



# CITY OF FLAGSTAFF

## FLAGSTAFF CITY COUNCIL

211 West Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Main Line: 928-213-2000

Website: <https://www.flagstaff.az.gov>

January 29, 2026

Senator Mark Kelly  
United States Senate  
Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Ruben Gallego  
United States Senate  
Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Eli Crane  
United States House of Representatives  
307 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Honorable Representatives,

On behalf of the City of Flagstaff, I am writing to express opposition to the planned implementation of the International Visitor/Nonresident Surcharge for entry to eleven major U.S. National Parks, scheduled to take effect this month. This policy will directly impact Grand Canyon National Park and, consequently, Flagstaff's visitor economy.

Tourism is Flagstaff's number one economic driver, welcoming an estimated five million visitors daily, employing 8,000 people and an annual greater economic impact of \$565 million. In a typical year, international visitors represent approximately fifteen percent of our overall tourism economy. Currently, international visitation is down nationwide, across Arizona, and locally in Flagstaff. Compounding this decline, our community also experienced reduced visitation in August due to the Dragon Bravo Fire and impacts related to the federal government shutdown.

Recent industry indicators reflect significant challenges:

- U.S. Travel Association: Inbound international visits are forecast to decline 6.3% in 2025.
- Grand Canyon National Park: Visitation is down 10% year-to-date (2025).
- International Inbound Travel Association: Canadian visitation is down 25%, equating to nearly four million fewer trips. Key long-haul markets also remain depressed.

Gateway communities like Flagstaff will be among the first and hardest hit. International travelers support local tax revenue, community jobs, shoulder-season demand, and stability for small businesses, including hotels, restaurants, outfitters, and attractions.

Flagstaff supports sustainable, reasonable increases to park fees. However, a surcharge targeting only international visitors is unnecessary and harmful to U.S. competitiveness. Working collaboratively with the tourism industry, we stand ready to help identify practical, effective solutions that meet revenue goals without undermining international demand. We respectfully urge the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service to delay implementation of the International Visitor/Nonresident Fee Plan and pause the Nonresident Group Tour Fee specifically.



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Thank you for your consideration. We appreciate your attention to this matter and your commitment to protecting the economic health of gateway communities and America's national parks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Becky Daggett". The signature is written in black ink on a white rectangular background.

Becky Daggett

Mayor, City of Flagstaff, on behalf of the Flagstaff City Council