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October 27, 2020

Governor Gavin Newsom
State of California
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Allowing Hotel Meetings

Dear Governor Newsom:

California's hotel industry is devastated. We need your help – now.

You can return thousands of unemployed hotel workers to their jobs and provide desperately needed economic activity and tax revenues by allowing hotel meetings to occur. California is the only state in the nation not open for these meetings despite our hotels' outstanding health record.

The California Hotel & Lodging Association (CHLA) and our state's more than 6,000 hotels that provide jobs for more than 285,000 employees are confident hotels can host individual meetings safely – just as we have done for vulnerable populations since the pandemic's start and for individual travelers since you lifted restrictions in June.

The industry's commitment to safety and cleanliness for hotel meetings is detailed in our recently released [CHLA Clean + Safe Guidance for Meetings + Events](#). This guidance incorporates existing recommendations from the California Department of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and has been reviewed by the former chief of Cal/OSHA. It provides hotels with details for meetings that include pre-planning, arrival considerations, cleaning protocols, meeting protocols and food service considerations.

As every other state except California holds hotel meetings, we are losing out on an estimated \$32.8 billion in direct spending and 227,000 jobs, much of which are now going to other states. Meeting planners already are booking future events in other states because California is closed and it's uncertain when and how the state will allow meetings – a multi-year economic disaster for hotels, employees and cities dependent on travel tax revenue.

*Protecting the
rights and interests
of the California
lodging industry*

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Our hotels have hosted COVID-19 positive and vulnerable populations, medical workers, first responders and essential travelers, all without a single cluster outbreak. I'm confident that with our responsible meetings guidance, the industry can host events safely and for the benefit of our great state.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your approval soon of hotel meetings and events in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynn S. Mohrfeld', written in a cursive style.

Lynn S. Mohrfeld, CAE
President + CEO
California Hotel & Lodging Association

cc:

- Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins
- Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
- Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva, Chair – Assembly Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism, and Internet Media Committee
- Mark A. Ghaly, MD, MPH, Secretary of Health and Human Services
- Erica S. Pan, MD, MPH, Acting State Public Health Officer
- Che Salinas, Office of the Governor, Senior Advisor on Business and Economic Development
- Chris Dombrowski, Acting Director, Office of the Governor, Business and Economic Development (Go-Biz)