



**Travel Industry Association
of America**

**TRAVEL BUSINESS
ROUNDTABLE**



A Strategic Partner to 

December 16, 2005

Ambassador Karen P. Hughes
Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
United States Department of State
Harry S. Truman Building
2201 C Street, NW
Room 7261
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Under Secretary Hughes:

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you once again for spending time with Chuck Merin and me last month and for welcoming the ideas and assistance offered by the travel and tourism industry. Working with your department, the travel and tourism industry in particular and the business community at large can have a salutary impact on our nation's public diplomacy efforts. Clearly, an enormous task lies before us, but as we discussed, there are some immediate steps we have begun to take:

1. **Making the visa application process more efficient** – We have had discussions with State Department officials about utilizing travel and tourism training staff to develop and implement a program, in conjunction with the Foreign Service Institute, for all new Foreign Service officers, ambassadorial appointments and career consular officers.
2. **Utilizing entry and exit points to portray a welcoming America** – We are working with Business for Diplomatic Action to create a pilot program at U.S. ports-of-entry. Initial outreach to governors and mayors in the selected locations and coordination with the Department of Homeland Security should be underway. We are prepared to reach out to friends in the entertainment sector to execute the production of the videos we discussed, as well as to work with DOS and DHS to further streamline the entry and exit processes.
3. **Arranging meetings with top travel and tourism executives** – The travel and tourism industry has already helped facilitate conversations between your department and industry leaders who can collaborate on the public diplomacy effort. We would be delighted to facilitate a meeting between you and industry leaders at a mutually convenient time.

Again, we thank you for your time and attention. We hope to talk with you and your staff again soon as we move forward on these initiatives.

Yours sincerely,

Roger J. Dow
President and CEO
Travel Industry Association of America