

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 1, 2010

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you know, the United States will host the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit next year in Hawaii. By hosting APEC, the U.S. will have the ability to underline our commitment to the region and set the direction for APEC. However, unlike 18 of the 21 APEC economies, the U.S. has not authorized the APEC Business Travel Card yet and we are writing to urge your support for the passage of H.R. 3192 and S. 1633, legislation to authorize the establishment of the APEC Business Travel Card.


The U.S. began participating in the APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC) program in 2007 as a “transitional member.” Benefits of holding an ABTC include: being permitted to use the “crew” or designated “ABTC” lanes in airports when entering a country and expedited visa processing. President Bush committed to begin issuing ABTCs to American citizens by 2008 – but to date it has not been done. Currently, U.S. business men and women are unable to benefit from U.S. entry into this program even though the U.S. has been extending those benefits to their foreign competitors and counterparts for almost three years. There are currently 57,000 cardholders; none are American. Until the U.S. establishes a system for issuing ABTCs to qualified U.S. citizens, U.S. businesspeople will continue to be unable to take advantage of this program.

The U.S. will have the opportunity to shape and direct APEC when we host the APEC summit in 2011 in Hawaii. This will be the first time the U.S. has hosted APEC since 1993. Due to the importance of the Asia Pacific region to the U.S. it will be critical that APEC 2011 is a robust success – and not having lived up to our commitment to authorize the ABTC will be noticeable.

We have introduced H.R. 3192 and S. 1633, legislation that directs the Department of Homeland Security to create and integrate the ABTC program with other trusted traveler card programs like NEXUS, FAST, and Global Entry. We urge you to support this legislation, and look forward to seeing the ABTC program implemented before the U.S. hosts the 2011 APEC Summit next year.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Sincerely,

  
Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress

  
Maria Cantwell  
U.S. Senator