

## Subcommittee Approves Tourism and Consumer Protection Legislation

Washington, D.C. — The Committee on Energy and Commerce's Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection today completed a markup of two legislative measures aimed at promoting international tourism in the U.S. and protecting consumers from purchasing fraudulent calling cards.

For Immediate Release:  
September 16, 2008

Contact: Jodi Seth or Brin Frazier / 202-225-5735

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Washington, D.C. — The Committee on Energy and Commerce's Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection today completed a markup of two legislative measures aimed at promoting international tourism in the U.S. and protecting consumers from purchasing fraudulent calling cards. Both bills were approved by voice vote, and will now be referred to the full Committee on Energy and Commerce for consideration.

"I applaud my colleagues for working in a bipartisan manner on these two important bills," said Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI), Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. "Improving foreign perceptions of our country and protecting consumers from deceptive and abusive marketing practices are critical to restoring our international reputation and strengthening consumer confidence."

H.R. 3232, the "Travel Promotion Act of 2007," sponsored by Rep. William D. Delahunt (D-MA) and Roy Blunt (R-MO), would create a non-profit corporation to encourage U.S. travel. The Corporation for Travel Promotion would provide useful information to international travelers, as well as identify and address perceptions in other countries regarding U.S. entry policies. A Manager's Amendment offered by Rep. Bobby L. Rush, Chairman Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection, was agreed to by voice vote.

H.R.

3402, the "The Calling Card Consumer Protection Act," sponsored by Rep. Eliot L. Engel (D-NY), along with original co-sponsors Reps. Mike Ferguson (R-NJ) and Ed Towns (D-NY), would protect consumers who purchase calling cards by combating widespread abusive and deceptive marketing practices, such as hidden charges and incorrect advertising of the number of calling minutes on a card. It requires clear and conspicuous disclosure of all fees, minutes, and limitations on prepaid calling cards and services. Additionally, it provides for enforcement by State attorneys general and public utility commissions and authorizes the FTC to enforce violations and penalties.

Additionally, it makes certain marketing practices illegal and authorizes the FTC to enforce violations and penalties.

During the markup Reps. Bobby L. Rush (D-IL), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection, and Ed Whitfield (R-KY), Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, stated that they will continue working together to address outstanding issues and develop a bipartisan Manager's Amendment before the Full Committee markup.

"I'm pleased that our subcommittee was able to advance to the full Energy and Commerce Committee two pieces of legislation that promote tourism and benefit consumers. The Travel Promotion Act would create a non-profit Corporation for Travel Promotion aimed at combining resources from the public and private sectors to make travelling to the United States easier and more attractive to international tourists," said Rush. "I'm also pleased with the strong, bipartisan support for the Calling Card Consumer Protection Act, legislation designed to eliminate the fraud and deception associated with far too many of these cards that many low-income and immigrant populations depend upon to stay connected to families and friends. I look forward to moving quickly, during this session of Congress, to pass these bills into law."

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Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce

2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515