

**Kiki Garcia (host):** Tell us, what is Brand USA?

**Roger Dow:** Brand USA is an entity that was created 10 years ago that promotes the United States, really simply. They tell the world, come to America and the entity is paid for by visitors and the travel industry. Although it is authorized by the government travelers pay us \$14 every two years into Brand USA when they come here for the first time. And the travel industry has to match it dollar-for-dollar, so it creates a \$200 million promotional front around the world that says come to America. And it's critical when you think of Albuquerque, because it levels the playing field. It lets you compete for international visitors, just like Las Vegas because they've got a monster budget. And Albuquerque and New Mexico and places like that that don't have as big a budget. And Brand USA can help them get to areas where they want to come, they want to see authentic America.

**Garcia:** Why is international tourism so important to the American economy?

**Dow:** Because it's a huge dollar revenue amount to the US economy. \$254 billion, everyone is talking about trade deficits these days, international travel is actually a surplus, \$69 billion. And it creates a huge number of jobs, you're talking about 120,000 jobs are lost by our decline in share that's been going on lately Kiki. We've been losing a little share of international travel, but that little 2% we lost is 120,000 American jobs so that's important.

**Garcia:** Oh wow, so why is Brand USA at risk right now, what's going on?

**Dow:** What's going on, it's reauthorized by Congress as legislation, and all they do is say: okay the government can collect the money from these visitors when they come here. It doesn't take a penny from taxpayers, but it's authorized like a lot of things in government in five-year increments. Well the next five years is up in 2020, so we've just got to get Congress to put it on the docket, approve it, and move on. It doesn't take a penny from our pockets, you and me, but it puts a lot of money in our pockets when visitors come here.

**Garcia:** That's not good. So how can Brand USA and American jobs be saved?

**Dow:** Well if you look at Brand USA, if we didn't have Brand USA, we would probably lose 50,000 jobs over the next five years and that makes no sense whatsoever. And probably another \$50 billion. Congress has to attach it to a bill when they come back next week or put it in a standalone bill and just say let's reauthorize it for another 5-7 years and away, we go. And we'll keep telling the world come to America, because it's a pretty good place.

**Garcia:** Right? I know! Okay so where can people go for more information?

**Dow:** Real simple, they can go to [TheBrandUSA.com](http://TheBrandUSA.com), they can tell us all about it. Many things in America are not no-brainers, this is a no-brainer. Congress just has to step up and reauthorize it.

**Garcia:** Wonderful, thank you so much for being with us this morning and have a safe trip.

**Dow:** Alright Kiki thank you.