



ASIAN AMERICAN HOTEL OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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Dear Chairman Conyers and Ranking Member Smith:

On behalf of the Asian American Hotel Owners Association ("AAHOA"), it was with great interest that we received the news that H.R. 4080, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to establish a separate nonimmigrant classification for fashion models, is set to be considered in committee this week.

As you may be aware, AAHOA has more than 8,700 members, who own 22,000 hotels across the country. This is almost 40 percent of all hotels nationwide, which are worth \$60 billion in property value.

AAHOA has been following this issue for quite some time, and it had been our understanding that, for various reasons, an ad hoc approach to reforming the guest worker systems in the U.S. would not be possible. This is why we were so happy to learn that there had been movement in the Judiciary committee on this important issue.

We were heartened to learn of this development, and hopeful that it might lead to a full committee mark-up and eventually passage of H.R. 1843, "The Save Our Seasonal and Small Business Act of 2007."

Across the nation, from the runway to the Rodeway Inn, America's economy relies on temporary work visas. Small businesses are particularly susceptible to shortages in adequate temporary labor, as they have smaller staffs from which to draw support during peak season.

If passed, H.R. 1843 will substantially increase the number of H-2B workers by exempting those who have participated in the program in the previous 3 years from the 66,000-person annual cap. Each year, many small business owners—and many of our members—rely on this program to fill seasonal jobs when sufficient U.S. workers are unavailable.

The program has been a great success, each year allowing many businesses to supplement their full time American workforce, thereby remaining competitive. Indeed, this program ultimately functions to preserve jobs for Americans, for without access to an adequate workforce, many businesses would be forced to close down. In this time of recession, this is the last thing our economy needs.

We urge you to take steps now that will provide a lasting solution to our nation's seasonal employment needs. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Fred Schwartz
AAHOA President