



January 7, 2021

Good Afternoon,

As we noted in our final message of 2020, we cannot and do not expect the challenges of our times to simply disappear with the arrival of a new year. We were saddened yesterday to witness an assault on the United States Capitol. We [share the sentiments](#) expressed by US Travel President & CEO Roger J. Dow. The peaceful transition of power is a bedrock principle of this country, as is the decorum by which we conduct ourselves even in political disagreement. These tenets came under attack yesterday. Our fervent hope is that this nation will begin a healing process in 2021.

Of course, the political turmoil on display yesterday occurred against the backdrop of a nation still gripped by a pandemic. While [Destination Analysts data](#) indicates an uptick in Americans aspiring to travel, we know that the vast majority of these dreams will not materialize until the second quarter of 2021 at the earliest. Here in Boston, Mayor Walsh has [extended the rollback to Phase Two, Step Two](#) for at least three more weeks, meaning indoor event spaces, museums, tours, historical sites, and many other businesses will remain closed through January 27. Restaurants will continue to operate under strict guidelines. The Commonwealth announced today that the temporary capacity and gatherings limitations set to expire on January 10 will be extended through January 24.

Despite this adversity, we do see signs of hope in the world of destination marketing. CVBs are now eligible for PPP loans and this week [US Travel sent a letter to the Small Business Administration](#) asking the agency to streamline and expedite access to PPP loans for Destination Marketing Organizations. Meanwhile, the Baker Administration has begun to roll out the [\\$668 million relief program](#) to provide financial assistance for small businesses affected by the pandemic. For more information on eligibility and how to apply [please click here](#).

In other good news, we learned in the wee hours Wednesday morning that our legislation to enable the formation of Tourism Destination Marketing Districts (TDMD) in Massachusetts had passed on Beacon Hill. Now it just needs Governor Baker's signature. We've been working on the TDMD bill for well over a year now. Essentially it permits hotels in a defined area – which in our case includes Boston and Cambridge – to implement an assessment (not a tax) that gets collected and then directly reinvested back into destination marketing. We still have work to do for the final ratification and creation of our TDMD but this is a huge step and we are thrilled.

We remain steadfast in our advocacy and initiatives on behalf of this industry and our members. We are here for you.

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