

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3484

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 18, 2011

Mr. FARR (for himself, Ms. BERKLEY, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. OLVER, Mr. DICKS, and Mr. REYES) 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:

1 (1) The importance of travel and tourism can-
2 not be overstated. Travel and tourism employs
3 America.

4 (2) Approximately 7,720,000 domestic jobs de-
5 pend on the travel and tourism industry.

6 (3) The travel and tourism industry accounts
7 for 2.8 percent of the Nation's gross domestic prod-
8 uct.

9 (4) The travel and tourism industry generates
10 \$1,300,000,000,000 in total expenditures.

11 (5) The travel and tourism industry lost
12 392,000 jobs in 2009.

13 (6) In 2009, tourism output declined by
14 \$100,000,000,000.

15 (7) Total direct tourism employment decreased
16 by 0.5 percent in 2010.

17 (8) Public-private partnerships have been un-
18 derutilized in the promotion of travel and tourism
19 and are a dynamic tool in creating new domestic
20 tourism markets and promoting domestic regional
21 tourism growth.

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

23 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish
24 a competitive grant program, to be administered by the
25 Office of Travel and Tourism Industries, to promote do-

1 mestic regional tourism growth and new domestic tourism
2 market creation.

3 (b) RANGE OF GRANT MONETARY AMOUNTS.—The
4 amount of each grant awarded under this section shall be
5 not less than \$100,000 and not more than \$1,000,000.

6 (c) GRANTEE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

7 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Grants may be
8 awarded under this section to—

9 (A) State tourism offices;

10 (B) local destination marketing organiza-
11 tions; and

12 (C) partnerships between a State or local
13 government and local tourism entities.

14 (2) REGIONAL DIVERSITY.—In awarding grants
15 under this section, the Secretary may consider—

16 (A) giving priority to regions with low con-
17 tributions to tourism marketing;

18 (B) maintaining regional diversity of grant
19 recipients; and

20 (C) providing benefits to rural and less-
21 marketed destinations.

22 (3) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants awarded under
23 this section may be used to—

24 (A) promote domestic regional tourism
25 growth; and

1 (B) create new domestic tourism markets.

2 (4) APPLICATION PROCESS.—

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

8 (B) CONTENTS.—Each application sub-
9 mitted under subparagraph (A) shall include—

10 (i) a description of the tourist pro-
11 motion activities to be funded by the grant;
12 and

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

16 (I) a list of the specific tourist
17 entities that such government has
18 partnered with to promote tourism
19 within the relevant domestic region;

20 (II) the details of the partnership
21 agreement;

22 (III) specific information explain-
23 ing how such partnership will increase
24 regional tourism; and

1 (IV) the anticipated positive im-
2 pact of the partnership on job cre-
3 ation and employment in the relevant
4 domestic region.

5 (d) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

6 (1) NON-FEDERAL FUNDS.—As a condition for
7 receiving a grant under this section, the grant recipi-
8 ent shall provide, either directly or through dona-
9 tions from public or private entities, non-Federal
10 matching funds, in cash or in-kind, in an amount
11 equal to the amount of the grant.

12 (2) SPECIAL RULE FOR IN-KIND DONATIONS.—
13 Of the amount of non-Federal matching funds re-
14 quired under paragraph (1), not more than 25 per-
15 cent may be provided through in-kind contributions.

16 (e) REPORTS.—Not later than 6 months after the last
17 day of each fiscal year in which grants are awarded by
18 the Secretary under this section, the Secretary shall sub-
19 mit a report to Congress that details—

20 (1) travel-generated expenditures;

21 (2) travel-generated tax receipts; and

22 (3) travel-generated employment.

23 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

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

4 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
5 the Secretary of Commerce.

6 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
7 authorized to be appropriated, for each of the first 5 fiscal
8 years beginning after the date of the enactment of this
9 Act, \$10,000,000, which shall be used for grants under
10 this section and shall remain available until expended.

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