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AAHOA Statement on California Senate Bill 403

ATLANTA, Ga., Jun. 2 – The Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA), the largest hotel owners association in the world, strongly opposes any form of discrimination, including caste. AAHOA, however, opposes [California Senate Bill 403](#) ("SB 403") due to a concern that it could lead to improper and unlawful racial profiling, targeting, and attacks on individuals of Asian American descent and/or who practice the tenets of Hinduism. Adding "caste" to the anti-discrimination categories outlined in Section 51 of the California Civil Code and other Education Code and Government Code sections is unnecessary, and will cause more harm than good.

"AAHOA was founded on the very basis of preventing discrimination and, therefore, has always strongly opposed any form of discrimination, including caste-based, as inimical to our values as Americans and as human beings," said **AAHOA Chairman Bharat Patel**. "However, contrary to what it looks like on the surface, Senate Bill 403 singles out South Asians and other vulnerable ethnic communities and could lead to improper and unlawful racial profiling and stigmatization of individuals of Asian American descent."

AAHOA's founding in 1989 was on the very premise of discrimination that Asian American hoteliers faced within the industry, particularly from banks and insurance companies. AAHOA has worked hard for more than three decades to overcome racial profiling on the basis of national origin, ethnicity, and ancestry.

"There are existing U.S. laws that already address discrimination, and they are near and dear to the hearts of Asian Americans who have faced discrimination on so many different levels simply because of the color of their skin or their religious beliefs," said **AAHOA President & CEO Laura Lee Blake**. "Adding caste to the mix through SB 403 only magnifies these differences and will cause great division and unnecessary conflict for all South Asian communities."

AAHOA stands in solidarity with other organizations, including the [Hindu American Foundation](#), that strongly oppose SB 403, and urges the Senate to shelve SB 403 completely.

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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.