

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade Member Kathy Castor
Hearing on “Daylight and Destinations: Examining Time, Travel, and Tourism”

November 20, 2025

Thank you Ranking Member Schakowsky and thank you to our witnesses for being here to discuss time change, travel, and tourism.

All of these topics are important to my home state of Florida where we have no shortage of sunshine and travel and tourism are significant pillars of economic growth. In 2024, Florida welcomed 143 million visitors, driving local economies and supporting hospitality jobs. Next year, Florida will welcome visitors from across the country and around the world as Miami hosts seven World Cup matches during the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

We want tourism to continue to flourish in Florida and across the country. That is why we need to support this vital sector of the economy by bolstering programs like Brand USA, welcoming international visitors who spend their money here, lowering costs for Americans so they can afford to travel and attend events, and protecting travelers and consumers from deceptive pricing.

Brand USA is a public-private partnership that markets the United States – including Florida – to international travelers. President Trump’s Big Ugly Bill reduced Brand USA’s budget by 80 percent, imperiling its mission. I’m proud to announce that I will be co-sponsoring legislation with my colleague, Rep. Bilirakis to restore funding to Brand USA.

In addition to funding Brand USA, to encourage international tourism to the United States, we also need to address the fears and frustrations of international travelers caused by the policies of the Trump Administration, such as the Administration’s harsh immigration enforcement and tariffs. We want international visitors to feel welcome when they come to the United States so that they come back and continue to spend their money in our local communities.

To keep domestic tourism thriving, we need to address the affordability crisis in America. Over half of Americans are cutting back on travel over economic concerns. We need real solutions to lower costs for American consumers including to protect travelers and consumers from surprise fees so that the price they see is the price they pay. My bipartisan Hotel Fees Transparency Act does just that for hotel stays. I’m proud that this bill passed the House and urge my Senate colleagues to follow suit and pass this bill.

Thank you to the witnesses for your testimony today and I yield back.