

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 23, 2016

The Honorable Jeh Johnson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Johnson:

We write to you today in support of Singapore's participation in Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Global Entry Program and urge you to expedite the implementation of the December 2014 bilateral joint statement to achieve this goal. Implementation of this agreement between Singapore and the U.S. will provide reciprocal benefits for U.S. citizens in time for the upcoming summer travel season. Expanding Global Entry's expedited clearance process to pre-approved visitors from Singapore, a critical strategic and trading partner of the United States, will help demonstrate our country's commitment to the Asia-Pacific region while improving our ability to screen potential threats against the U.S. homeland.

Leisure and business travelers from Singapore have made a significant contribution to the U.S. economy and job creation. According to the U.S. Travel Association, every \$1 million spent by international visitors directly supported 6.6 jobs in the travel industry. The U.S. Department of Commerce estimates the over 150,000 Singapore citizens that visited our country in 2015 spent nearly \$1 billion which represents a small portion of Singapore's \$23 billion outbound travel market. The United States can do more to attract these visitors and Global Entry membership is an important way to welcome them.

Travel underpins the business and trade ties between the American people and a world of opportunities for businesses large and small. Around 500,000 U.S. residents visited Singapore in 2015 according to the Singapore Tourism Board. Bilateral trade reached \$46 billion in 2015, making Singapore the United States' 5th largest export destination in Asia. Of key importance is the ease of which business or leisure visitors from Singapore or anywhere in the world can arrive at their destination in a safe and secure manner.


As members of Global Entry and Singapore's equivalent undergo a prescreening process in return for faster customs and immigration clearance on arrival, it is critical that this benefit is available for visitors from Singapore to the United States and Americans traveling to Singapore. Furthermore we note that travelers from Malaysia, Hong Kong, Australia and China can already apply for this benefit in Singapore.

Singapore's membership in Global Entry would not only provide its passport holders a smoother visit to the U.S. but also help make our country safer by enhancing bilateral law enforcement cooperation. Since 1999, Singapore has been a member of the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) which requires it to enhance security-related information sharing with the United States, timely reporting of lost and stolen passports and maintaining high counter-terrorism law enforcement, immigration control, aviation and travel document security standards. Expansion of Global Entry to Singapore will promote even closer security cooperation with the Singaporean authorities, who oversee one of Asia's busiest ports and top financial centers and help direct CBP resources to higher-risk, unknown travelers and enforcement.


This year marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the United States and Singapore, and fully implementing this joint agreement would be a fitting gesture of our continued efforts to strengthen the security partnership between our two nations. We strongly support Singapore's membership in CBP's Global Entry Program and urge the efforts towards this goal be accelerated to help ensure the best travel experience for Americans and Singaporeans alike. We also request an update on our engagement with your Singaporean counterparts on this issue.

Sincerely,



MAZIE K. HIRONO
United States Senator


JOHN MCCAIN
United States Senator


MARIA CANTWELL
United States Senator

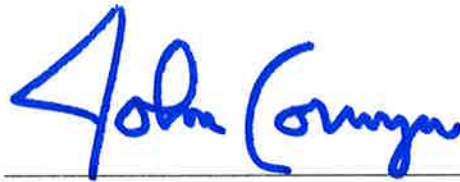

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cc: R. Gil Kerlikowske, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner