



December 5, 2023

House Energy & Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Rodgers, Ranking Member Pallone, and Members of the House Energy & Commerce Committee:

The Travel Technology Association (“Travel Tech”) is the voice of the travel technology industry, advocating for public policy that promotes transparency and competition in the travel marketplace, encourages innovation, and empowers traveler choice. We represent the leading innovators in travel technology, including Online Travel Agencies (“OTAs”) and metasearch engines, short-term rental platforms, travel management companies, and Global Distribution Systems (“GDS”).

Today, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce will consider H.R. 6543, No Hidden Fees on Extra Expenses for Stays (FEES) Act. The No Hidden FEES Act will require – for the first time ever in federal law – consumers to be shown the total price for a hotel room (including rate and all mandatory fees). Under this legislation, the total price must be “transparent to and easily understood by the consumer.”

Promoting transparency is a top priority for Travel Tech and its members. It is essential that travelers make informed decisions without hidden surprises or unexpected expenses. When travelers have complete pricing details, they can accurately compare different options and make choices that align with their preferences and budget. This transparency enables travelers to plan more effectively and promotes fair marketplace competition.

This legislation finally holds hotels accountable for the all-too-common situations wherein they withhold information about their mandatory fees – often known as “resort fees” – from consumers and the online tools consumers regularly use to price compare and book their stays. To collect these “resort fees,” hotels routinely surprise consumers onsite at check-in, forcing them to pay for services the guests may never use during their stays. Price comparison sites, just like consumers, depend completely on hotels providing their accurate rates and mandatory fees upfront. But as we know all too well, hotels do not have a track record of providing their mandatory fees.

On behalf of members of Travel Tech, H.R. 6543 – No Hidden Fees on Extra Expenses for Stays Act is an important first step forward. It brings much-needed transparency to consumers from hotels to rein in their troubling resort fee practices. Importantly, this



legislation sets a single national standard for the transparency of mandatory fees assessed by hotels. This will create uniformity and certainty for hotels, short-term rentals, online ticket agents, metasearch agents, and others, and most of all, travelers – no matter where they reside in the U.S. – about what is included in advertised pricing for lodging.

Despite the benefits of this legislation, H.R. 6543, however, lacks a common-sense provision to account for those situations when hotels fail to provide accurate and complete information to price comparison sites. Thirty-nine states have laws in place to protect against identical situations when inaccurate sales tax information is conveyed from the seller to the marketplace and onto the consumer. These thirty-nine laws rightly hold the seller – in this case, hotels – responsible in such instances and not the marketplaces like those of Travel Tech member companies. Travel Tech simply seeks the same fair consideration on the federal level regarding mandatory fee information.

Sincerely,

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