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Virginia Tourism Corporation & Capital Region USA Announce \$339,199 Grant from U.S. Department of Commerce

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RICHMOND, Va. – U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke announced today a \$339,199 grant to the Capital Region USA (CRUSA), one of five awards totaling more than \$1.5 million to non-profit industry groups to support and enhance the global competitiveness of U.S. manufacturing and services industries.

CRUSA, in partnership with the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Maryland Office of Tourism and Destination DC, will use the three-year grant to develop marketing promotions with tour operators in Western Europe, Mexico and Brazil to increase international visitation and export revenues to Virginia, Maryland and Washington, DC. By 2012, CRUSA expects these promotions to result in more than 59,000 hotel room night bookings across the region, generating an economic impact of \$5.27 million in export revenues.

Alisa Bailey, president and CEO of the Virginia Tourism Corporation, remarked that the partnership with CRUSA has been a valuable one for the region. “Through grants such as this and by other efforts CRUSA has been able to creatively leverage funds supplied by its primary partners by a 7:1 ratio, and that is so important when we all are fighting for every dollar we can get,” she said. “VTC’s values our 17-year partnership with CRUSA and Washington Dulles International Airport. Dulles delivers 393 flights from 43 foreign cities to the region weekly and these visitors stay longer and spend more on average than domestic travelers.”

Mary Saunders, Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Manufacturing and Services, commented that “We are pleased to assist Capital Region USA in its efforts to increase travel and tourism receipts from Western Europe, Brazil, and Mexico. By leveraging the resources of the Commerce Department, we are confident that Capital Region USA’s project will increase international visitor traffic to Virginia, Maryland and Washington, DC.”

Commerce’s Market Development Cooperator Program (MDCP) awards are cooperative agreements between Commerce’s International Trade Administration and recipients who foster global competitiveness. Since its inception in 1993, Commerce has made 97 awards under the MDCP initiative. For more information about the Market Development Cooperator Program, please visit www.trade.gov/mdcp.



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About the Capital Region USA: The Capital Region USA is a non-profit tourism marketing coalition funded by the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Maryland Office of Tourism, Destination DC and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority. CRUSA works to maximize visitor arrivals and economic impact to the region from international markets by implementing innovative marketing programs and public/private sector partnerships.

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