



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Iowa Hotel & Lodging Association Forms

Industry Advocacy Group to Promote Human Trafficking Prevention Compliance Training

January 20, 2022 (DES MOINES, IA)- A group of Iowa hospitality leaders today announced the formation of the Iowa Hotel & Lodging Association (IHLA). The new non-profit trade association was incorporated earlier this month, but officially launches January 20, 2022. The group is actively building membership and has started to engage in initiatives which fulfill its mission to protect, promote, educate and advocate on behalf of the states 700+ hotels and lodging establishments.

“Iowa’s hotel and lodging industry was one of the hardest hit business sectors when COVID-travel restrictions were put in place,” said Paul Rottenberg, President and CEO of Orchestrate Hospitality Group, which operates two hotels, and Chairman of the IHLA Board. “We need a unified voice as we fight our way back to pre-pandemic occupancy rates.”

In fact, data from the American Hotel & Lodging Association, the national partner of the newly formed IHLA, estimates that Iowa’s hotels lost nearly 10,000 jobs and \$420 million in room revenue alone. Nearly 2,000 pre-pandemic hotel jobs have yet to return, showing a 9% decline in industry employment in the state.

“A thriving hotel industry is critical to strong local economies, and strong state and local hotel associations are critical to a thriving hotel industry,” said American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) President and CEO Chip Rogers. “With the launch of the Iowa Hotel & Lodging Association (IHLA), hospitality professionals in the state will have a dedicated advocate representing their interests when and where it matters most. We look forward to working with the IHLA team to ensure the voices of Iowa hoteliers and hotel employees are heard loud and clear in the Hawkeye state and beyond.”

In addition to working towards recovery-friendly legislation and a better state regulatory environment for hotel & lodging operations, the new group is taking a visible role in key issues impacting the industry. In fact, the IHLA Board last week joined with state agencies and other business organizations in the Capitol Rotunda in support of Governor Kim Reynolds as she reaffirmed Iowa’s dedication to fighting human trafficking by signing



a proclamation declaring January to be “Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.”

The IHLA’s first educational outreach will focus on helping Iowa’s hotel and lodging establishments become compliant with a new law that took effect Jan. 1, 2022 which requires training of all employees on how to spot and report human trafficking crimes. Establishments must be in compliance in order to host and receive payment for state employee overnight stays or for state meetings held on property.

The IHLA is an independent trade association managed by the Iowa Restaurant Association. Jessica Dunker, President and CEO of the Iowa Restaurant Association is serving as the President and CEO of the Iowa Hotel and Lodging Association for the present time.

The IHLA’s forming Board of Directors includes; Board Chairman, Paul Rottenberg of Orchestrate Hospitality in Des Moines, Vice Chair, Ravi Patel of Hawkeye Hotels in Coralville, and Director, Greg Edwards of Catch Des Moines.

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About the Iowa Hotel & Lodging Association

Iowa Hotel & Lodging Association (IHLA) is the recognized leader of Iowa’s hotel and lodging industry, providing essential support to the industry. Founded in 2022, the Association represents over 700 Iowa hotel and lodging establishments. The industry plays an integral role in Iowa's economy, employing more than 65,000 people and creating nearly \$8 billion in annual sales. For more information, visit www.hotellodgingiowa.com.

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