

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 16, 2016

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We write on the occasion of the upcoming Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders' Meeting scheduled to be held in Lima, Peru from November 19-20, 2016. As a strong message of our nation's commitment to the Asia-Pacific region and recognition of the importance of business travel to our economy, we ask that you expedite the implementation of the APEC Business Mobility Group agreement reached last year among APEC members including the United States to extend the validity of the APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC) from three to five years.

The ABTC has greatly improved entry procedures so that American business people can travel with the same ease as their counterparts in other APEC nations. The APEC Business Travel Card Act, which you signed into law in 2011, provided for the authority to issue these cards to U.S. citizens and prescribe regulations regarding the conditions of or limitations on eligibility. Pursuant to this authority, the Department of Homeland Security issued an interim final rule on June 12, 2014 that set the card's maximum validity to three years. According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the nearly 25,000 U.S. ABTC holders now enjoy a time savings of approximately 43 minutes per person per trip when clearing foreign immigration services using the fast-track lanes at airports in APEC countries.

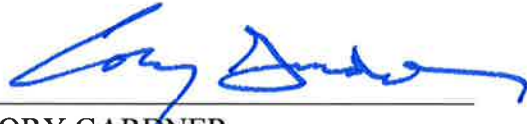
A five-year ABTC will further reduce costs and help American importers and exporters travel in the Asia-Pacific region to conduct business more efficiently. The ABTC already reduces the cost of cardholders' business travel between APEC economies with immigration processing time cut by 52.4 percent according to APEC Policy Support Unit research. With an additional two years of validity, American business travelers would face less red tape and be able to spend more time exploring new business opportunities, attend meetings and conduct trade and investment activities that are important to creating jobs in our country.

As strong supporters of the ABTC, we believe measures to facilitate business travel by Americans within the fast-growing economies of APEC contributes greatly to job creation in our country and strengthening U.S. standing in this critical region. Thank you for your consideration on this important issue.

Sincerely,



MAZIE K. HIRONO  
United States Senator



CORY GARDNER  
United States Senator



AMY KLOBUCHAR  
United States Senator



GARY C. PETERS  
United States Senator

CC: The Honorable John Kerry, Secretary of State  
The Honorable Jeh Johnson, Secretary of Homeland Security