

South Carolina Commercial Service Airports



February 29, 2024

The Honorable Lindsay Graham
United States Senator
221 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Tim Scott
United States Senator
104 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Graham and Senator Scott,

Representing the six commercial service airports in South Carolina, which support our state's travel and tourism economy, we urge you to oppose the Credit Card Competition Act of 2023 (CCCA). In our state, tourism is in an estimated \$29 billion industry, supporting one in every 10 jobs and generating \$1.8 billion in state and local taxes¹.

If signed into law, this bill would suppress travel and tourism by eliminating the foundation of credit card rewards and loyalty programs that countless visitors to South Carolina rely on for travel.

Numerous things draw people from around the nation to South Carolina. But regardless of what brings people here, what remains the same is that tourists open their wallets to airlines to travel here, to hotels to stay, to restaurants to eat, and beaches to swim. The CCCA would sharply reduce the number of people traveling here through our airports, effectively forcing many of these same wallets to close. This tourism economy undergirds jobs and economic growth and allows our airports to prosper.

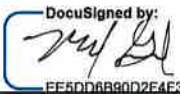
Airlines for America, the leading trade organization for major U.S. airlines, estimates that frequent flyer miles earned through airline co-branded credit cards funded air travel trips 172,000 domestic visitors to South Carolina. These 172,000 visitors supported nearly \$260 million in economic activity, 2,095 jobs and over \$71 million in payroll.

And it is not just tourists – an overwhelming number of South Carolinians enjoy the many benefits that come along with having a travel credit card. For instance, there over 100,000 South Carolina residents with a Co-Brand American Airlines credit card, which is the only airline to serve all six of our state's commercial airports. The CCCA would degrade the programs that these South Carolinians love. The perks associated with being an AAdvantage member and cardmember—such as free checked bags and loyalty point accruals that can be redeemed for flights—are at risk if the CCCA passes.

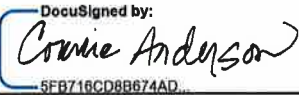
No one wants to see these popular programs disappear and they are essential for the success of airports. We urge you to oppose the CCCA.

Sincerely,

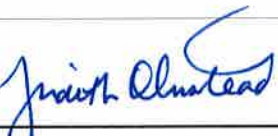
¹ <https://www.scpvt.com/tourism>

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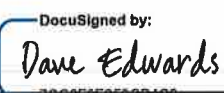
Mike Gula
Executive Director, Columbia Metro...

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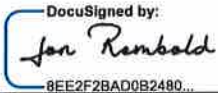
Connie Anderson
Executive Director, Florence Regiona...

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Judi Olmstead
Director of Airports, Myrtle Beach In...

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David Edwards
President/CEO, Greenville Spartanb...

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Jon Rembold
Airport Director, Hilton Head Island ...

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Elliott Summey
Executive Director & CEO, Charleston International Airport