



Meetings, Events & Incentive Travel Industry Joins Together for *Keep America Meeting* Campaign

Grassroots Effort Asks Industry to Sign Online Petition to Show Support for the Importance of Events in Building Businesses and Stabilizing American Economy

New York – February 11, 2009 – Two days after the U.S. Travel Association and industry leaders from key organizations issued guidelines for recipients of TARP funding, members of the meetings, events and incentive travel industries have banded together in a grassroots effort to draw attention to the important role meetings play in building successful businesses, as well as the vital role meetings, events and incentive travel play in the American economy.

According to the U.S. Travel Association, meetings and events are responsible for 15 percent of all travel-related spending, create nearly \$40 billion in tax revenue at the federal, state and local level and generate more than one million jobs. Without the jobs generated by meetings, events and incentive travel, the current unemployment rate of 7.6 percent would rise to 8.2 percent and cost the average American household an additional \$136 in taxes annually.

The campaign asks supporters to go to its www.keepamericameeting.org website and sign an online petition. The petition signatures will be delivered by Keep America Meeting to the U.S. Travel Association and industry leaders from key organizations to fuel industry-wide efforts with the White House and the U.S. Congress.

Keep America Meeting was created by TBA Global in partnership with the U.S. Travel Association with support from the Event Marketing Institute. It is endorsed by a non-partisan group of associations, publishers and companies.

A preliminary list of endorsers includes Site (Society of Incentive Travel Executives), Society of Independent Show Organizers (SISO) and media endorsers Red 7 Media (publisher of *Event Marketer*, *Event Design*, *Agenda*, *EXPO* magazines), MeetingsNet (publisher of *Corporate Meetings & Incentives*, *Medical Meetings*, *Financial & Insurance Meetings*, *Association Meetings*, *Religious Conference Manager* magazines), *Special Events Magazine*, *Event Solutions Magazine*, and Northstar Travel Media LLC (publisher of *Meetings & Conventions* and *Travel Weekly* magazines).

Other early supporters include the San Diego Convention & Visitors Bureau, PGA National Resort & Spa, DGO and HotelBlox. Organizations interested in becoming a Keep America Meeting endorser agree to fully promote the cause and can sign up on the Keep America Meeting website.

U.S. Travel Association

The U.S. Travel Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the \$740 billion travel industry. U.S. Travel's mission is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the United States. For more information, visit www.ustravel.org.

About TBA GLOBAL

Founded in 1994, TBA Global (www.tbaglobal.com) is a privately-held agency that creates nontraditional marketing and communications programs, events and meetings for high-profile businesses and associations worldwide. TBA Global is ranked in the top 100 U.S. marketing organizations and among the Top 50 Sales Promotion Agencies by Advertising Age magazine (May 5, 2008). TBA Global has 18 offices in North America and the U.K.

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