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## **Georgia Hoteliers Disappointed by Abrams’s Hostility to Hospitality**

ATLANTA, Ga., Oct. 17 – AAHOA Georgia Regional Director Kapil Patel issued the following statement in response to Georgia gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams’s assertion that, “People shouldn’t have to go into agriculture or hospitality to make a living in Georgia”:

“We are disappointed in politicians who fail to understand the value of hospitality workers and their careers. Tens of thousands of Georgians choose hospitality to make a living – because the hotel industry offers good-paying jobs and clear pathways to successful and meaningful careers. These hard-working Georgians play a key role in our state’s travel and tourism industry which had a \$63.1 billion economic impact in 2017.”

“AAHOA is an organization of small business owners who are primarily first- and second-generation Americans, and many members are immigrants. We know first-hand that careers in hospitality are a path to realizing the American Dream. We work hard to help hospitality workers achieve the same success as they work their way up through the industry. Comments that claim one of the state’s top industries offers careers that are somehow undesirable diminish the hardworking women and men of the hospitality industry and devalue our work, our business, our families, and our livelihood.”

“We expect a candidate for Governor to value all Georgians and the career choices they make. Perhaps Abrams can take the time to meet the wonderful men and women who make up our industry so she can better understand and appreciate who we are, the value of hospitality, and what it means to work to serve others.”

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*AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world. The nearly 18,000 AAHOA members own 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.*