



Center for Responsible Travel

Transforming the Way the World Travels

www.responsibletravel.org

**Tour Operators and Educational Travel Organizations' Petition
to the U.S. Department of State, regarding Travel to Cuba
March 1, 2018**

In early September 2017, the U.S. Department of State began a drawdown of staff in the U.S. Embassy in Havana, Cuba, which, after reports of Embassy employees being afflicted with health problems, resulted in a total 60 percent reduction in staff by September 29, 2017, and a Travel Warning against Cuba. That warning and, later, a Level 3, or "reconsider travel," advisory resulted in a sharp decline in U.S. visitors to Cuba. This despite the fact that there are no confirmed reports of any of the almost 700,000 civilian U.S. visitors to the island nation in 2017 experiencing health problems similar to Embassy employees.

Whereas the State Department is scheduled to decide on whether or not to re-staff the U.S. Embassy in Havana on March 4, 2018, we, the undersigned, request that the Department re-staff the U.S. Embassy in Havana and change Cuba's travel advisory from a Level 3, or "reconsider travel," to at least a less intimidating Level 2, or "exercise increased caution."

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