



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Statement on Murder of Mississippi Hotel Owner Yogesh Patel**

ATLANTA, Ga., Aug. 18 – AAHOA President & CEO Cecil P. Staton issued the following statement in response to the murder of hotel owner Yogesh Patel of Cleveland, Miss.:

“America's hotel owners are saddened by the sudden and senseless loss of a fellow hotelier and member of the community. Violence has no place in our society, especially at hotels which offer guests comfort and security. Hospitality is more than an industry. It is a guiding philosophy for millions of people that urges one to show generosity, warmth, and compassion to friends and strangers alike. We are living in times fraught with anxiety, pain, and uncertainty. Hospitality can help ease the tensions of everyday life, even in the face of misdirected frustrations. This crime has deeply impacted our industry and our members who feel that this could happen to them at any time. No one should live in fear just for doing their job. The hardworking men and women who are America's hotel owners understand that there is no higher calling than service to others, and that is what makes this loss so tragic. We extend our deepest sympathies to Mr. Patel's family and employees and hope they will find justice.”

### **About AAHOA:**

*AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world. The nearly 20,000 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.*

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