

March 17, 2026

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and the association community we represent, we urge Congress to act swiftly to provide full funding for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and ensure the continued stability of our nation's travel and security infrastructure.

Association meetings and business events play a vital role in the U.S. economy and workforce. Associations convene professionals, researchers, educators, and industry leaders to exchange knowledge, advance innovation, and strengthen professional communities across nearly every sector. These gatherings are also a powerful economic driver for cities and communities nationwide.

Recent economic impact research conducted for ASAE by Oxford Economics highlights the scale of this contribution. Each year, more than 272,000 association meetings and events attract nearly 52 million participants, directly support approximately 342,000 jobs, and generate \$42 billion in spending in communities across the United States. This activity supports hotels, restaurants, convention centers, transportation providers, and countless small businesses in destinations of all sizes.

For this reason, disruptions to the nation's travel infrastructure – particularly those affecting airport operations and security screening – have immediate consequences for the meetings and events ecosystem. The dedicated professionals of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) play a critical role in maintaining the safe and efficient movement of travelers across the country. However, funding lapses that require these essential personnel to work without pay place significant strain on the workforce and increase the risk of staffing shortages, longer security wait times, and travel disruptions. When millions of attendees are traveling to conferences and professional meetings that are planned months or years in advance, even small disruptions can have significant ripple effects across the economy.

A stable and reliable travel system is essential to sustaining the economic and professional benefits generated by association meetings and events. We therefore respectfully call on Congress to take immediate action to fully fund DHS and ensure that TSA and other critical agencies have the resources necessary to maintain uninterrupted operations.

Thank you for your leadership and for supporting the infrastructure that enables millions of Americans to safely travel, convene, and contribute to the nation's economic vitality.

Sincerely,



Michelle Mason, FASAE, CAE, AAiP
President and CEO