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AHLA, AAHOA ANNOUNCE NEW STATE, LOCAL ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION

American Hospitality Alliance will coordinate political engagement, accelerate recovery

BOSTON, Mass., June 29 - The nation's two largest hotel and lodging associations, the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) and the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), announced the creation of the American Hospitality Alliance (AHA) at the International Society of Hotel Associations' summer meeting. AHA will promote the hospitality industry at the state and local levels by harnessing the power and influence of industry leaders and directing it toward advocacy and political engagement. The strategic partnership between AAHOA, AHLA, and leading state hospitality associations will encourage pooling resources and streamlining efforts to educate lawmakers at the state and local levels.

"America's hotel owners are proud to partner with AHLA and numerous state hospitality associations to help forge stronger connections with lawmakers and to advance innovative solutions to help hoteliers on the road to recovery," **AAHOA Interim President & CEO Ken Greene** said. "The majority of hotels are small businesses. That is why the owners and operators are particularly well-suited to inform lawmakers about policies and regulations that will accelerate the industry's resurgence. This coalition could not have come at a more important time as the hotel industry prepares to welcome back guests."

"AHLA has long recognized the importance of state and local governments in policy issues affecting hoteliers, and it is imperative that growing our industry's state and local presence remain a priority as we look toward the future," **AHLA President & CEO Chip Rogers** said. "AAHOA and our engaged state hospitality associations understand how critical a thriving hotel industry is to reviving the economy at the local and state levels, and we are proud to unite every segment of the industry around this effort."

AHA's advocacy efforts will focus on issues that are key to boosting the hospitality industry's recovery as the country reopens.

Hoteliers continue to be concerned with COVID-19 liability, illegal hotels masquerading as short-term rentals, drive-by lawsuits, tax reform, and workforce development. Forecasts by STR and CBRE suggest that the lodging sector will not fully recover from the COVID-19 pandemic until at least 2023.

AHLA and AAHOA will co-chair AHA, and an advisory board of 17 industry representatives and staff serving one-year terms will steer the Alliance's priorities and policy initiatives.

"As an Advisory Board member, we at Aimbridge Hospitality are fully committed to furthering the American Hospitality Alliance's mission of collectively advancing our advocacy efforts in burgeoning areas, which we view as the key to recovery and growth as the hospitality industry rebuilds," **Aimbridge Hospitality Senior Government Affairs Officer Laura Vesely** said. "AHLA and AAHOA have long recognized the importance of state and local governments in policy issues affecting hoteliers, and the formation of the AHA will be an invaluable resource for hoteliers and lodging associations across the country."

"Strengthening partnerships among state and national hospitality associations is critical to tackling the challenges America's hotel owners and hospitality workers continue to face at the tail end of this pandemic," **Harshil Patel, Vice President, Champion Hotels** said. "COVID-19 wiped out a decade of growth in an industry that creates millions of jobs and generates billions of dollars in tax revenue for local economies. AHA's creation is an investment in communities across the country. As governments engage with businesses to spur growth, AHA will be there to help hoteliers and lodging associations make the most out of stimulus measures and other programs designed to rebuild the economy."

For more information about AHA, please visit the Alliance's website at www.americanhospitalityalliance.com.

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About AHLA:

The American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) is the sole national association representing all segments of the U.S. lodging industry. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., AHLA focuses on strategic advocacy, communications support, and workforce development programs to move the industry forward. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitality was the first industry impacted, and it will be among the last to recover. That is why AHLA is committed to promoting safe travel while also creating a standardized safety experience nationwide through the Safe Stay initiative. With an enhanced set of health and safety protocols designed to provide a safe and clean environment for all hotel guests and employees, hotels across America are ready to welcome back travelers when they are ready to travel. Learn more at www.ahla.com.

About AAHOA:

AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world. The nearly 20,000 AAHOA members represent almost one in every two hotels in the United States. With billions of dollars in property assets and hundreds of thousands of employees, AAHOA Members are core economic contributors in virtually every community. AAHOA is a proud defender of free enterprise and the foremost current-day example of realizing the American Dream. Learn more at AAHOA.com.