

ECA ADVOCACY UPDATE

Driving economic growth. Supporting job creation. Empowering small businesses.

January 5, 2024



1. ECA releases 2024 public policy agenda

On Wednesday, ECA announced its [2024 public policy agenda](#) and top priorities for the year ahead.

By the numbers: ECA's top-6 priorities for 2024 are:

- Restoring **visa processing** operations to pre-pandemic levels.
- Helping to attract and train the industry's **next generation workforce**.
- Restoring **communicable disease coverage** to event cancellation insurance.
- Increasing **music licensing** transparency.
- Promoting industry-led **sustainability and decarbonization** efforts.
- Amplifying efforts to raise **industry awareness** among our future talent pool.

ECA's view: "From ensuring that all international exhibitors and attendees can return to exhibitions and conferences in the U.S. to supporting public sector involvement in developing the industry's next generation workforce, ECA will be actively engaged in Washington, DC and beyond on the issues that matter for the industry in 2024," said Vinnie Polito, SISO CEO and ECA Co-President.

Go deeper: Read "[ECA Releases 2024 Public Policy Agenda](#)."

- **Download** ECA's 2024 public policy agenda [here](#).

Thank you to [EXHIBITOR](#), [Northstar Meetings Group](#), [BizBash](#), [Conference & Meetings World](#), [Exhibition World](#), and [Travel Daily News](#) for covering the launch of ECA's 2024 advocacy efforts.



2. State Department extends visa waivers

In late December, the State Department [announced](#) the extension of certain visa interview waivers that were set to expire on December 31, 2023.

Why it matters: This important move will support academic and scientific event organizers in the U.S. while helping to prevent the further growth of visa wait times at many U.S. embassies and consulates around the world in 2024.

- **In November**, ECA and a coalition of 65 other organizations [called on](#) the State Department to extend these important pandemic-era interview waivers.

What's next: ECA is laser-focused on securing up to \$300 million in additional funding to tackle visa and passport processing backlogs as part of the ongoing FY24 federal government funding debate.



3. ECA submits California forklift feedback

In response to California's proposed new zero-emission forklift rule, ECA filed its formal [comments](#) with the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

The bottom line: ECA highlighted the industry's leadership on decarbonization while making several suggestions to CARB to ensure that its environmental aims with the new rule are aligned with industry feasibility.

- **ECA also provided** CARB with the Net Zero Carbon Events [roadmap](#) and new [logistics guidance document](#) to show how the industry is already committed to lowering the carbon footprint of its forklift fleet.

Where it stands: After analyzing the 300+ comments submitted by stakeholders, CARB will publish its final rule this spring and vote on passage on June 27, 2024.



4. In case you missed it...

- **ECA's Tommy Goodwin** is the guest on this week's [EXHIBITOR Now podcast](#) talking about ECA's 2024 public policy agenda
- **The Event Manager Podcast**, produced by Skift Meetings, named its episode on ECA as one of its [top-10 episodes of 2023](#).
- **ECA will join PCMA** at Convening Leaders next week in San Diego for an important [session](#) on the intersection of politics and business events.



When Politics and Values Collide:

Navigating Potential Calls to
Boycott A Destination



Tommy Goodwin
VICE PRESIDENT | EXHIBITIONS
& CONFERENCES ALLIANCE



Beth Surmont
VICE PRESIDENT, EVENT DESIGN
& STRATEGY | 360 LIVE MEDIA



Nneka St. Gerard
CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER | SOCIETY
FOR MATERNAL-FETAL MEDICINE



Robin Troutman
CDEPUTY DIRECTOR | NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILS ON
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



Howard Givner
SVP KNOWLEDGE & INNOVATION, PCMA



Thomas F. (Tommy) Goodwin
Vice President

tommy.goodwin@exhibitionsconferencesalliance.org