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CONTACT: Jessica Soklow
(jsoklow@ahla.com)

AH&LA APPLAUDS ANNOUNCEMENT OF DOL COMPETENCY MODELS

Increased Emphasis on Employee Skill Development Aligns with Association's Training Strategies

Washington, D.C., April 17, 2008 – The American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA) commends Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao and the United States Department of Labor (DOL) following the announcement of the latest industry-based competency models for the hospitality industry. These models are similar to training strategies stressed in materials developed by AH&LA's Educational Institute (EI), and are the latest in a series developed as part of the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative.

The models address priorities as identified by hospitality industry leaders including industry image, workforce recruitment, employee retention, language skills, and so-called "soft-skills." This initiative, administered by DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), was designed to assist the development of skilled workforces within specific industries and allow those workers to receive training that will facilitate their advancement within their field. It was first proposed by President Bush on Labor Day 2003.

"The DOL competency model is beneficial for EI as it aligns with our training material competencies," said Faye T. Gayes, CRDE, CHT, vice president, state relations & educational

programs for EI. “We have been able to provide input into developing these competencies, and in turn, use those competencies as we develop new training materials. AH&LA members and their employees all benefit.”

“We congratulate President Bush and Secretary Chao for continuing to roll out further competency models in this initiative,” said Marlene M. Colucci, AH&LA executive vice president for public policy. “One of the biggest challenges facing the lodging industry today is the lack of a sustainable workforce, and with projections estimating the need for an additional 300,000 workers in the next several years, hoteliers will certainly reap tremendous benefits through the implementation of this program.

“Through this program, the president and the secretary continue to demonstrate their awareness of the need for workforce development throughout a wide cross-section of industries in this country, and we applaud them for their continued leadership on this issue.”

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Serving the hospitality industry for nearly a century, AH&LA is the sole national association representing all sectors and stakeholders in the lodging industry, including individual hotel property members, hotel companies, student and faculty members, and industry suppliers. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., AH&LA provides members with national advocacy on Capitol Hill, public relations and image management, education, research and information, and other value-added services to provide bottom line savings and ensure a positive business climate for the lodging industry. Partner state associations provide local representation and additional cost-saving benefits to members.