
ASTA joins Engage Cuba Coalition

18/06/2015



The American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA), in an effort to generate support from American businesses and non-profit groups to reform U.S. travel and trade restrictions with Cuba, is joining as a founding member a new organization, Engage Cuba. The group is now airing ads on major networks such as CNBC, Fox News and MSNBC to gain support for overturning the 54-year-old law that restricts travel by Americans to Cuba.

"The benefits of increased engagement actually go beyond the shores of Cuba," said ASTA President and CEO Zane Kerby. "We believe lifting the travel ban will bring economic benefits to Cuba's neighbors as well, and the travel industry that serves them by generating demand for new passenger routes, tours and travel agent services."

Engage Cuba coalition members include the National Foreign Trade Council, National Association of Manufacturers, the Consumer Electronics Association and the Council of the Americas in this effort, as well as civil society organizations affiliated with Engage Cuba-Third Way, #CubaNow, Cuba Study Group and the Center for Democracy in the Americas. Leading companies such as Procter & Gamble, Cargill, Choice Hotels and The Havana Group are among a few of the private sector institutions that share ASTA's goal in lifting the Cuba travel ban.

All told, ASTA estimates at least two million additional Americans could visit Cuba by 2017 if Congress votes for a full lifting of travel restrictions before the end of this year. "ASTA has long believed that Americans ought to be allowed to travel across the globe without restriction, allowing them to act as ambassadors of freedom and American values abroad, and our work with Engage Cuba will bring that goal within reach," said Kerby.

Advocating for the interests of travel agents at all levels of government is a core part of ASTA's mission. Anyone who wants to be a part of that unified effort, or who wants to help support the association that is doing this work daily at the federal and state level, should join today.

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<http://www.traveldailynews.com/news/article/66691/asta-joins-engage-cuba-coalition#sthash.UJ8nM598.dpuf>
