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**AAHOA Statement on Murder of Hillcrest Motel Owner Pravin R. Patel**

**ATLANTA, Ga., Feb. 14** – AAHOA issued the following statement in response to the murder of veteran hotel owner/operator, Pravin R. Patel (76), of Sheffield, Alabama:

America's hotel owners are deeply saddened, shocked, and outraged by this senseless act of violence against a small business owner that cost him his life. Police say the 34-year-old suspect was arrested and is now in custody after he shot Pravin R. Patel, the owner of the Hillcrest Motel, on the morning of February 8. [A local TV station](#) shared that according to court documents they obtained, a felony complaint states Patel tried to get the suspect to leave before the shooting occurred.

“Senseless acts of violence have no place in our communities, and our hearts are breaking for Pravin’s family, including his wife, children, and grandchildren,” **said AAHOA Chairman Bharat Patel.** “No family should have to endure what Pravin’s family is going through, and we send our condolences to everyone who knew and loved him.”

AAHOA Alabama Regional Director Sanjay M. Patel said Pravin Patel spent more than four decades in the town of Sheffield, owning and operating the same motel.

“He was a very family-oriented person, jolly, and a keen businessman,” **Sanjay M. Patel said.** “Everyone in town knew him as a familiar face in the community after being there 40-plus years, and the family was well-known in the community for being genuine and caring.”

“The loss of a loved one under such circumstances is an unimaginable tragedy that no family should ever have to endure,” **said AAHOA President & CEO Laura Lee Blake.** “As a long-standing businessman in his community, Pravin was known for his kindness and his beautiful family. We pray for great comfort and strength during this impossibly difficult time for those who knew and loved him, and for his legacy of service and hospitality to continue for many generations to come.”

The violence that occurred has left a lasting scar on the AAHOA Community, and we are all devastated and mourning the loss of Pravin. AAHOA is confident that Alabama authorities will help the Patel family find justice.

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**About AAHOA**

*AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world, 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.*