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AMERICAN SMALL BUSINESS TRAVELERS ALLIANCE

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ASBTANEWS...

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January 19, 2007

Wright Amendment Compromise Proving Beneficial for Airlines, Travel Industry and Small Business Travelers

More Flights and Better Fares for Small Business Travelers, a Cohesive Regional Travel Industry, and Increased Revenue for Airlines Are All Being Realized

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – DALLAS, TX – After years of controversy over Dallas-Fort Worth's Wright Amendment, the compromise reached on the issue last year has quickly proved beneficial to airlines, the travel industry and small business travelers, according to the American Small Business Travelers Alliance (ASBTA), a national alliance that provides valuable services and functions focused specifically on the travel needs and interests of small business owners.

“Last June, we predicted that the Wright Amendment compromise would benefit small business travelers by encouraging more competitive airfares and improved scheduling options, and we're pleased to see that this has been the case,” said Chuck Sharp, ASBTA President. “It's also encouraging to see that the key airlines involved in the compromise – American and Southwest – appear to be experiencing a boost in revenues.”

A federal law created in 1979 to restrict the operation of flights out of Dallas' Love Field Airport to only short-haul destinations, the Wright Amendment raised controversy since its inception and divided the travel industry in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Among those affected were small business travelers (SBTs), whose travel plans often hinge on the availability of a combination of flexible schedules, direct flights and low fares.

In June 2006, Dallas Mayor Laura Miller and Fort Worth Mayor Mike Moncrief, along with American Airlines and Southwest Airlines, developed a compromise that made immediate changes to the Wright Amendment and called for its full repeal in 2014. The legislation was approved by the Texas Legislature and passed into law in October 2006.

Almost immediately, the compromise made business travel more accessible than ever to small businesses by encouraging increased competition and, consequently, lower fares. It also allowed for a greater number of flights and destinations from Love Field Airport, while still maintaining Dallas-Fort Worth Airport as a strong regional airport – a critical element to the health of the D/FW economy and an important issue to SBTs. The gradual implementation of further changes could also benefit SBTs in the near and distant future.

“The success of the compromise is also an important step in healing the division of the Dallas-Fort Worth airline industry,” said Sharp. “D/FW Airport and Love Field and their respective anchor airlines are now able to dedicate their entire focus to addressing critical challenges affecting both travelers and the travel industry, including fuel costs and security.”

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About ASBTA and SMBTA:

ASBTA is a national organization dedicated to serving and educating small business travelers by providing information regarding travel and mobile technology. The Small and Medium Technology Alliance (SMBTA) is part of ASBTA focused on helping businesses better utilize technology. If you're a small business owner and want to learn more or become a member for free, visit our sites – www.asbta.com and www.smbta.com. Members of the media can receive a free copy of survey results by contacting ASBTA by phone at 469-648-0190 or email at surveys@asbta.com.