

2009 SENATE TRANSPORTATION

SCR 4016

## 2009 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 4016

Senate Transportation Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: February 12, 2009

Recorder Job Number: 9295

Committee Clerk Signature

*Jody Hauge*

Minutes:

**Vice Chairman Senator Nodland** called the Transportation Committee to order and all committee members were present. Senator Nodland opened the hearing on SCR 4016.

**Senator Potter** introduced and testified in support of SCR 4016. The resolution directs the Congress and President to work for a friendlier policy for foreigners. He is particularly concerned about the passport regulations in our work with Canada. He said, tourism in ND the last four years has been good overall. Canadians are coming down, driving down to spend money in ND. There are more and more restrictions on that cross border crossing. He also said that we are the only nation that requires its airline passengers to take off their shoes before they board planes. He said the US has an overseas perception of being unfriendly to overseas travelers. He said this is a simple resolution to help change that image and he urged support for SCR 4016.

**Senator Fiebiger** said line 2 talks about the urging the Congress and the President to enact federal legislation promoting travel and he was wondering what form that would take as opposed to urging them to promote tourism. He was wondering what Senator Potter envisioned with that.

**Senator Potter** said Senator Dorgan has some proposed legislation to re-energize this USTTA thing. It helps us reach out and provide information, sort of soft marketing.

In the former USTTA mission, they promoted Disney World, New York, Los Angeles and not real America. What this legislation does it says lets help rural America and give people an authentic America.

**Heather LeMoine**, Director for the Tourism Division within the Department of Commerce testified in support of SCR 4016. Written testimony #1.

**Senator Nodland** asked if the passport situation at the Canadian Border was really a problem.

**Heather LeMoine** said that they have had several instances of miscommunication that has caused problems on the Canadian border. Also international problems with media.

**Senator Marcellais** talked about the Native American Casino close to the border and said they see obstacles with the passports at the border. He said after 9-11 it did affect their business at the casino.

**Senator Nodland** asked why the main efforts toward Scandinavian Countries.

**Heather LeMoine** said we do have history there and many times the interest in ND does follow some of those reverse immigration. She said they see trends in tracing of roots. She said they also have a number of events and culture that supports the Nordic culture.

**Senator Nodland** asked why we target Australia.

**Heather LeMoine** said that they target Australia along with their membership and partnership with the Rocky Mountain International organization.

**Senator Fiebiger** said it looks like they are doing some great things and with Federal help this could really mushroom.

**Heather LeMoine** said, "absolutely". With Federal support from the Federal government and having this partnership we can move forward and their efforts can be more targeted.

**Senator Potter** asked if ND is a full member of the Rocky Mountain International organization.

**Heather LeMoine** said that ND was a full member. Before we were not because we weren't considered a true Rocky Mountain State but because of culture and heritage we have been accepted.

**Senator Marcellais** commented on some of the success coming out of this relationship.

No Opposition

No Neutral testimony

**Vice Chairman Nodland** closed the hearing on SCR 4016.

**Senator Potter** moved a Do Pass.

**Senator Marcellais** seconded.

**Senator Potter** said the office is doing a good job but ND needs more help reaching out to International travel and help to overcome the perception of being unwelcoming.

Roll call vote: 6-0-0

Senator Potter is the carrier.

Date: 2-12-09  
Roll Call Vote #: 4616

2009 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

Senate Transportation Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken  Do Pass  Do Not Pass  Other

Motion Made By Senator Potter Seconded By Senator Marcellais

Senator	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chairman Senator Gary Lee	✓		Senator Tom Fiebiger	✓	
Senator George Nodland	✓		Senator Richard Marcellais	✓	
Senator Dave Nething	✓		Senator Tracy Potter	✓	

Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Senator Potter

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SCR 4016: Transportation Committee (Sen. G. Lee, Chairman) recommends DO PASS**  
(6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SCR 4016 was placed on the  
Eleventh order on the calendar.

2009 HOUSE INDUSTRY, BUSINESS AND LABOR

SCR 4016

# 2009 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 4016

## House Industry, Business and Labor Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

**Hearing Date:** March 11, 2009

**Recorder Job Number:** 10742

Committee Clerk Signature

*Ellen Keiser*

**Chairman Keiser:** Opened the hearing on Senate Concurrent Resolution 4016 promoting travel to the United States by overseas visitors therefore promoting the economies of communities across North Dakota & the United States.

**Senator Potter~District 35.** This is a resolution in favor of international tourism. It's generated from the experiences of 911 and our reaction. In some regards, we shot ourselves in the foot. Other people have seen the United States somewhat less travel friendly. France has been the number one destination forever and we are not number one. Our percentage of the world market has shrunk. We have had a difficult time, although we still generate 1.7 trillion in economic activity from travel and tourism, there is been dramatic decrease in the amount of visitor spending since 911. The Travel Tourism administration used to maintain across the globe, offices where they encouraged inbound travel to the United States. That activity has virtually ceased. Now, there is before Congress, on the second page, the Travel Promotion Act. This is an attempt by the travel industry to encourage Congress to pass the act to get back into the business and encourage people to visit the Unites State from other countries. The key feature of this act I like much better because in the past, when they brought them to the United States, they brought them to New York or Orlando or Los Angeles.



What this travel bill act is aimed at is the heart land of America and it is something that is suppose to encourage rural visitation, visiting the real American.

**Vice Chairman Kasper:** I browsed the resolution just briefly and a bunch of the items jumped up that I want to discuss with you. Your resolution says overseas visitor, which would exclude Canada & Mexico, is this the intent?

**Senator Potter:** It certainly was not my intent to discourage Canadian travel. The Travel Promotion Act is aimed at overseas travel and that is its intent.

**Vice Chairman Kasper:** If you go to line 11, on page 1, at the end, "a perception grew overseas that the United States is no longer a friendly and welcoming destination", I have a real concern about an assumption of a perception that is very hard to quantify, this is someone's opinion. To me it is a negative reflection on the people of the United States. Are you hung up on lines 11 & 12?

**Senator Potter:** It is a negative statement but it is a true statement. The perception, that doesn't mean that the Americans are unwelcoming or unfriendly, the perception is accurate but I can't substantiate it. I have no pride in those phrases and if this committee would like to fix that and make it a much more positive piece of resolution, I'm completely happy.

**Vice Chairman Kasper:** Then we go down to lines 15 & 16, the perception of the United States is having an unwelcomed entry process, again a perception that may or may not be true, then you jump to the conclusion that we lost \$150 billion in lost visitor spending and 250,000 American jobs. What do you have to substantiate those two statements?

**Senator Potter:** I would hope that one expert would have some information on that. If she doesn't, I can't substantiate. I want to go back to the phrase you raised about perception. We all know that perception is reality. If it is a perception overseas, then we have an unwelcoming

entry process, then that becomes the reality, even if it isn't. All we need to do is overcome that and you overcome that with good marketing. That is what this is all about.

**Vice Chairman Kasper:** No substantiation of someone's opinion of perception. You can talk to people who come to North Dakota and they walk away and say "what a great place to be". I have some concern about that and it would be hard for me to support this.

**Sara Otte Coleman~Director for the Tourism Division within the Department of Commerce.** See testimony attachment. I wanted to say that there are documented studies out there of evidence of perception.

**Chairman Keiser:** Have you been following what's happening on the Mexican border? Do you have any concerns about that for travel?

**Coleman:** I just found out today that a very respected colleague of mine who had my position in Arizona, just took a position that specifically addresses that in a new commission. We don't market in Mexico, so it's not something that directly affects us.

**Coleman:** I believe that intent isn't necessarily to lighten security as much as it is to improve communications. That's where our difficulty is.

**Chairman Keiser:** Anyone here in opposition of CR 4016, neutral? Closes the hearing, what are the wishes of the committee?

**Vice Chairman Kasper:** The only way I will support this resolution is if we delete lines 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21 & 22, which are the three negative statements in this resolution.

**Vice Chairman Kasper:** Moves to amend CR 4016.

**Chairman Keiser:** Further discussion on the amendment?

**Representative Boe:** I was wondering if the commissioner would like to comment on the proposed amendment?

**Coleman:** I would concur that the intent is still there.

**Chairman Keiser:** We have three options. We take them out Vice Chairman Kasper's amendments, leave them in and run it or try and to amend it. I've tried to amend them to make them positive but I can't because they are designed to be negative. They are somewhat accurate.

**Roll call was taken on the amendment with 10 ayes, 3 nays, 0 absent.**

**Chairman Keiser:** Motion to amend carried and we have Senate CR 4016 as amended, what are your wishes?

**Representative Schneider:** Moves a Do Pass as Amended.

**Representative N Johnson:** Seconded.

**Chairman Keiser:** Further discussion?

**Voting roll call was taken on CR 4016 for a Do Pass as Amended with 13 ayes, 0 nays, 0 absent and Representative Amerman is the carrier.**

Date: Mar 11 - 2009

Roll Call Vote # 1

### 2009 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 4016

House House, Business & Labor Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken  Do Pass  Do Not Pass  As Amended

Motion Made By \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded By \_\_\_\_\_

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Keiser	✓		Representative Amerman		✓
Vice Chairman Kasper	✓		Representative Boe	✓	
Representative Clark	✓		Representative Gruchalla		✓
Representative N Johnson	✓		Representative Schneider		✓
Representative Nottestad	✓		Representative Thorpe	✓	
Representative Ruby	✓				
Representative Sukut	✓				
Representative Vigesaa	✓				

Total (Yes) 10 No 3

Absent 0

Floor Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

0

Date: Mar 11 - 2009

Roll Call Vote # 2

**2009 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES**

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 4014

House House, Business & Labor Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken  Do Pass  Do Not Pass  As Amended

Motion Made By Schneider Seconded By N Johnson

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Keiser	7		Representative Amerman	7	
Vice Chairman Kasper	7		Representative Boe	7	
Representative Clark	7		Representative Gruchalla	7	
Representative N Johnson	7		Representative Schneider	7	
Representative Nottestad	7		Representative Thorpe	7	
Representative Ruby	7				
Representative Sukut	7				
Representative Vigasaa	7				

Total (Yes) 13 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Amerman

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

on the concert calendar

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SCR 4016: Industry, Business and Labor Committee (Rep. Kelser, Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** and **BE PLACED ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR** (13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SCR 4016 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, remove lines 11 and 12

Page 1, remove lines 15 through 17

Page 1, remove lines 20 through 22

Renumber accordingly

2009 TESTIMONY

SCR 4016

#1

Testimony of Heather LeMoine- Marketing Director

Department of Commerce- Tourism Division

Senate Transportation Committee

SCR 4016

Senator Gary Lee, Chairman

*Some  
given to  
H. Lee*

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for the record I am Heather LeMoine Marketing Director for the Tourism Division within the Department of Commerce. I urge your support of SCR 4016. The United States of America is one of very few countries that does not have an international tourism office. Nearly every developed nation in the world spends millions of dollars to attract visitors. Since the tragic events of 9/11 the United States has implemented many new security measures. These measures, although necessary for national security, have created obstacles for international travel. Two-million fewer overseas travelers visited the US in 2007 than in 2000. The decline in overseas travel since 9/11 has cost America 46-million visitors, \$140 billion in lost visitor spending and \$23 million in lost tax revenue. The US Congress is working on legislation that will provide support for a private-public partnership to help communicate our policies and let the world know that our country is welcoming to visitors.

Here in North Dakota we work in partnership with the Rocky Mountain International organization and our regional tourism partners from South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and Minnesota. We target our international marketing in the Nordic Countries of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland along with Germany and last year began work in Australia. In this biennium, we hosted 14 international familiarization trips to North Dakota. These FAM trips are showing results with more than 25 feature stories placed on North Dakota in major international media so far. North Dakota attractions are also in international tour operator catalogs in nine European markets. North Dakota has been ranked the 5<sup>th</sup> most popular state destination for all Norwegians' by Dagbladet, Norway's largest newspaper.

Interest in travel to the US is still strong. Visits from Sweden to the US alone have increased for 26-consecutive months with arrivals up 17-percent from 2007. Now is the time to make sure the world knows that our country welcomes foreign visitors. I ask for your support on SCR 4016 so that we can work with our counterparts from across the US, the United States Travel Association and our federal government to send out that message to the world.