

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 951

To promote bilateral tourism through cooperation between the United States
and Mexico.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 4, 2019

Mr. CUELLAR (for himself and Mr. McCAUL) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To promote bilateral tourism through cooperation between
the United States and Mexico.

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 “United States-Mexico
5 Tourism Improvement Act of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The United States and Mexico have bene-
9 fitted economically from a bilateral, mutually bene-

1 ficial partnership focused on enhancing the tourism
2 industry in both countries.

3 (2) In 2016, Mexican tourism to the United
4 States peaked at 18,990,585 visitors, constituting 1
5 in 4 (24.9 percent) of all tourists that year.

6 (3) Additionally, in 2016, spending by Mexican
7 tourists in the United States totaled \$20.3 billion,
8 which represented a 3 percent growth from 2015.

9 (4) Tourist activity to the United States from
10 Mexico has declined since 2016, which is in contrast
11 to an overall international tourism industry increase
12 in the United States.

13 (5) In 2017, international tourist arrivals to-
14 taled 76,900,000, up 0.7 percent from 76,400,000 in
15 2016.

16 (6) The same year, 77,000,000 international
17 visitors spent a record \$251.4 billion on hotels, trav-
18 el, food, and souvenirs, a 2-percent increase over
19 2016.

20 (7) However, also in 2017, there was a 6.1-per-
21 cent decline in visitors to the United States from
22 Mexico, comprising a loss of 1,166,585 Mexican
23 tourists from 2016.

24 (8) The Department of Commerce has not yet
25 released 2017 spending totals by Mexican tourists in

1 the United States, but a corresponding monetary de-
2 cline would be approximately \$1.24 billion in lost
3 revenue.

4 (9) This is a critical economic trend given that
5 Mexico is the biggest source of international visitors
6 to the United States after Canada.

7 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

8 It is the policy of the United States—

9 (1) to continue deepening bilateral tourism
10 through governmental cooperation between the
11 United States and Mexico;

12 (2) to improve third-party tourism to the
13 United States and Mexico through joint inter-
14 national promotional efforts; and

15 (3) to seek to prioritize and expand the tourism
16 industries in both countries by emphasizing ex-
17 changes in various international economic sectors,
18 including relating to—

19 (A) hospitality and accommodation;

20 (B) retail;

21 (C) medical procedures;

22 (D) dental care; and

23 (E) cultural education.

1 **SEC. 4. STRATEGY TO EXPAND BILATERAL TOURISM**
2 **THROUGH COOPERATION WITH MEXICO.**

3 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of State shall de-
4 velop a strategy through the High Level Economic Dia-
5 logue (HLED) platform to carry out the bilateral tourism
6 policy described in section 3 and to encourage the Govern-
7 ment of Mexico to take reciprocal action relating to bilat-
8 eral tourism.

9 (b) **ELEMENTS.**—The strategy required under sub-
10 section (a) shall—

11 (1) encourage more joint tourism initiatives be-
12 tween the United States and Mexico, including col-
13 laborations between governmental and non-govern-
14 mental entities;

15 (2) encourage United States and Mexican non-
16 profit institutions and private businesses to assist
17 prospective and developing entrepreneurs in
18 strengthening their business skills in the United
19 States and Mexico; and

20 (3) assess the feasibility of fostering partner-
21 ships between medical and dental institutions in the
22 United States and Mexico, including hospitals, clin-
23 ics, medical schools, and dental programs, for the
24 purpose of allowing patients greater ease and sense
25 of security when considering cross-border medical
26 procedure and dental care options.

1 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
2 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall
3 submit to Congress a report on the strategy required
4 under subsection (a).

○