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September 26, 2017

The Honorable Michael T. McCaul
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
H2-176 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bennie Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
H2-117 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman McCaul and Ranking Member Thompson:

On behalf of the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA), I write in support of H.R. 3548, the Border Security for America Act. The Border Security for America Act builds on the progress U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has made in meeting its mandate to biometrically confirm the exit of foreign visitors while maintaining appropriate and reasonable privacy safeguards.

GBTA (www.gbta.org) is the world's leading trade association for the business travel industry. As the voice of the industry in Washington, GBTA has more than 9,000 members, 39 local chapters and affiliates a network of 30,000 business travel and meetings professionals. GBTA represents a global industry with \$1.2 trillion in business travel and meetings expenditures annually, with over \$284 billion spent in the United States in 2016.

CBP has a mandate to biometrically verify the exit of foreign visitors. CBP is currently developing and piloting its "Traveler Verification Service" to fulfill that mandate. The Traveler Verification Service (TVS) is a CBP service that allows trusted partners such as the airlines, airports and Transportation Security Administration (TSA) with a service to securely verify the identity of travelers as they move through the airport environment. Rather than a traditional "big box" solution that would cost billions, divert needed staff, and undoubtedly cause delays at the airport, TVS leverages the airlines' business and modernization plans and shared goal of providing frictionless travel to its customers. To that end, CBP has already conducted two pilots with large air carriers, and is currently in the process of expanding.

All of CBP's efforts regarding biometric exit have been done with a strong commitment to privacy. CBP maintains regular contact with the stakeholders, including GBTA, on potential impact of TVS and what to expect with the upcoming policy changes. CBP has also published a Privacy Impact Assessment this past June. Additionally, CBP recently convened a meeting with a number of privacy advocates to get feedback on upcoming regulations and has testified three times this year on CBP's biometric exit mandate.

I commend the committee for its attention and leadership to biometric exit and border security. H.R. 3548 builds on the momentum CBP has made in fulfilling its mandate and provides the necessary oversight to ensure that operations are done consistent with input from all the stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Michael W. McCormick, Executive Director & COO
Global Business Travel Association