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**AAHOA Meets With Senator John Hickenlooper**

WASHINGTON, D.C., Sept. 29 – On Tuesday, September 27, AAHOA leadership met with Senator John Hickenlooper (D-CO) in Washington at his Capitol Hill office.

Senator Hickenlooper, who sits on both the Small Business Committee and the Senate Commerce Committee, met with AAHOA to discuss SBA loan limit increases, and promoting fairness and transparency in the franchise industry.

While AAHOA has doubled down on the advocacy front in recent weeks, this meeting was foundational to further building relationships with Senator Hickenlooper and key members of his staff as AAHOA continues to push forward its advocacy agenda, including:

- AAHOA's footprint across Colorado and its impressive Oxford Economics Study findings
  - [Colorado by the numbers](#)
  - Industry Leader: 39.5% of all hotels in the state of Colorado are owned by AAHOA Members, which accounts for 520 hotels and 55,861 rooms.
  - Labor: \$5B in wages/salaries/other compensation. That's approximately 54,490 direct jobs and 101,000 total impact jobs in the state.
  - Annual Economic Impacts: \$8.5B in contribution to the state's GDP, and \$2.3B in federal/state/local taxes. \$201M in total lodging taxes.
- The need to increase the SBA Loan caps
  - Senator Hickenlooper, who was once a small business owner himself, discussed his own involvement in seeking to increase the overall maximum of SBA loans on different levels to better reflect prices in 2022
  - Currently, many hoteliers make use of SBA 7(a) and 504 loans to help finance the new construction or purchase of their hotel properties.
  - SBA loan limits are capped at \$5 million, and the current costs of building and purchasing properties greatly exceed \$5 million.
  - Since the value of the hotels is significantly higher than these loan limits, there remains substantial collateral for higher loan amounts.

- Congress can greatly assist small businesses by increasing the SBA loan limits to match the current economic conditions and thereby create a sustainable business model for the future.
- Fairness & Transparency in Franchising
  - Ensuring fairness in franchising with appropriate disclosures by franchisors to their franchisees concerning the receipt and collection of revenues and fees.
  - The Franchisee Freedom Act – Another tool in the arsenal to ensure there is a private right of action with an opportunity for franchisee buyers to seek relief for FTC Rule violations for the benefit of all.

“Each day we can meet with a leading U.S. Senator, like Senator Hickenlooper in Washington, D.C., on issues important to our members, including raising SBA loan limits and increased transparency concerning the industry, means we are increasing our impact and exposure in our nation’s capital,” said AAHOA President & CEO Laura Lee Blake. “AAHOA remains committed to strengthening our advocacy efforts at all levels on behalf of our members, and on Tuesday, we truly served as the voice of all hoteliers.”

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### **About AAHOA**

*AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the nation, with Member-owned properties representing a significant part of the U.S. economy. AAHOA's 20,000 members own 60% of the hotels in the United States and are responsible for 1.7% of the nation's GDP. More than one million employees work at AAHOA member-owned hotels, earning \$47 billion annually, and member-owned hotels support 4.2 million U.S. jobs across all sectors of the hospitality industry. AAHOA's mission is to advance and protect the business interests of hotel owners through advocacy, industry leadership, professional development, member benefits, and community engagement.*