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## **Biran Patel Becomes Chairman of World's Largest Hotel Owners Association**

ATLANTA, Ga., June 19 – Texas hotelier Biran Patel is the new chairman of AAHOA, the world's largest hotel owners association. In a video message to AAHOA's nearly 20,000 members, Patel praised the resiliency of hoteliers and reaffirmed the association's commitment to helping them weather the COVID-19 pandemic. Highlighting the association's efforts to help the industry over the past few months and to address the difficulties hotel owners continue to face, Patel was optimistic, noting that, "In the face of this challenge, there is hope."

"I am excited to serve America's hotel owners in this role," said Patel. "While there are many challenges for us as hoteliers, there are also opportunities for our association to grow and for us to grow with it. Over the past three months, AAHOA delivered valuable educational resources to our members about navigating, adapting to, and learning about COVID-19. Our advocacy team worked tirelessly to pressure Congress to address the liquidity crisis hotel owners face. AAHOA delivers under pressure."

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact the hospitality industry as businesses begin to recover from the sharp decline in occupancy rates and revenues caused by travel restrictions and stay-home orders. Patel said that his priorities will be to lead the board in strategic thinking as it revises the association's strategic plan.

"AAHOA is doing a lot to help hotel owners during this crisis," said Patel. "Every few years, we revise AAHOA's strategic plan. We are at one of those points now, and it could not come at a better time. We can evaluate how to best meet our members' needs on the road to recovery. Our board is united in serving AAHOA's members, and we will see that reflected as we lay out our plan for the next few years.

"I am grateful for the hard work and leadership of Chairwoman Jagruti Panwala. I look forward to seeing her, our members, and industry partners at the 2020 AAHOA Convention & Trade Show in Orlando, Fla.," he added. The convention is scheduled to take place at the Orange County Convention Center, August 9-11.

Chairman Patel joined AAHOA in 2003. He served as an Ambassador and then as a member of the Board of Directors as a Regional Director for North Texas. AAHOA members elected him as Secretary in 2017. He serves as a partner in BHP Investments Company and owns and operates multiple branded and independent properties. He is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin and holds a degree in finance.

2019-2020 AAHOA Chairwoman Jagruti Panwala said, “It was an honor to serve as AAHOA’s first Chairwoman. Over the past year, our association saw exceptional growth in membership, engagement, franchise relations, education, and advocacy. I am proud of how we pivoted to help hotel owners navigate the challenges of COVID-19. AAHOA is here for America’s hoteliers, and I am confident that we will get through this crisis together. I look forward to continuing to serve AAHOA as the Immediate Past Chair. Our association will continue to grow and to help our members at the highest level. I am excited for our upcoming convention in Orlando, and I cannot wait to see everyone there.”

“AAHOA is grateful to our outgoing chairwoman, Jagruti Panwala. AAHOA is richer for her service. I would also like to recognize our outgoing Immediate Past Chair Hitesh (HP) Patel for serving AAHOA for over a decade. During these challenging times, we are fortunate to have Jagruti, and now Biran, leading our board,” said AAHOA President & CEO Cecil Staton. “His understanding of our industry, what owners are going through in different segments, and his knowledge of the challenges facing owners of both branded and independent properties are incredible assets that will serve AAHOA and America’s hoteliers well.”

**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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