



February 14, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell & Leader Schumer,

The hotel and lodging industry is integral to the American economy, supporting nearly 8 million jobs and creating almost 200,000 new jobs since 2010. These jobs are in every Congressional district and offer a readily achievable pathway to the middle class. The industry has many reasons to be optimistic about building upon this record of job creation and growth, but the current uncertainty surrounding immigration policy gives us cause for concern. As important as issues like tax reform and international travel are to our success, the hotel industry is fundamentally an industry of people serving people. Our employees are the backbone of our hotels, and without a stable and reliable workforce, we cannot thrive and continue to offer life-long careers in our industry.

The most immediate immigration priority is finding a permanent solution to protect the beneficiaries of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and Dreamers more broadly. The DACA program has provided protection from deportation and work authorization for individuals who were brought to the United States illegally as children through no fault of their own. The hotel industry is a significant employer of DACA recipients and the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) has been a leader in advocating for a bipartisan, legislative solution that will provide permanent status to this deserving population. Unfortunately, we have long passed the moment when we could have avoided disruption to our businesses, and more importantly, to the lives of our employees and their families. However, the Senate has chance this week to end the uncertainty and the chaos, and **we implore you to find a permanent legislative solution that will provide legal certainty for Dreamers, contains responsible border security enhancements and avoids significant disruptions to the American workforce and economy.**

Like every industry, and like people from every walk of life, we believe strongly in protecting our nation and our citizens, and by all accounts, enhancements to border security will be a critical part of any compromise in this debate. However, we urge all sides not to let disagreements over the details of border security derail a successful outcome on the plight of Dreamers. Likewise, we recognize that many policy makers from both parties would like to see other immigration-related matters addressed this week in the Senate. Some of those issues



include the diversity visa system, family immigration, legal guest worker programs and the overall level of immigration to the United States.

The hotel industry has a stake in many of these debates and is eager to see them resolved. Our hotels have a large component of international workers, both permanent residents of the United States and those here temporarily for employment. There are several immigration and worker visa programs that are vital to our industry, and there is a broader need to ensure that the workforce is expanding rapidly enough to keep pace with job creation in the coming years. While we would be delighted to see broad reforms that guarantee a stable and qualified workforce in the next several days, we are concerned that such an endeavor could very well torpedo the eminently attainable goal of passing a legislative fix for Dreamers. However, we look forward to working in a bi-partisan manner to address these remaining immigration challenges.

Again, on behalf of AHLA and the more than 52,000 hotel properties in the United States and the more than 8 million jobs our industry supports, we thank you for your leadership on this critical issue and stand ready to assist and support you in passing a permanent legislative solution for Dreamers.

Sincerely,

Katherine Lugar
President & CEO