

June 10, 2026

The Honorable Bruce Westerman, Chairman
The Honorable Jared Huffman, Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Westerman and Ranking Member Huffman,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing businesses across the group travel and commercial tour industries, we write to express our appreciation for the Committee's continued efforts to strengthen America's public lands and address the maintenance and infrastructure needs of our National Park System.

We support the Committee's commitment to ensuring that our national parks remain accessible, sustainable, and enjoyable for future generations. America's public lands are among our nation's greatest assets, and investments that improve visitor experiences, preserve natural resources, and address deferred maintenance challenges are important objectives worthy of thoughtful consideration.

As the Committee continues its work on the Great American Outdoors Act 250, we respectfully encourage your consideration of the unique role commercial tour operators play in providing affordable and accessible access to our national parks. Motorcoaches and commercial tour operators transport millions of visitors annually, including seniors, students, veterans, international visitors, and travelers who may not otherwise have the opportunity to experience these treasured destinations.

As we have previously communicated, while we appreciate the Committee's efforts to thoughtfully evaluate park funding mechanisms, we remain concerned about the inclusion of the non-resident visitor fee as written. The expansion of the non-resident visitor fee to the entirety of nation's public lands system is not conducive for our industry or our customers who access the parks. Unlike private vehicles, commercial tours operate under a fundamentally different business model, often planning itineraries and pricing months or years in advance. Per-passenger fee structures can create operational challenges, increase costs for consumers, and inadvertently discourage visitation to national parks and the tour operators that support gateway economies, while also jeopardizing the revenue generated from commercial tours.

The Department of the Interior is actively addressing implementation challenges associated with the international visitor fee at the initial 11 park units. These efforts include developing efficient bulk-purchasing options for commercial tour operators, improving group-tour processing procedures, and ensuring consistent implementation across park units. Congress should allow these measures to be fully implemented and evaluated before considering any expansion of the program.

We believe there is an opportunity to continue working collaboratively with Congress, the National Park Service, and industry stakeholders to develop a framework that supports the financial needs of our parks while recognizing the unique operational realities of commercial transportation providers. We look forward to continuing those conversations and identifying solutions that preserve access, affordability, and operational certainty for visitors and operators alike.

Additionally, we strongly encourage the Committee to consider language directing the National Park Service to conduct annual systemwide reporting on commercial tour activity across the National Park System. Reliable and consistent nation-wide data regarding commercial visitation, transportation patterns, economic impact, and visitor access is essential to inform policymaking. Such reporting would provide Congress, park managers, and stakeholders with valuable information to better understand visitation trends, evaluate policy outcomes, and support future decision-making regarding commercial access and park operations.

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As industry partners, we remain committed to working constructively with the committee to ensure that America's national parks remain accessible, financially sustainable, and welcoming to all visitors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

American Bus Association
International Inbound Travel Association
National Tour Association
U.S. Travel Association
Student and Youth Travel Association