

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 31, 2019

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Wicker:

We write to request that the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation consider S. 2229, the bipartisan *Stop Online Booking Scams Act of 2019*, during its next executive session.

Online booking sites have created a marketplace where consumers can shop for hotels across thousands of brands on a single platform. With the rise of online bookings has come an increase in online booking scams. Fraudulent websites give the appearance of being connected to a hotel, but actually have no relationship with them. Transactions through these sites often result in consumers paying for reservations that do not exist or that differ from available inventory at the hotels.

It is for these reasons that we introduced the bipartisan *Stop Online Booking Scams Act*. Our bill will help protect consumers from these scams by making it unlawful for unaffiliated third party online hotel reservation sellers to advertise or sell reservations if they imply that they own the hotels, ensuring that companies that do not comply with the law are liable for unfair and deceptive acts under the Federal Trade Commission Act, and giving state Attorneys General the authority to bring a civil action against companies who violate this provision. The legislation narrowly targets illegitimate and unaffiliated third party reservation sellers while ensuring that there are no unintended effects on legitimate online travel agencies, which play an important role in the hotel booking industry.

We believe that the Stop Online Booking Scams Act is a balanced, narrow, and needed solution that protects both consumers and legitimate online hotel booking sites from online bookings scams.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator



AMY KLOBUCHAR
United States Senator

CC: Ranking Member Maria Cantwell, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation