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**Congress clears way for smoother business travel to 21 of the fastest growing economies in the world**

The National Center for APEC and its Board applaud passage of the APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC) Act of 2011, by the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate. “Thanks to the House and Senate, American business travelers will spend more time closing deals, and less time waiting in airport lines in the APEC region,” said Monica Whaley, President of the National Center for APEC. “As companies from the Asia Pacific gather for the CEO Summit next week, American firms will know that they will soon be on the same footing in terms of travel facilitation with their APEC competitors. This measure, combined with the recent passage of three trade bills, demonstrates that the U.S. is serious about expanding economic opportunities for companies seeking to grow through trade.”

Whaley added, “The National Center thanks Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Daniel Akaka (D-HI), and Daniel Inouye (D-HI) and Representatives Kevin Brady (R-TX) and Rick Larsen (D-WA) for their tireless efforts on this legislation. We would also like to thank the House Committee on Homeland Security and Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs for their diligent efforts to see this legislation through. The legislation enjoys broad bipartisan support and we are thankful for all who helped ensure its passage.”

This legislation authorizes the issuance of APEC Business Travel Cards to American business leaders, who will benefit from more efficient travel processing. Following Congressional approval, the legislation will move to the President’s desk for his signature.

The ABTC card will allow qualified U.S. business travelers to use expedited immigration lanes in participating economies and will help promote cross border trade in goods and services in the future. The following APEC economies currently participate in the Travel Card program: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, China, Hong Kong (China), Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, and Vietnam. Russia, the U.S. and Canada are transitional members.

**About the National Center for APEC** The U.S. National Center for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (NCAPEC) is the only U.S. business association focused exclusively on facilitating American private sector input to the APEC process. The United States is chairing APEC in 2011, and the National Center is coordinating the APEC 2011 USA Host Committee, the private sector host of business activities for the 2011 APEC Meetings. The National Center also functions as a conduit for U.S. businesses into APEC by serving as the Secretariat for the three U.S. executives who are appointed members of the APEC Business Advisory Council. For more information about the National Center for APEC, visit: [www.ncapec.org](http://www.ncapec.org).

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