



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **AAHOA Statement on National Human Trafficking Awareness Day**

ATLANTA, Ga., Jan. 10 – AAHOA President and CEO Cecil Staton and AAHOA Chairwoman Jagruti Panwala issued the following statement regarding National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, which falls on January 11:

“America’s hoteliers stand with trafficking victims, not just on Human Trafficking Awareness Day but every day. Human trafficking is a blight on our society, and, tomorrow, we draw attention to its victims and its effects on our communities. Trafficking is one of the ugliest and most despicable crimes in our society. It exploits society’s most vulnerable and destroys lives.”

“Understanding the signs of trafficking and knowing how to respond can be the difference between life and death. Recognizing the unique role hotels can play in assisting victims and keeping traffickers out of our communities, AAHOA mounted an extensive education and awareness campaign in 2017 to train hotel owners and employees how to identify and respond to trafficking situations. AAHOA’s Human Trafficking Awareness Trainings (HTAT) are online trainings developed in partnership with Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking and Polaris. AAHOA HTAT is available on demand and at no cost to our over 19,500 members and the employees at their hotel properties. To date, thousands of hotel owners and employees have completed the training, and we are optimistic that thousands more will educate themselves about preventing this heinous crime.”

### **About AAHOA:**

*AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world. The over 19,500 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.*

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