct spending. The hostel industry understands the importance of creating a welcoming atmosphere for international travelers as well as domestic. We believe that our industry and its youth travelers are a critical component in advancing the city's overall economic development goals. Further, many of our youth travelers do not share the same concerns about proposed U.S. travel policies as some of their international counterparts.

NYC & Co. has reported that a possible loss of over 300,000 international tourists may not visit New York out of fear caused by the recent U.S. elections and subsequent immigration policies. They estimate the city stands to lose over \$600 million in tourism dollars.

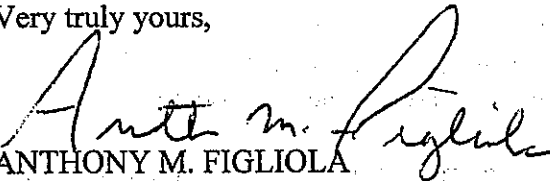
I am here in behalf of the hostel industry, to offer our assistance to the council on a pathway to recoup those lost international travelers. Councilmember Chin has a bill (Intro 0699) that would legalize hostels in New York City in commercial districts ONLY. This bill, which has received the support of The Hospitality Alliance, Partnership for NYC and the Citizens Housing and Planning Council as well as in the past from NYC & Co, would create a licensing mechanism that would ensure, safe and affordable accommodations for budget conscious youth travelers. We estimate that our industry would generate over 600,000 bed nights with an economic impact of over \$234 million to the city. These are conservative estimates, given that New York is a destination on par with London who has almost 1 million hostel bed nights.

In 2010, the state legislature amended the city's Multiple Dwelling Law and NYC Administrative Code to crack down on illegal hotels, the unintended consequence was that hostels, which were not defined in the city code, were told they could not operate. Understanding the importance of youth travel and the impact of Hostels in New York, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement led an interagency working group to develop said legislation (i.e., Intro 0699) to legalize hostels.

Since 2010, the youth traveler who originally sought hostel accommodations in New York City, instead chose to visit other U.S. cities that have hostel laws such as Boston, San Francisco, Miami, Chicago and Washington DC. The New York Times has reported that our city has lost almost \$300 million in international youth tourism dollars due to a lack of hostel accommodations.

Our industry is desirous to work with the city council, economic development officials and the Mayor's office to help promote the city to international youth travelers and bring back this important group of tourists.

Very truly yours,


ANTHONY M. FIGLIOLA
Vice President

NEWS FROM:

The New York Times

Hostel Business Wants to Make a Push Back Into New York

By **Tanya Mohn**

Pouring rain one day last week didn't stop a dozen or so European and American hostel owners and executives from taking a four-hour bus tour through the industrial neighborhoods of Long Island City in Queens.

Intent on reviving and expanding New York's atrophied hostel business — which they say could enhance the city's appeal to youthful tourists — the visitors were sizing up thousands of square feet of commercial space and warehouses.

The properties included an auto body repair shop; a hardware supplier; and a clothing restoration business that over the years has worked on Winston Churchill's military uniform, Princess Diana's gowns and Melania Trump's wedding dress.

"Old buildings all have great stories," said a visitor from Dublin, Anne Dolan, a founder and director of Clink Hostels, whose keystone business is housed in a former London magistrate's court.

"Hostel owners are like backpackers," Ms. Dolan said. "We dare to go where others haven't gone."

But the issue in New York City, these hostel experts say, is that too few backpacking and other young and budget-conscious travelers dare to pass through town, because of a dearth of hostels. As a result, they said, the city is not only losing tourist business and tax revenue, but also the chance to advertise itself to young people from around the country and the world who might someday return to work and live in New York.

"I think hostels make great cities accessible to young people," Ms. Dolan said. "New York is missing out."

Hostel proponents blame a six-year-old New York State law, the Illegal Hotels Bill. The law was aimed at nonconforming rentals, overcrowded single-room occupancy residences and other forms of lodging deemed substandard by the legislation's sponsors.



Although Airbnb was not as big a presence in 2010 as it is now, the law has been wielded to crack down on various types of listings on the company's service. Last week Airbnb settled a lawsuit against New York City in which the company had opposed the city's right to impose fines on Airbnb hosts who listed properties that did not conform to the 2010 law.

Also caught in the 2010 law's dragnet were almost all of New York City's hostels, according to Feargal Mooney, whose company arranged last week's tour. Mr. Mooney is chief executive of Hostelworld, a hostel booking firm that represents properties in more than 170 countries.



Nearly five dozen New York City hostels were put out of business by the 2010 law, and new ones have been prevented from opening, Mr. Mooney said. Most of the remaining ones advertise as hostels but are now formally classified as hotels.

Mr. Mooney and others on the tour say they hope that a new piece of legislation, awaiting a hearing by the New York City Council, could revive the city's hostel business.

Right now, the only bona fide hostel in the city is run by a nonprofit group, Hostelling International USA, on Amsterdam Avenue on the Upper West Side, he said. It is able to operate its New York City property because of its building classification and special use permit.



Aaron Chaffee, Hostelling International's vice president for hostel development, said he would welcome additional hostels in the city but supported the need for regulation. The final stop on the bus tour was at the Paper Factory, an elegant, edgy hotel decorated with repurposed objects from its former life as a pulp plant.

"Wow, I love it," said Eric van Dijk, managing director of Meininger Hotels, a company based in Berlin that owns 16 hostels in Europe and has 13 more in the

pipeline there. He said the game room and other communal spaces gave the property the look and vibe of a hostel.

Gal Sela, the hotel's owner, went into contract for the building in 2010 intending to operate it as a hostel. But when the law went into effect, he couldn't proceed.

"I like the business model of hostels," Mr. Sela said. The revenue per square foot from dorm-style rooms is profitable, he said, but more important are a laid-back ambience and a focus on community. "It's something unique in hospitality," he said. "I'd change it into a hostel in a heartbeat if the law changes."

Before the 2010 legislation, some hostels were substandard, Mr. Mooney conceded, but not all. He said that hostels around the world today were typically safe, clean and modern, with kitchens and laundry facilities, on-site cafes and even 24-hour reception desks. Many reflect high-end design similar to boutique hotels.

Hostelworld has hired Jerry Kremer, president of Empire Government Strategies, a lobbying firm, to help change the law affecting hostels.

“Young people coming to the city have very few choices,” Mr. Kremer said. “The hostel industry is frustrated that the city hasn’t embraced a form of tourism that not only brings in money but also encourages young people to come to the city and stay. Any other major city in the country would be chasing after us.”

New York currently yields about \$234 million a year in revenue from hostels and related tourism — about a third of the amount a city its size should be generating, according to a recent Hostelworld analysis.

“Hostel owners will go in areas that are underserved and turn them into something special and change a neighborhood,” Mr. Kremer said. “They are ready, willing and able to write checks.”

The group met with City Council members to discuss legislation that would authorize the creation of hostels and provide specific oversight for their licensing, regulation and operation. The hostel group hopes to have a hearing before the Committee on Housing and Buildings by early next year.



“It was a good and productive meeting,” said the bill’s primary sponsor, Councilwoman Margaret S. Chin, a Democrat whose district is primarily in Lower Manhattan. Providing good, safe and affordable accommodations for young travelers is “critical,” she said.

Laura Daly, deputy director of the World Youth Student and Educational Travel Confederation, a nonprofit trade association for the global youth travel industry, said international destinations like Berlin and Amsterdam welcomed hostels “with open arms.”

Paul Halpenny, a group director for Hostelworld, said Barcelona was another city where political efforts brought results. “Owners there spent years battling the city,” he said of Barcelona. “But today it has some of the best hostels in any city around the world.”

In Rome, a change in the law last year resulted in about eight new or planned hostels.

In the United States, Ms. Daly said, cities including Miami, Los Angeles and Chicago are attracting hostel investment over New York.

Generator Hostels, based in London, has a dozen properties and several in development in Europe, and a property under construction in Miami scheduled to open next year.

Both Generator and Meininger, the German company, have full-time staff in the United States actively looking for sites.

And yet, for all the activity, hostel development in the United States has been slow, compared to other regions of the world, said Bjorn Hanson, a professor of hospitality and tourism at New York University's Tisch Center.

That, he said, is because of strict regulations, the rise of less expensive limited-service hotels in urban areas and the popularity of hotel-chain loyalty points. And not everyone sees the appeal of bunkhouse camaraderie.

Still, there is a trend even in the mainstream lodging industry for guests to spend less time in their hotel rooms, in favor of public spaces to work and meet fellow travelers. "Hostels do that extremely well by offering more of a social experience than most hotels," Dr. Hanson said.

All of which is why the visitors on the bus in Long Island City last week remained hopeful.

"There's power in numbers," Ms. Dolan of Clink Hostels said. "It seems like the right moment."

The New York Times article can be found here: http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/05/realestate/commercial/hostel-business-wants-to-make-a-push-back-into-new-york.html?emc=eta1&_r=0



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**Testimony to the New York City Council
Committee on Economic Development
April 20, 2017**

Preparing for the Impact of Federal Travel Bans on New York City's Economy

My name is Tim Tompkins, and I am the President of the Times Square Alliance, which works to improve and promote the Times Square district. Thank you, Chair Garodnick and members of the Economic Development Committee for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today, and for the opportunity to talk about the crucial role tourism plays in our city's economy.

Though Times Square is home to a wide variety of commercial, retail and cultural offerings, it should come as no surprise that the tourism sector makes up the largest share of Times Square's economic output. Annual direct spending on hotels, entertainment and retail in Times Square amounts to \$6.2 billion. Our neighborhood has 16% of the city's hotel rooms; in fact, we've added 2,550 new rooms since 2011. Accordingly, direct spending on hotels has increased over 30% in that time, resulting in \$2.5 billion in revenues and \$305 million in tax revenue.¹ Tourists make up over two-thirds of attendees to Broadway shows, an industry that, on its own, contributes nearly \$12.6 billion to the economy of New York City on top of ticket sales and supports 89,000 local jobs, according to the Broadway League.²

In short, tourism helps drive Times Square, but the impact of tourism reverberates far behind Midtown because the jobs and tax revenue it generates touch nearly every neighborhood in the city. It is for this reason that we are deeply concerned about the impact of a federal travel ban on the city's economy.

The number of international visitors to New York has grown nearly every year since 2006, interrupted only briefly in 2009 by the financial crisis. Last year, the city drew 12.7 million international visitors from countries as varied as Britain, Brazil and China, a 74% increase from 2006.³ International visitors make up 21% of all tourism to the city, but they pack an outsized economic punch because they stay longer and spend more per trip than domestic visitors. NYC & Company estimates that international visitors accounted for 48% of total tourism-related spending in 2015; that's \$20.3 billion.⁴

Where does that money go? To New Yorkers. The tourism sector supported 375,250 jobs in 2015, an increase of over 90,000 from 2006.⁵ That's 9.1% of all payroll employment in the City, spanning a variety of income levels and sectors ranging from lodging, entertainment and food to communications, construction and wholesale distribution.⁶ If Times Square, where 60% of New York City resident-employees live outside Manhattan, is any indication, that income is supporting families across the greater metropolitan region.⁷

Although no federal travel ban is currently in place, the reality is that New York's tourism industry is already facing some very real headwinds. We shared NYC & Company's concern that New York expects

¹ TSq. Alliance Economic Impact Report, 2016

² Broadway League Statistics: <https://www.broadwayleague.com/research/statistics-broadway-nyc/>

³ *In 2006, NYC & Co. estimates 7.26 million international visitors came to NYC.* NYC&Co. "New York City Tourism: A Model for Success," June 2013, p.7; New York Times, "New York Expects Fewer Foreign Tourists, Saying Trump Is to Blame," February 28, 2017

⁴ NYC&Co. New York City Travel + Tourism Trend Report, October 2016, p.14

⁵ NYC&Co. "New York City Tourism: A Model for Success," June 2013, p.13; NYC&Co. "New York City Travel + Tourism Trend Report," October 2016, p.15

⁶ NYC&Co. "New York City Travel + Tourism Trend Report," October 2016, p.15

⁷ TSq. Alliance Economic Impact Report, 2016

to draw 300,000 fewer foreign tourists this year than in 2016, a drop that will cost the city's businesses hundreds of millions of dollars in lost sales.⁸

We are heartened by NYC & Company's proactive efforts to fight this downward trend, which make it even more important that the City must continue to invest in tourism promotion, advocacy and research to gain a fuller understanding of the ways in which tourism touches the lives of New Yorkers across the city. There is still much we don't know about the ways in which tourism dollars make their way throughout New York's economy, or how the industry can help even more New Yorkers achieve stable, middle-class lives.

We also believe it is vital for the city to continue to enhance its enforcement of quality-of-life issues in high-traffic, high-visibility locations like Times Square, which are the public face of our city and country. When visitors to Times Square are aggressively solicited or touched without their permission, it reinforces the notion that New York is an unsafe, unwelcoming place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your role in getting reasonable regulations passed; now the Administration must be proactive with respect to enforcement.

These efforts can help ensure New York remains a welcoming place not just for tourists from around the world, but for New Yorkers of every type who call this city home.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

⁸ New York Times, "New York Expects Fewer Foreign Tourists, Saying Trump Is to Blame," February 28, 2017

- 25% defined these difficulties as
 - a) Fear of traveler harassment;
 - b) Fear of harassment or reprisals of US travelers in the Middle East;
 - c) Uncertainty regarding Green Card and approved visa credibility;
 - d) Limited access to the employee pool.

That 25% soared to 37% when respondents emphasized individual fears.

In response to the question, "Will this travel ban reduce your company's travel?"

- 3% responded "Significantly."
- 36% replied "Somewhat."

Business and business travelers abhor "uncertainty." When travelers are uncertain about the viability of a trip, it gets postponed. That means postponing the hotel stay, the dining, the surface transportation charges, the shopping, and the ancillary revenue that floats this city. Sometimes, trips and travelers are rerouted to other places... Places with less regulation, equal security, newer meeting facilities, and an equal number of options.

New York City is more than just the landmark gateway to the US. It is the portal to business, art, music, and culture. Why would anyone introduce an aura of uncertainty in traveling to New York?

Business travel brings people together. Barely two months after these bans were announced — and on the heels of the electronics restrictions — the Association of Corporate Travel Executives is convening a global travel conference. And we are doing it right here, in New York City. It starts Sunday, April 23rd. We have brought 1,000 representatives from 25 countries to discuss issues similar to the ones you are discussing here. I invite you, Mr. Chair, and this committee to join the ACTE conference with me.

The uncertainty about New York needs to end here.

Thank you.

End of testimony

Testimony of: Greeley Koch, Executive Director/CEO
Representing: Association of Corporate Travel Executives
Presented to: New York City Council's Committee on Economic Development
Subject: Preparing for the Impact of Federal Travel Bans on New York City's Economy
Date: April 20, 2017
Contact: gkoch@acte.org

I'd like to thank the Honorable Chair, the distinguished members of this committee, and the City of New York for the opportunity to address this issue — the economic impact of travel bans.

My name is Greeley Koch, Executive Director of the Association of Corporate Travel Executives, a global travel trade group with members in 75 countries... Representing more than 50,000 business travelers in the air on any given day... And billions of dollars, euros, and yen in annual business travel expenditures. Many of those travelers and a lot of that revenue passes through this city.

You are going to hear some startling numbers today... From myself and others. Those numbers will parallel the hard reality of the first and second travel ban timeline. But there is a much harder reality of traveler perception... Which ultimately drives the numbers six to twelve months in advance. In other words, the worst may be yet to come.

Here is what we know:

- International bookings to the US are down 6.5% over the same period last year, from countries not affected by the bans.
- Excluding the Middle East, the highest regional drop in bookings is from Western Europe, down 13.6 percent from last year.
- Bookings worldwide to the US have dropped a full 1.1 percent from, 3.4% to 2.3% as of January 27th to February 24th, 2017.

These figures were provided by Forward Keys, a company that analyzes 14 million travel transactions per day. I have every confidence in their accuracy.

- The February Forecast for visitation to New York — offered by NYC & Company — projected a 2.1% drop in international travel in 2017 as compared to 2016. This translates to a loss of about 300,000 visitors compared to 2016 levels (12.7 million falling to 12.4 million this year).

At ACTE, travel goes beyond numbers. Every statistic has a face, and those faces matter. Here is the backstory of those numbers.

In a recent survey of 250 global business travel managers conducted by ACTE, we learned that "uncertainty" regarding travel to the US was suddenly affecting travel agendas.

- 20% claimed that the travel ban posed difficulties for their respective companies. And this 20 percent was barely reflected by the seven countries named in the ban.

TESTIMONY OF MATT A.V. CHABAN
POLICY DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR AN URBAN FUTURE

BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PREPARING FOR THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL TRAVEL BANS ON NEW YORK CITY'S ECONOMY

APRIL 21, 2016

Good afternoon, Chair Garodnick and members of the committee, and thank you for inviting the Center to share our work on this important issue.

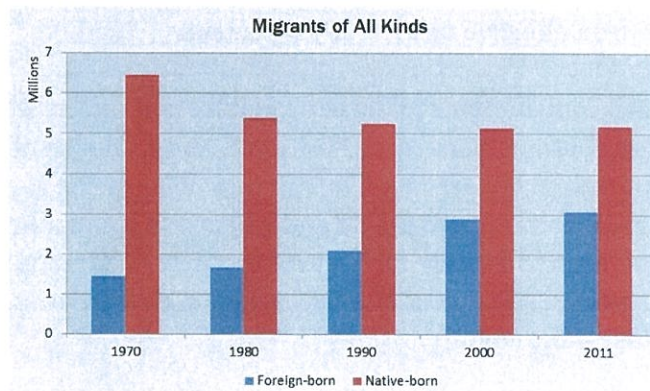
My name is Matt Chaban, and I am the policy director of the Center for an Urban Future. We're an independent, nonpartisan think tank based in Manhattan whose mission is advancing smart and sustainable public policies to reduce inequality, increase economic mobility and grow the economy for all New Yorkers.

Over 20 years, we have produced exhaustive research on these issues, including ways to help New York's women entrepreneurs succeed; what it takes for small businesses to grow and thrive; the way the city's capital construction system is failing its cultural institutions; the shortcomings in the high school equivalency system; and the issue that brings us here today: immigration's central role in the city, and particularly its economy.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

So here we are at the Economic Development committee talking about an immigration ban. The two could not be more opposite, and nowhere is that truer than New York. Over our two decades, the Center has frequently returned to the vital role immigrants play in New York City, both as architects of the our culture and engines of our economy.

For four centuries, the city has been one of immigrants and commerce, where each invigorates the other. This will not change, no matter the actions of Washington, though the administration can still hurt New York when it has rarely been stronger.

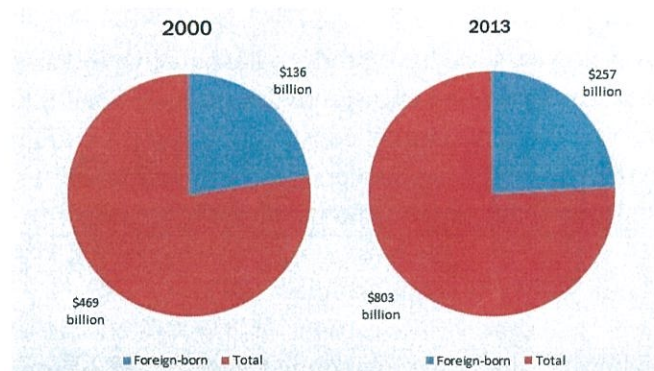


The White House's actions are risking business. While only one out of three New Yorkers are foreign-born, nearly half of the workforce hails from another country. And a surge in foreign-born New Yorkers since the 1980s has tracked closely with the city's recovery. Their ranks have nearly doubled, according to the Center's research, to more than 3 million, while the native-born population declined by a few percent.

Indeed, this is among the great ironies of the immigration ban: For a president who claims to understand business and the economy better than anyone, his administration seemed to be ignoring a simple fact. Both in New York City and across the country, immigrants create massive economic dividends not only for themselves but for their entire communities.

In 2013 alone, immigrants in New York accounted for \$257 billion in economic activity, according to a 2015 analysis by the New York State Comptroller's Office (PDF: <http://bit.ly/2lgqoFz>). This activity has nearly doubled since 2000, growing faster than the city's overall economy; whereas immigrants generated 29 percent of the city's economic output in 2000, this share reached 32 percent in 2013.

And these contributions come from all corners of the immigrant community, even those thought to live in the shadows. An analysis by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (PDF: <http://bit.ly/2lfQUOF>) found that undocumented immigrants in New York State contributed \$1.11 billion in local and state taxes last year. And they pay a greater share than other New Yorkers, with an effective rate of 8.9 percent, compared to 8.1 percent for the typical state resident. Furthermore, the institute estimated that were these New Yorkers granted full legal status, their contributions would rise to \$1.36 billion, with an effective tax rate of 9.9 percent.



Such contributions to the city's culture and coffers would not be possible without immigrants' contributions to many of New York's most important industries—including many people might not expect. We are familiar with the cabbie or the garment worker hailing from Africa or Central America; those jobs are 88 and 96 percent immigrant held. But well-paying, high-skilled jobs that keep us healthy and housed also rely on foreign-born New Yorkers: some 70 percent of life scientists, 59 percent of pharmacists, and 60 percent of civil engineers in the city hail from outside the country.

Industrious Immigrants					
Top Jobs for Immigrants		Bottom Jobs for Immigrants		Top High-Skill Jobs	
Garment and textile pressers	96%	Firefighters	8%	Medical and life scientists	70%
Sewing machine operators	93%	Film and TV camera operators	13%	Civil engineers	60%
Dishwashers	92%	Writers and authors	14%	Pharmacists	59%
Drywall and ceiling tile installers	91%	Sound engineers	14%	Registered nurses	58%
Taxi drivers & chauffeurs	88%	Public relations specialist	16%	Tax preparers	57%
Masons	86%	Police supervisors & detectives	16%	Dentists	55%
Tailors, dressmakers & sewers	85%	Actors	16%	Travel agents	54%
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	83%	Lawyers, judges & judicial workers	16%	Mechanical engineers	53%
Maids & housekeepers	83%	Speech language pathologists	16%	Biological scientists	53%
Painters	82%	Athlete and artist agents & managers	16%	Physicians & surgeons	45%

And in the creative industries—a growing bedrock of the city’s economy at roughly 7 percent of all employment—immigrants also play a notable role, with nearly 50,000 foreign-born New Yorkers employed in creative occupations. They account for an astounding 14 percent of all foreign-born creative professionals in the United States.

The most promising part of the city’s economic explosion has been a newfound entrepreneurial spirit, and here, too, immigrants are having an outsized impact. There are roughly 41,000 foreign-born business owners in the city, compared to 32,000 native-born ones, again despite the fact there are roughly twice as many native-born New Yorkers. And these enterprising immigrants employ all manner of New Yorkers, whether opening a Thai restaurant with American-born servers and delivery workers from the Middle East or creating a healthcare start-up with programmers from South Asia, Eastern Europe, and the West Coast.

As we have already heard, the administration’s actions are also impacting those temporary immigrants who have become such a vital part of our economy: tourists. New York has always been one of the top travel destinations on the planet, but the boom in tourism remains staggering, having nearly doubled over two decades to 60 million visitors last year. Because of the travel ban, many of the jobs these tourists make possible are now threatened.

We are now working on a major new report documenting the growing economic importance of tourism to New York’s economy, which we look forward to sharing in the coming months. Already our research has shown that in 2014, more than 362,000 jobs were sustained by visitors to New York City, with total wage of \$22.5 billion. In just two years, those jobs have continued to surge, growing 5 percent to 375,000 jobs.

These are not just jobs for tour guides and hotel concierge, either. In 2014, there were approximately 275,000 direct tourism jobs while 87,000 were jobs created through indirect or

induced spending. That means the baristas at that underground roastery in Bushwick and the copy editors at the *Time Out New York* have just as much to lose should tourism fall.

Whatever comes to pass with the White House's immigration policy, now is the moment for New Yorkers to come together and unleash the full potential of the city's immigrant communities. Both the Council and the administration have supported these goals before, and it is now more important than ever that they do so.

The opportunities for strengthening these critical, and vulnerable, communities are everywhere. It could mean easing the burden on immigrant entrepreneurs; improving our libraries, which are critical hubs for both immigrants and jobseekers; and helping highly skilled yet underemployed New Yorkers leave behind their brooms and taxis and return to the hospitals and offices where they can make the greatest impact on the city.

Thank you again for this important opportunity to share our work on this critical issue. I have included links at the bottom of our testimony, if you would like to find more information about our research, as well as recommendation on how to improve the situation of immigrant workers and entrepreneurs.

A World of Opportunity: New York City's Immigrant Entrepreneurs

<https://nycfuture.org/research/a-world-of-opportunity>

A City of Immigrant Workers: Building a Workforce Strategy for All New Yorkers

<https://nycfuture.org/research/a-city-of-immigrant-workers-building-a-workforce-strategy-to-support-all-ne>

Where Immigrant New Yorkers Go to Work

<https://nycfuture.org/data/immigrant-workers-data-brief>

Creative New York: The Critical Role of the Cultural Industry

<https://nycfuture.org/research/creative-new-york-2015>

Branches of Opportunities: Creating New York's 21st Century Libraries

<https://nycfuture.org/research/branches-of-opportunity>



**Testimony Before the New York City Council
Committee on Economic Development
Oversight: Preparing for the Impact of Federal Travel Bans on
New York City's Economy
April 20, 2017**

Good afternoon Chair Garodnick, members of the Economic Development Committee, and staff. My name is Julie Samuels and I am the Executive Director at Tech:NYC, a coalition of more than 450 technology and startup companies in New York. One of our primary objectives is to increase engagement and dialogue between our industry and New York City government, which is why I'm so glad to be here today.

As part of this process, we hope to work with our members to help policymakers learn more about the technology industry and how we can harness its ingenuity to address the day-to-day issues that impact our city. At the same time, we believe our member companies can learn from the people and policymakers of New York City, especially about how new and innovative ideas can adapt to the challenges presented by a large, diverse, and complicated city.

Our ultimate goal in engaging in this dialogue is to demonstrate that New York City is the best place for technology companies to grow and develop. We believe that New York's unique business ecosystem, as a global center for so many industries such as finance, media, fashion, art, and real estate, will serve to strengthen the technology businesses that call New York home; and that in turn, technology will further strengthen those incumbent industries and the city at large. A crucial ingredient to this is diversity, which is why our community came out so quickly and emphatically against the President's immigration travel ban.

I'd like to start by taking a quick look at the numbers, which are quite notable.



- Roughly one in 10 American workers with jobs at private firms were employed at immigrant-founded companies. In New York alone, nearly 500,00 people are employed at firms owned by immigrants.¹
- More than half of the Fortune 500 companies based in New York are founded by immigrants or their children.²
- There are more than 375,000 immigrant entrepreneurs in the New York City metro area. In fact, immigrant residents are 19.1 percent more likely to be entrepreneurs than native-born residents³.
- In 2014, students on temporary visas made up of about one out of every three students earning a Master's degree at New York's universities in STEM fields, and 40.7 percent of students earning a PhD-level degree in STEM fields.⁴
- Every time a state gains 100 foreign-born STEM workers with graduate level STEM training from a U.S. school, 262 more jobs are created.⁵

In other words, our economy—both locally and nationally—depends on a robust immigration system that not only attracts, but welcomes with open arms, the kind of people who create jobs and grow the economy. The federal travel ban unfortunately sends precisely the opposite message to entrepreneurs and other highly-skilled workers. Namely, that they are not welcome here.

On top of this, the ban will likely have a negative impact on tourism, which greatly contributes to the local and national economy. For example, the international firm Tourism Economics forecasted that the number of foreign travelers to the U.S. could fall by 6.3 million annually between 2016 and 2018 due to this Administration's rhetoric and policies⁶. Locally, New York's tourism industry is vital to our economy and accounted for \$62.5 billion of the state's GDP in 2014.

We've also begun to see the effects that the current political climate has had on immigration with the recent H1-B visa lottery. As you know, the H1-B visa program, which allows high-skilled foreign workers to come to this country, has been under attack

¹ Partnership for a New American Economy, 2016, "The Contributions of New Americans in New York." <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/nae-ny-report.pdf>

² Partnership for a New American Economy, 2016, "The Contributions of New Americans in New York." <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/nae-ny-report.pdf>

³ Partnership for a New American Economy, 2016, <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/city/new-york>

⁴ Partnership for a New American Economy, 2016, "The Contributions of New Americans in New York." <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/nae-ny-report.pdf>

⁵ Madeline Zavodny, "Immigration and American Jobs," The Partnership for a New American Economy and the American Enterprise Institute, 2011, http://www.renewoureconomy.org/sites/all/themes/pnae/img/NAE_Im-AmerJobs.pdf.

⁶ Patrick McGeehan, "New York Expects Fewer Foreign Tourists, Saying Trump Is to Blame" https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/28/nyregion/new-york-foreign-tourists-trump-policies.html?_r=0



from this Administration and others. While we agree that the program is ripe for reform, it remains an important tool for companies to attract much needed technical talent. Of note, just this week, the federal government announced that the number of applicants for such visas fell below 200,000 for the first time since 2014. In fact, in 2016, there were at least 36,000 *more* applicants than this year. Think about this for a second—more than 36,000 fewer high-skilled workers want to come to the United States this year.

It's not just H1-B visas. Take the story of one of our member companies based here in New York, Andela. Andela is a local startup that connects talented African engineers with employers in the United States. In addition to doing important work, Andela is also a New York success story. It has raised \$41 million in venture funding and employs nearly 100 New Yorkers. In late February, one of Andela's engineers, a 28-year-old from Nigeria, was making his way to the United States for the first time. After securing a short-term visa and all appropriate legal travel documents, and traveling for nearly 24 hours, he arrived at JFK where he was detained by Customs and told he "didn't look like an engineer." He was forced to take a technically difficult computer coding exam and was detained for three hours before being allowed to leave the airport.

That engineer made it out of the airport and was able to get to his job at First Access, a New York fintech startup. But what happened to this engineer creates instability not just for him, but for two growing New York tech companies. It threatens the ability of these companies to grow and thrive here in our city.

Andela's story illustrates just why so many New York technology companies and investors have come out so strongly in opposition to the travel ban. In fact, my organization, Tech:NYC, sent a letter detailing that opposition to the White House just days after the first ban was implemented, and it was signed by more than 2,000 New Yorkers who work in our industry. I would like to tell you a bit about that letter and how it came to be.

President Trump signed the first version of the immigration travel ban on January 27th, a Friday night. As you might remember, there was initially a good deal of confusion about how the ban would work, what it meant, and how it would be implemented. Within 24 hours, it became clear to us that the ban was something our members and community strongly opposed. On Sunday morning, we sent a draft letter saying as much out to approximately 100 CEOs and investors, asking if they'd like to publicly join our opposition. In less than nine hours—again, on a Sunday—we had amassed



signatures from more than 400 senior executives, mostly CEOs and investors. Indeed, after adding their names, many shared personal stories of immigrant founders and their families, friends, and employees.

We released the letter on Monday, and within 72 hours, we were up to more than 2,000 signatures, when we finally sent it off to the White House. The swift and unequivocal response from our community shows the negative impact that we fear a travel ban, if fully implemented, can and will have. Not just to engineers like Andela's, but to the diversity and inclusivity that we most treasure about NYC and our nation.

I'd like to read in full the letter we proudly sent to the White House and Congressional leaders on February 3rd.

We've also submitted copies of our letter with the full 2000+ signatures to the committee.

President Trump:

We are business leaders and investors from New York City's robust and growing technology sector. Among the reasons we proudly build and grow companies here in New York City is the rich diversity the city and its residents provide. We write out of concern that your recent executive orders will undermine that and send a dangerous message to all immigrants that they are not welcome here.

America has long provided homes and futures to millions who dared to share in our collective dream. There is nowhere this is more true than New York City—home to Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty, and more foreign-born immigrants than any other city in the world. Your executive orders suspending entry for citizens of certain countries, even those who currently have legal status, along with limiting the refugee program, threaten those immigrants who are our current and future neighbors, friends, colleagues, customers, and even bosses. Their presence is a crucial ingredient that sets New York City apart and a fundamental reason why we have all chosen to build our careers and companies here.

In addition to all of the humanitarian reasons to welcome refugees, it is dangerous to discourage immigration when the facts show that immigrant entrepreneurs play a significant role in the American



economy. Immigrants are more than twice as likely to start a business as the native-born population. Immigrant entrepreneurs started, in whole or in part, some of the most important technology companies of our time including Tesla Motors, LinkedIn, Zipcar, Google, Intel, Yahoo!, eBay, and WhatsApp. More than half of the companies on the current list of U.S. technology startups valued at \$1 billion or more were started by immigrants.

We should be doing everything in our power to attract these entrepreneurs to the United States. Yet when we close the door to immigrants from certain countries, not to mention to refugees, we are telling *all* immigrants that they are not welcome here.

We are confident that we can achieve security without threatening the inclusivity and diversity at the heart of New York City—and the United States. We encourage you to rescind your recent executive orders.

In conclusion, we are gravely concerned about the inevitable negative economic impact that a fully implemented travel ban will have on our industry, our city, and our nation. We've already seen the early stages of this trend and the ban is not even currently in force. We commend the committee for hosting this hearing and we look forward to working with you to ensure New York remains home to the diverse and entrepreneurial population that make our city the home we all love so much.



January 30, 2017

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In addition to all of the humanitarian reasons to welcome refugees, it is dangerous to discourage immigration when the facts show that immigrant entrepreneurs play a significant role in the American economy. Immigrants are more than twice as likely to start a business as the native-born population. Immigrant entrepreneurs started, in whole or in part, some of the most important technology companies of our time including LinkedIn, Tesla Motors, Zipcar, Google, Intel, Yahoo!, eBay, and WhatsApp. More than half of the companies on the current list of U.S. technology startups valued at \$1 billion or more were started by immigrants.

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Sincerely,

[signatures begin on following page]



Ryan Abbadi Financial Analyst Warby Parker	Gallery Partnerships Manager Artsy	CPO & Co Founder Luv.it Technologies	Operations Manager Meetup
Jenna Abdou Host & Producer of Beyond the Headline 33voices	Anna Adams- Buettner	Stephanie Aiyeku Senior Accounting Manager Intersection	Franz Aliquo Founder/CCO AVG
Ty Abernethy Co-Founder Take the Interview, Inc.	Seyi Adekoya Software Developer Andela	Ibrahim Akaba Food Safety Specialist Blue Apron	Lauren Allanson Product Manager Greenhouse Software Inc.
Eden Abrahams NY Leader Venwise	Alex Adelman Founder Cosmic	Mike Albanese CEO Galore Media	John Allspaw CTO Etsy
Erin Abrams VP of Legal Affairs Via	Janette Afsharian Executive Director Bluemarker LLC	Santos Gabriel Getchman Albarran Optician Warby Parker	Miriam Altman Co-Founder & CEO Kinvolved
Jacob Abu-Zeid Quality Control Warby Parker	Ayna Agarwal Co-Founder She++	Emily Alben photographer Warby Parker	Jeffrey Eric Altman CEO AuriStor, Inc.
Danny Ackerman Software Engineer Intent Media	Manoj Aggarwal Jackpocket	Robert Albert CEO Routehappy	Shayna Amato Operations Specialist Warby Parker
Carlos Acosta Store Leader Warby Parker	Shera Ahmad CTO Money-Media	Jane Aldridge AppNexus	Scott Amenta Chief of Staff Spring
David Jon Acosta Designer Rent the Runway	Asmau Ahmed Founder Plum Perfect	Archie Alegre Support Engineer Intersection	Mark Matheson Amery Senior Advisor Warby Parker
Harley Adams	Germán Ahumada	Camille Alexander	Kal Amin Vice President

Spotify	CEO Amino	Pamela Aquino Intersection	Meghan Asha CEO FounderMade
Rajesh Amin Executive Chairman Mana Health Inc.	Hayley Anderson Core Engineer Meetup	David Arcara Managing Director Laconia Capital Group	Erin Asher Customer Experience Advisor Warby Parker
Amasa Amos Senior Software Engineer Intent Media, LLC	Richard Andrews Solutions Engineer AppNexus	Megan Arend Lead, Technical Client Manager AppNexus	Kyle Ashley Director of Retail Warby Parker
Matthew Amsden Founder & CEO ProofPilot	SEDIQA NARGIS ANED Nuclear Medicine Technologist Digirad	Tasso Argyros Founder & CEO ActionIQ	Shawne Ashton Sr Manager Strategic Planning Zola
Miryam Amsili Product Specialist Yext	Marc Angelico Director of Account Management AppNexus	Ursula Arhart Warby Parker	Jonathan Askin Professor Brooklyn Law School
Brendan Amyot CEO Bid Genie Group	Alessandro A. E. Anzani Partner Network Society Ventures	Tim Armstrong CEO AOL	Karim Atiyeh Founder and CTO Paribus
Jude Anasta Co-Founder & CEO Madhat	Sarah Apgar Director, New Stores and Facilities Warby Parker	David Arnow President Turing's Craft, Inc	Brandon Atkinson Chief People Officer AppNexus
Erica Anderman Director of Operations Slice	Lynne Applebaum Senior Wellness Director Somerset Hills YMCA	David Aronoff General Partner Flybridge Capital	Patricia Atlas Optician Warby Parker
Addison Anderson Via Transportation		Danny Aronson CEO Even	Patti Atlas Optician
Benjamin Anderson		Kevin Christopher Aryadi Financial Specialist Rocketrip	



Warby Parker	Engagement Director	TallyHee Inc.	Mary Beth Barone
Josh Attenberg Co-Founder & CTO Detectica	AppNexus	Dawn Barber Co-Founder NY Creative Tech Week	Senior CX Associate Rockets of Awesome
Joel Auerbach Artsy	Matthew Bahr Founder & CEO Hodi	Richard Barbieri Senior Manager, Risk Operations Etsy	Rosemarie Barresi Accounting Manager AppNexus
Joshua Auerbach CEO Digg	Ted Bailey Founder & CEO Dataminr	Arie Barendrecht CEO WiredScore	Chris Barrows Host/Creator Why I Social Podcast
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Partner	Senior Software Engineer		
Upfront Ventures	Warby Parker	Nick Taranto	
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UX Designer

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U.S. TRAVEL
A S S O C I A T I O N

TESTIMONY FOR THE RECORD

OF

ROGER DOW
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

AT

**OVERSIGHT HEARING: "PREPARING FOR THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL TRAVEL
BANS ON NEW YORK CITY'S ECONOMY"**

BEFORE THE

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

APRIL 20, 2017

Chair Garodnick and members of the Committee on Economic Development: I am pleased to offer testimony on behalf of the U.S. Travel Association, the national non-profit organization representing all sectors of the travel industry in America.

Travel and security can and must go hand-in-hand. Nowhere is this more apparent than in New York City, our nation's top international destination and the first point of entry to the United States for many international travelers. Because it hosts some of the world's biggest celebrations—and has dealt with some of our nation's gravest emergency challenges—New York City has an enormous stake in how America is perceived around the world. Fortunately, the city benefits from the outstanding work of NYC & Company in promoting New York as a top global destination—but even these efforts can be affected by national policy that lacks a sustained balance between national security and travel facilitation.

It is difficult to overstate the value of travel to the U.S. economy. The travel industry employs 15.3 million, or roughly one in nine Americans. In fact, travel is a top-ten employer in 49 states and the District of Columbia, providing good jobs that cannot be outsourced. In 2016, travelers in the U.S. spent \$990.3 billion—that's \$2.7 billion a day, \$113.1 million an hour, \$1.9 million a minute and \$31,400 a second. This spending generated a total of \$2.3 billion in economic output, and nearly \$158 billion in tax revenue supporting vital public services like police, firefighters, and teachers.

International travel is particularly important to our country's economic growth, because every dollar spent in the U.S. by an international traveler is considered an export. There were over 74.7 million international arrivals to the U.S. last year, making international travel America's No. 1 service export and No. 2 export overall. International travel spending directly supported about 12 million U.S. jobs

last year, and \$32.4 billion in wages. At \$246 billion, international travel accounted for 11.2 percent of all U.S. exports in 2016. According to our analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, we enjoyed an \$87 billion international travel trade surplus in 2016, larger than any other sector of the U.S. economy. Without travel, the country's \$500 billion trade deficit would be 17 percent larger.

International travelers, particularly those from overseas (any country excluding Canada or Mexico), have an outsized impact on the U.S. economy because they stay longer and spend more. When visiting the U.S., overseas travelers on average stay 18 nights and spend \$4,360 per person.

It wasn't always this way, though. In the decade after 9/11, the U.S. experienced a decline in international visitation while travel grew all over the rest of the world—and, regrettably, for entirely preventable reasons. After 9/11, the U.S. rightly had to institute a series of new security measures. However, these precautions lacked any revised travel facilitation policies and were not reinforced by a clear message of welcome. Without this balance, foreign nationals began to perceive the U.S. as less hospitable, and international travel to the U.S. suffered—so much so that the travel industry now refers to the ten years after 9/11 as “The Lost Decade.”

Thankfully, the subsequent period has encouraged significant growth for international travel to the U.S. This progress is the direct result of the National Travel and Tourism Strategy, implemented in 2012 and conceived to generate 100 million international visitors by 2021, and of Brand USA's work promote the United States as the top global destination. These efforts yielded new and remarkably successful policies to increase the efficiency of the visa and entry processes, develop trusted traveler programs, expand preclearance locations and enhance the Visa Waiver Program. Still, we had a long

way to go to recover from the Lost Decade—and it was only last year that the U.S. finally reclaimed its pre-9/11 global share of international travel exports.

This recent recovery makes it that much more important to stay focused on the lessons of post-9/11, as there are ominous signs that we may be entering a new period of decline, with serious potential consequences for New York City.

First, a critical clarification: the travel community fully supports policies genuinely needed to protect national security. It is not just our responsibility as Americans—without confidence in public safety, potential travelers will stay home. Rather, we are concerned about implementing security measures that are so deep and broad, without clearly conveying their rationale or an accompanying message of welcome for legitimate travelers, that all of our progress will be put at risk.

Because most international travel is planned and booked well in advance, we are now only beginning to discern the impact of recent policies such as the implementation of “extreme vetting” of visa applicants, or the President’s executive orders on visas and immigration. But the initial indications are worrisome—and extend well beyond travelers from the six countries directly targeted by the executive order.

U.S. Travel is now working with other travel leaders to compile accurate data on the potential impact of various factors on inbound international travel—from the appreciating dollar to “America First” themes. Our research team is analyzing indicators that reflect both global travel intent and actual flight and lodging bookings. The preliminary flight booking data currently suggest significant declines from specific geographic regions. However, it’s already clear the issue is not merely the raw

volume of travelers from the affected handful of nations, but rather the potential resulting perceptions globally.

It doesn't have to be this way. Restoring balance between security and travel facilitation, and then communicating a message of welcome to travelers around the world, can help mitigate negative perceptions of the U.S. abroad—and pre-empt major damage to our economy.

From convention bookings to leisure tourism, the global travel marketplace is extremely competitive. Travelers have choice—and they will go where they feel most welcome. They are discouraged by what they perceive as delay, confusion or unnecessarily invasive scrutiny. Just as our elected officials work hard to sway undecided voters to win elections, we can likewise use our considerable marketing skills to attract them to our shores—especially “undecided” travelers from allied countries who are unsure about future trips to the U.S.

We cannot presume that we will retain our top spot in the international travel market just because America has a wealth of prime attractions. Other destinations are steadily growing their international travel market share, and happily welcome more long-haul travelers. There is mounting evidence of trip cancellations and reduced advance booking searches in response to the current political climate. We need to offer potential visitors reassurance that we are the same welcome nation we have always been. We cannot afford to lose their goodwill.

So fundamentally, here's what we as a nation need to do:

- 1) Be precise and welcoming in messaging about travel security measures affecting international visitors;

- 2) Tailor security policies to address public safety without paralyzing routine business or leisure travel, and provide resources to implement these policies without creating inordinate inefficiencies;
- 3) Clearly and explicitly remind U.S. embassies and consular offices abroad that a key part of their mission is to help facilitate travel to the U.S.;
- 4) Support the critical work of NYC & Company to market New York City as an iconic world-class destination and gateway to the United States; and
- 5) Support Brand USA, our nation's destination marketing organization, as it promotes the United States around the globe;

These are not abstract concepts—they define our nation's global image, and directly affect millions of Americans whose livelihood depends on a vibrant international travel market. To ensure that a more hospitable voice is heard abroad, the U.S. must put in sustained work at the national, state and local level—and in the private as well as public sector.

U.S. Travel recently initiated a campaign called *Faces of Travel* to document the human impact of travel-related policy and rhetoric. From the hotel concierge to the ballpark concessionaire, Americans rely on our leaders to protect public safety, and to hone an accompanying message of fundamental hospitality that America is indeed still open for business. To this end, we appreciate your commitment on the New York City Council, which can serve as a model for action by municipal and state officials across the country.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to testify today, and please call on the U.S. Travel Association if we can provide any further assistance.



April 20, 2017

Written testimony respectfully submitted to the New York City Council Committee on Economic Development by Andrew Hoan, President & CEO of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, regarding Preparing for the Impact of Federal Travel Bans on New York City's Economy.

Good Morning Chair Garodnick and Members of the Economic Development Committee:

I am Andrew Hoan and I serve as the President & CEO at the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce.

The Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce is a membership-based business assistance organization that represents the interests of over 2,100 member businesses across the borough of Brooklyn. The Brooklyn Alliance is the not-for-profit economic development organization of the Chamber. It works to address the needs of businesses through direct business assistance programs.

I would like to commend the committee for exploring the effects of enacting a potential federal travel ban to the United States and its potential impacts on New York City's economy. This proposed action causes great concern for me in terms of the livelihood of Brooklyn residents and workers. We should also be concerned about the cumulative impacts on several industries, such as tourism, higher education, and small businesses.

Net foreign migration to Brooklyn increased by 74 percent between 2011 and 2014. Discriminatory travel bans will curtail travelling and immigration, not only from the countries targeted, but could have a global impact due to the disdain and fear perpetuated by the act. Although 40 percent of Brooklyn residents are foreign-born, close to 50 percent of businesses in Brooklyn are owned by immigrants. These businesses form the bedrock of our everyday lives, such as grocery stores, dry cleaning, and taxi services. 40 percent of higher skilled professions, such as information technology, architecture, and engineering are composed of immigrant workers, which can be attributed to the large amount of foreign students studying at our colleges and universities. Healthcare is the largest employer sector in the borough, which also contains a high level of foreign born professionals.

The impact of a potential federal travel ban would have consequential effects on Brooklyn and the entire City as a whole. The Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce will stand strong against any proposed ordinances affecting certain groups of people based on country of origin. We will continue to support immigrant-owned businesses and residents, through our various programs and services.

Thank you for providing us with the opportunity to testify in this case.

AH/vs



SEE WHAT TOMORROW BRINGS

around the whole world. There's no doubt that the rhetoric around the ban has damaged the U.S. brand. Tourism is a very discretionary market. It takes very little for travelers to shift their plans and preferences, and consumers have more choices than ever when it comes to travel options.

I commend NYC & Company for taking a proactive leadership role to mitigate any negative effects of federal policy and rhetoric. NYC & Company was the first destination marketing organization in the U.S. to come out against the travel ban, vocalizing strong opposition to any kind of impediments to legitimate international travel into the U.S. The organization's "ALL ARE WELCOME" campaign was the first of its kind, and destinations across the country are now following their example. Earlier this week, Los Angeles tourism officials launched a similar "Everyone is welcome" campaign, underscoring the importance of reassuring international travelers.

In closing, tourism is more than fun. It's serious business. In fact, it's the lifeblood of communities across the five boroughs. Destination marketing does more than attract visitors and fill hotel rooms. It drives broader economic growth and offers benefits to local communities, making a destination more competitive and improving the overall quality of life for residents. And its role is becoming even more important during this delicate time. Maintaining the awareness of the New York City brand among major international destinations is not only crucial to drive short-term visitation and the related economic impact, but also for the long term continued vitality of the destination.

Thank you for your time and consideration. DMAI looks forward to continuing to work with the city of New York to drive economic impact, job creation, community sustainability and quality of life through travel.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Don Welsh".

Don Welsh
President & CEO
Destination Marketing Association International



Written Testimony Before the New York City Council,
Committee on Economic Development

Oversight Hearing on Preparing for the Impact of Federal Travel Bans
on New York City's Economy

April 20, 2017

Testimony of Don Welsh, President & CEO of
Destination Marketing Association International

Good afternoon Chairman Garodnick and Members of the Committee on Economic Development. My name is Don Welsh and I am the President and Chief Executive Officer of Destination Marketing Association International, the global trade association for official destination marketing organizations, convention bureaus and tourism boards. I regret that I am not able to be with you today, but I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the impact of Federal Travel Bans on New York City's economy.

As many of you know, tourism is critical to the economic and social well-being of the City of New York. Last year alone, travelers spent more than \$42 billion in the city, generating more than \$5.8 billion in tax revenue for the city and state. Those dollars overwhelmingly support critical public services like education, health care and public safety. The industry is also a proven job creator, with more than 375,000 people whose jobs rely on visitor spending. In total, travel and tourism in New York City is responsible for an economic impact of over \$62 billion.

The strength of New York City's tourism economy is buoyed by NYC & Company's aggressive, global marketing of the destination. In today's globalized, networked world, every destination must compete for its share of the world's consumers, tourists, businesses, investment, capital, respect, and attention. Like any product, travel destinations are brands that require investment to remain relevant, attractive and competitive. The only organization that takes on this responsibility for all five boroughs is NYC & Company.

The incredible impact that tourism has on New York City is being put at risk when the message being sent around the world is that the United States is not a welcoming destination. The federal travel ban sent out a clear message to the world that the U.S. is actually closing, it's not open for business, and it's not just the six countries that were targeted – it's actually showing in the advanced bookings



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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF LENA AFRIDI BEFORE
THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CONCERNING THE IMPACT OF THE FEDERAL TRAVEL BAN ON THE NYC
ECONOMY**

April 18th, 2017

Good Morning. Thank you Chair Garodnick and members of the Committee on Economic Development for the opportunity to testify.

My name is Lena Afridi and I am the Policy Coordinator for Equitable Economic Development at the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD). ANHD is a membership organization of NYC- neighborhood based housing and economic development groups- CDCs, affordable housing developers, supportive housing providers, community organizers, and economic development service providers. Our mission is to ensure flourishing neighborhoods and decent, affordable housing for all New Yorkers. We have nearly 100 members throughout the five boroughs who have developed over 100,000 units of affordable housing in the past 25 years alone and directly operate over 30,000 units.

The ANHD is committed to strengthening the needs of communities citywide and sees small businesses as integral to the fabric of New York's neighborhoods. **United for Small Business NYC (USBNYC)**, a coalition convened by ANHD, understands that the federal travel ban will have an immeasurably negative impact on New York City's small businesses and neighborhood economies. USBNYC includes community organizations from across New York City fighting to protect New York's small businesses and non-residential tenants from the threat of displacement, with a particular focus on owner-operated, low-income, minority and immigrant-run businesses that serve low-income, immigrant, and minority communities.

New York's small businesses are what make this city special both nationally and worldwide. USBNYC is committed to ensuring that the city's immigrant and minority owned businesses thrive. Small business displacement – whether through speculation, gentrification, harassment, or draconian immigration policy – is cultural displacement and undermines the fabric of New York's neighborhoods. . In addition to pre-existing pressures facing small businesses in New York City, the Muslim ban, expanded raids, and an a political environment that is increasingly unfriendly to immigrants gives unscrupulous landlords even more fodder to harass tenants.

Immigrants and refugees make up almost half of all New York City small business owners, making them a fundamental part of the city's unique diversity. They are bodega owners, street vendors, restaurateurs, neighbors, and community members. They provide culturally relevant



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goods, vital services, and the vibrancy that makes New York what it is. Without these small businesses, New York will lose a significant part of its identity

In a time of great uncertainty and explicit attacks on immigrants, Muslims, and people of color across the country, it is vital to stand up for our communities and for our neighbors. In our mission to support the City's rich history of immigrant enterprise, we stand today and every day against the federal travel ban and with the Muslims and immigrants who make New York City a cultural icon.

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(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Matt Chaban

Address: 120 Wall Street, Fl 20

I represent: Center for an Urban Future

Address: _____

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Name: Vaun Sanyal

Address: _____

I represent: Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce

Address: _____

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Name: Bitta Mostafiz

Address: _____

I represent: MOIA

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Name: Donna Keren, NYC + Co.

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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Name: Dona Libner,

Address: NYC + Co.

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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Date: 4/20/12

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Name: Anthony Figliola

Address: 1425 Rxx Plaza, Uniondale NY

I represent: Hostelworld

Address: Dublin, Ireland

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Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bita Mostofi

Address: _____

I represent: MOIA

Address: _____

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Name: Greeley Koch

Address: _____

I represent: Association of Corporate Travel Executives

Address: Washington, DC

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Date: 4/20/17

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Name: Julie Samuels

Address: 349 5th Ave, NY NY 10016

I represent: Tech: NYC

Address: _____

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Name: Tim Tompkins

Address: _____

I represent: Times Square Alliance

Address: _____

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Date: 4/20/90

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Name: Jonathan Hollander

Address: 380 Broadway 5th fl. NYC 10013

I represent: Battery Dance

Address: same as above

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