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The Honorable Dan Sullivan
United States Senate
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

November 2, 2015

Dear Senator Sullivan:

The Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) is Alaska's leading statewide nonprofit trade association for the travel industry representing over 700 member businesses. Recently the Senate version of the Jobs Originated through Launching Travel (JOLT) Act (House companion is H.R. 1401) was launched. Senators Dean Heller (R-NV) and Chuck Schumer (D-NY) have introduced this bipartisan jobs bill that will boost security while increasing international travel to the United States through much needed reforms to the U.S. visa application and issuance process.

International travel is already an important economic driver for Alaska. International visitors make up 10% of travelers to Alaska. This is a growing market that contributes over \$178 million to Alaska's economy annually. This sector travels in both summer and winter and spends more per person in Alaska than the average visitor.

In 2014, travel exports brought \$180.7 billion to the American economy, larger than exports of other service industries as well as major manufacturing industries such as machinery, computers and electronic products and aircraft.

While it is clear that travel is helping to drive the U.S. economic recovery, the benefits could be far greater. The nation's share of global international arrivals has actually fallen from 7.5 percent in 2000 to just 6.4 percent in 2014, despite a 59 percent growth in overall global travel. So while global international travel boomed over the last decade, America failed to keep pace.

The JOLT Act will not only boost our economy, it would also make security enhancements to the Visa Waiver Program (VWP), which is a critical tool for keeping our nation safe. As you may know, the VWP allows pre-screened, pre-approved travelers from participating countries to travel to the U.S. for up to 90 days for business or leisure. The JOLT Act aims to further enhance this program by putting in place new, mandatory security requirements for partnering countries. It also gives the Secretary of Homeland Security greater flexibility to admit new countries that meet the necessary security requirements.

ATIA supports the JOLT Act and would like to encourage you to become an original co-sponsor the Senate version of the JOLT Act. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Colleen Stephens
Board Chair

Sarah Leonard
President & CEO