

111TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 4676

To direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish a competitive grant program to promote domestic regional tourism.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 24, 2010

Mr. FARR introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish a competitive grant program to promote domestic regional tourism.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Travel Regional Invest-
5 ment Partnership Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The importance of travel and tourism can-
9 not be overstated: travel and tourism employs Amer-
10 ica.

1 (2) Approximately 8,300,000 domestic jobs de-
2 pend on the travel and tourism industry.

3 (3) The United States travel and tourism in-
4 dustry is worth more than \$691,000,000,000 annu-
5 ally in direct spending, of which more than 85 per-
6 cent is the result of domestic travel. Including indi-
7 rect spending, such industry tops
8 \$1,200,000,000,000 in spending.

9 (4) The travel and tourism industry accounts
10 for 2.6 percent of GDP, nearly four times that of
11 the automotive industry.

12 (5) Domestic employment related to the travel
13 and tourism industry cannot be outsourced to other
14 countries.

15 (6) The current economic downturn has created
16 the most difficult economic environment for the do-
17 mestic travel and tourism industry since the period
18 following the terrorist attacks of September 11,
19 2001.

20 (7) The travel and tourism industry has con-
21 tracted by nearly \$130,000,000,000 in 2009 alone.
22 The domestic tourism economy has fallen by nearly
23 4.5 percent during 2009, twice the rate of the over-
24 all economy of the United States.

1 (8) Domestic spending on travel and tourism
2 has been in decline since the fourth quarter of fiscal
3 year 2008, while employment in the travel and tour-
4 ism industry has been falling since the second quar-
5 ter of such year.

6 (9) Public-private partnerships have been un-
7 derutilized in the promotion of travel and tourism
8 and are a dynamic tool in creating new domestic
9 tourism markets and promoting domestic regional
10 tourism growth.

11 **SEC. 3. DOMESTIC REGIONAL TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM.**

12 (a) ESTABLISHMENT BY SECRETARY OF COM-
13 MERCE.—The Secretary of Commerce shall establish a
14 competitive grant program, administered by the Office of
15 Travel and Tourism Industries, to promote domestic re-
16 gional tourism growth and new domestic tourism market
17 creation.

18 (b) RANGE OF GRANT MONETARY AMOUNTS.—No
19 grant shall be less than \$100,000 or more than
20 \$1,000,000.

21 (c) GRANTEE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

22 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—The following entities
23 are eligible for a grant under this section for the
24 purposes of promoting domestic regional tourism
25 growth and new domestic tourism market creation:

1 (A) A Convention and Visitors Bureau.

2 (B) A partnership between a State or local
3 government and a local tourism entities.

4 (2) APPLICATION PROCESS.—

5 (A) SUBMISSION.—An eligible entity seek-
6 ing a grant under this section shall submit to
7 the Secretary an application at such time, in
8 such form, and with such information and as-
9 surances as the Secretary may require.

10 (B) CONTENTS.—Such application shall in-
11 clude—

12 (i) a description of the tourist pro-
13 motion activities that the grant will fund;
14 and

15 (ii) in the case of a partnership be-
16 tween a State or local government and
17 local tourism entities—

18 (I) the specific tourist entities
19 that such government has partnered
20 with in order promote tourism within
21 the relevant domestic region; and

22 (II) the details of the partnership
23 and specific information as to how
24 such partnership will increase regional
25 tourism.

1 (d) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

2 (1) NON-FEDERAL FUNDS.—As a condition of
3 receipt of a grant under this section, the grant re-
4 cipient shall provide, either directly or through dona-
5 tions from public or private entities, non-Federal
6 matching funds, in cash or in-kind, in an amount
7 equal to the amount of the grant.

8 (2) SPECIAL RULE FOR IN-KIND DONATIONS.—
9 Of the amount of non-Federal matching funds re-
10 quired under paragraph (1), not more than 25 per-
11 cent shall be provided through in-kind contributions.

12 (e) REPORTS.—Not later than 6 months after the end
13 of each fiscal year in which grants were awarded by the
14 Secretary under this section, the Secretary shall submit
15 a report to Congress on—

16 (1) travel-generated expenditures;

17 (2) travel-generated tax receipts; and

18 (3) travel-generated employment.

19 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

20 (1) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
21 the Secretary of Commerce.

22 (2) LOCAL TOURIST ENTITY.—The term “local
23 tourist entity” means any public or private sector
24 business engaged in tourism-related activities.

1 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
2 authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 for each of the
3 first 5 fiscal years that begin after the date of enactment
4 of this section for grants under this section, and such
5 amounts appropriated shall remain available until ex-
6 pended.

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