



For Immediate Release
July 20, 2020

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HOTELS SUE SF TO PROTECT WORKERS, GUESTS FROM UNSAFE CLEANING ORDINANCE

*Supervisors' "Healthy Buildings" ordinance increases COVID-19 exposure risks,
jeopardizes hotel re-openings and thousands of jobs*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA. – (July 20, 2020) – The Hotel Council of San Francisco, the California Hotel and Lodging Association and the American Hotel & Lodging Association filed a lawsuit today to overturn the County of San Francisco's so-called "Healthy Buildings" ordinance that endangers hotel employees and guests and causes significant economic hardships by forcing many hotels to remain closed and permanently lay off thousands of workers.

The ordinance, approved on July 7 by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors puts hotel employees at greater risk of exposure to COVID-19, will delay those workers' return to work and adds costly and unnecessary cleaning requirements to a single industry while exempting all public buildings such as BART stations, jails, and even the supervisors' own offices.

The lawsuit asks the Superior Court/County of San Francisco to declare the ordinance unlawful and unenforceable.

The hotel associations, on behalf of their members, cite the ordinance's lack of alignment with public health guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the California Department of Public Health and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, risking the health of their employees. The lawsuit outlines the ordinance's overreach and unscientific foundation that:

- Endangers the health of hotel employees by mandating increased contacts with guests.
- Fails to align with widely recognized federal and state infectious disease experts health guidelines for hotels
- Does financial harm to a specific industry that has an outstanding health safety record
- Ignores San Francisco's environmental laws and mandates
- Serves the selfish interests of a union with no consideration of the employee harm it mandates.

"This harmful ordinance left us no option but to defend the safety and well-being of our 25,000 San Francisco employees and our valued hotel guests," said Kevin Carroll, President and CEO of the Hotel Council of San Francisco. "This dangerous ordinance



contradicts the advice of public health experts and would cause enormous economic hardship to our already struggling hotels trying to keep employees on the payroll.”

“California hotels’ livelihoods depend on being clean and safe,” said Lynn S. Mohrfeld, President and CEO of the California Hotel and Lodging Association. “We have an outstanding track record of following the expertise of federal and state health officials to ensure the well-being of our employees and guests.”

“The hotel industry already has launched an industry-wide, enhanced standard of health and safety protocols, called Safe Stay, designed in accordance with the CDC to meet the needs of the current public health crisis and assure our guests and our employees that hotels are safe,” said Chip Rogers, President and CEO of the American Hotel & Lodging Association. “Not only is this ordinance unnecessary and dangerous, but it would force hotels to remain closed, potentially for good, and lay off thousands of our dedicated workers.”

In addition to the health risks, the ordinance will cost San Francisco’s 215 hotels \$220,000 each on average, adding more than \$47 million in annual industry costs, extending hotel closures and extending joblessness of hotel employees, according to an independent analysis of the ordinance’s cleaning mandates. These costs are on top of an estimated \$498,000 that an average 250-room hotel will incur to install the best practices for cleaning and social distancing as recommended by the CDC, the CDPH and hotel associations and major hotel brands.

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