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AAHOA's Hoteliers Push Forward Impactful National Advocacy Agenda in Washington, D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C., Mar. 14 – This week, as part of its 2024 Spring National Advocacy Conference (SNAC), the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) hosted more than 200 key AAHOA leaders and members for two days in Washington, D.C. The Conference opened with a legislative learning session at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, followed by an evening Congressional Reception at the Cannon House Office Building, and then a full day of Congressional meetings.

AAHOA wrapped up SNAC with an active day on the Hill, where AAHOA leaders participated in nearly 160 in-person Congressional meetings with U.S. Senators, Representatives, and their staff, across all party lines.

SNAC provides the opportunity for AAHOA to work with elected officials to identify viable solutions to the industry's biggest challenges. Through education, advocacy, and connecting AAHOA Members with their elected officials, SNAC continues to be an integral part of AAHOA's advocacy plan.

AAHOA was proud to have nearly 30 key Members of Congress in attendance at its Congressional Reception. Each offered their comments and insights regarding the important role AAHOA and its members have in shaping the agenda of national policies and leading the industry in ensuring the voices of hoteliers are being heard. Elected officials also spoke one-on-one with their AAHOA Member constituents to build and strengthen their relationships for ongoing and future impact.



Among others attending the Congressional Reception was Congressman **Shri Thanedar (D-MI-13)**, who introduced the [*Loans in Our Neighborhoods \(LIONS\) Act*](#) (H.R. 7242) just last month. The *LIONS Act* is designed to amend the *Small Business Act* by increasing the maximum gross loan amounts for section SBA 7(a) and 504 loans from \$5M to \$10M, something for which AAHOA has long advocated.

The first day of SNAC also featured guest speakers, including **Senator Roger Marshall (R-KS)** and **Congressman Ro Khanna (D-CA-17)**.

Senator Marshall addressed AAHOA leaders, providing insight into his background, including his upbringing, which provided him the opportunity to work in several different jobs before going to medical school to fulfill his version of the American Dream. Sen. Marshall connected his experience working in the family business with that of AAHOA Members and said serving as a U.S. Senator is his way of giving back to the country.

Sen. Marshall is also a co-sponsor of the *Credit Card Competition Act* (S. 1838/H.R. 3881), legislation that will promote fee, security, and service competition among credit card networks. AAHOA is advocating for the passage of the *Credit Card Competition Act*, which would help hotel owners, and other retailers across the country, save on their bottom lines.

Congressman Khanna spoke to AAHOA Members about his upbringing and what led him to run for Congressional Office. Rep. Khanna, the son of Indian immigrants, has much in common with AAHOA Members, and champions more Indian Americans running for office. Rep. Khanna emphasized how representation is crucial to serving Indian-American communities and strengthening America's economic and strategic partnership with India.

"AAHOA's Spring National Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C., underscores our ongoing commitment to advocating for legislation that fortifies our members' businesses nationwide and drives economic prosperity for their hotels," said **AAHOA President & CEO Laura Lee Blake**. "Each year we continue to see the relationships grow between our AAHOA Members and their elected officials. We are grateful to Senator Marshall and Congressman Khanna for their support of AAHOA, and for the nearly 30 elected officials who attended AAHOA's Congressional Reception. Our twice-yearly advocacy conferences are quickly becoming the foundation for shaping and driving national policy, and our members are making it happen."

"As a champion of advocacy and building relationships with elected officials, AAHOA is proud to advocate on behalf of the hotel industry in the halls of Congress," said **AAHOA Chairman Bharat Patel**. "SNAC provides AAHOA leaders the opportunity to learn about the issues impacting our industry and prepares them to have productive, impactful meetings with their elected officials on Capitol Hill. AAHOA's reputation, influence, and recognition in Washington continues to grow, and it is thanks to the AAHOA Members who take the time to make advocacy a part of their business plan."



Download our [Spring National Advocacy Conference Policy Backgrounder and Guide](#) to learn more about AAHOA's Federal policy priorities. To acquire photos, email pr@aahoa.com.

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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 1.4% of the nation's GDP. More than one million employees work at AAHOA Member-owned hotels, earning more than \$51 billion annually, and member-owned hotels support 4.1 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.