

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Following President Obama's Announcement of National Travel and Tourism Strategy, U.S. Commerce Secretary Bryson Swears in Carol Wallace as Newly Appointed TTAB Member**

***San Diego leader to focus on use of tourism as an economic development tool, advocacy and outreach, and job creation and training to promote national tourism***

**(San Diego) -- Jan. 19, 2012** – U.S. Secretary of Commerce John Bryson conducted a swearing-in ceremony today and met with the 32 newly appointed members of the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board (TTAB) including Carol Wallace, President and CEO of the San Diego Convention Center Corporation. Bryson's discussion with the Board followed the President's announcement of a National Travel & Tourism Strategy and corresponding Executive Order from the President. The Board, first created in 2003 by then Commerce Secretary Donald Evans, provides stakeholder feedback on the challenges being faced by the U.S. travel and tourism industry, as well as ideas for what the federal government can do to help strengthen this important sector.

"This Board represents the eyes and ears of our nation's travel and tourism industry and I am committed to working with each of the esteemed members to bring more visitors to the United States," Bryson said. "I look forward to putting ideas into action, and to helping bolster job creation in this critical economic sector, which already supports more than 7.5 million jobs throughout the country."

"Ms. Wallace is an expert in both domestic and international travel and tourism related to the convention industry, and San Diego is fortunate to have her at the helm of our extremely successful convention facility. She's been instrumental in attracting many of the industry's most lucrative conventions that have placed San Diego in the international spotlight including Comic-Con International," said Mayor Jerry Sanders. "She will be an enormous asset to the board."

"Under Ms. Wallace's leadership, the San Diego Convention Center has become one of the region's strongest economic engines, supporting thousands of jobs countywide," said Nikki Clay, Chair of the San Diego Convention Center Corporation Board of Directors. "She is passionate about advancing the interests of the convention industry in the U.S., and internationally, she has been highly successful at forging global relationships and seeking new opportunities to bring international business to San Diego."

"I'm honored to lend my expertise to help strengthen the international travel and tourism market, a sector so vital to the national economy," said Carol Wallace, President and CEO of the San Diego Convention Center Corporation. "In San Diego, tourism is also the lifeblood of our local economy and our region's third leading industry. I'm excited about working with my fellow board members to

expand and create new opportunities to grow the industry and to help position the U.S. as a preeminent destination for international visitors.”

Travel and tourism is a \$1.2 trillion sector of the U.S. economy or nearly three percent of Gross Domestic Product. Critical to the nation’s overall economic health, the travel and tourism industry is one of the top employers for more than half of the U.S. states and territories. The U.S. travel and tourism industry is on pace for a record-setting year. Through November 2011, international visitors spent an estimated \$139.4 billion on U.S. travel and tourism-related goods and services year to date, an increase of 13 percent compared to the same period in 2010. The United States recorded a \$38.4 billion trade surplus for travel and tourism through November 2011.

Ms. Wallace, well-known throughout the national and international convention and meeting industry, has led the San Diego Convention Center Corporation since 1991. Since then, the 2.6 million-square foot facility has become one of the top rated facilities in the world and one of San Diego’s strongest assets, generating \$1.6 billion in economic impact last year and supporting 12,500 jobs region wide.

In Ms. Wallace’s 30-year career, she has earned a reputation as a top industry executive working for the Dallas Convention Center as well as the Colorado Convention Center. In San Diego, she played a pivotal leadership role convincing key constituents to expand the San Diego Convention Center, resulting in an expansion opening in 2001. The expansion has exceeded all expectations, and she is currently working with San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders and community stakeholders on efforts to expand once again.

Specific to the international community, Ms. Wallace serves as the North American representative on the board of directors for AIPC (International Association of Congress Centres), the industry association for professional convention and exhibition center managers world-wide, with representation from more than 53 different countries. She is also on the Professional Convention Management Association’s (PCMA) Education Foundation board of trustees and is the past president of the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM), the world’s largest public assembly facility management association.

Ms. Wallace will serve a two-year term on the Board. The previous Board delivered significant policy recommendations regarding travel facilitation, travel promotion, and data and research, some of which played a role in today’s Executive Order announcement. For example, the previous Board made important recommendations regarding visa facilitation, which have been incorporated into the President’s strategy to bolster tourism.

Following today’s swearing in ceremony, each board member was given the opportunity to share with the Secretary the priority issues they felt most affect the travel and tourism industry and would like to see the board focus on. Ms. Wallace’s areas of focus were: The use of tourism as an economic development tool; outreach and advocacy; and job creation and training for the travel and tourism industry.

A fact sheet with additional information about the TTAB is attached to this news release. A complete list of all 32 Board members can be found at <http://www.commerce.gov/news/press-releases/2012/01/19/coinciding-presidential-visit-secretary-bryson-welcomes-new-travel-an>.

Now celebrating more than 20 years of success, the San Diego Convention Center has generated \$18.3 billion in regional economic impact, \$364 million in tax revenues for the City of San Diego and

supports 12,500 jobs countywide. The San Diego Convention Center Corporation is a public benefit corporation created by the city to exclusively market, manage and operate the 2.6 million sf waterfront facility.

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