



June 29, 2020

San Francisco Board of Supervisors
One Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Opposing “Healthy Buildings Ordinance”

Dear Supervisors:

On behalf of the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), the sole national association representing all segments of the U.S. lodging industry, including iconic global brands, hotel owners and franchisees, lodging real estate investment trusts (REITs), hotel management companies, independent properties, bed and breakfasts, state hotel associations, and industry suppliers, we thank you for your leadership during this unprecedented public health and economic crisis.

To prepare America’s hotels to safely welcome back guests and employees as the economy reopens, AHLA recently launched “[Safe Stay](#),” an industry-wide, enhanced standard of health and safety protocols. The standards of *Safe Stay* were developed **with the input of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** and under the guidance of an Advisory Council comprised of industry leaders representing all segments of the hotel industry, and in conjunction with public health experts to advance best practices for protecting against the coronavirus.

Four focus areas comprise the standards of *Safe Stay*: employee and guest health, employees’ responsibilities, cleaning and disinfecting products and protocols, and physical distancing. As hotels across the nation begin welcoming guests back to the properties, employees will be trained to implement the heightened safety and cleanliness protocols developed to mitigate the spread of coronavirus. *Safe Stay* represents the top priority for the industry, the health and safety of guests and employees.

As the San Francisco hotel community seeks to rebound from the collapse of demand due to the coronavirus pandemic, ensuring the safety of guests and hotel associates is paramount. Unfortunately, the misguided “Healthy Buildings Ordinance” before the Board of Supervisors goes well beyond any public health guidance and will increase exposure risks for our associates and our guests to COVID-19 and create an incredible strain on business operations.

Therefore, AHLA strongly urges that you oppose this measure so that the health and safety of guests and employees can remain in the hands of public health experts.

The proposed ordinance goes beyond public health guidance in the following areas:

- Requiring the regular cleaning at least every 30 minutes of *dozens* of locations, furniture, fixtures and equipment exponentially increases COVID-19 exposure opportunities between

guests and employees, risks further health impacts due to excessive use of cleaning products and is operationally impossible.

- Cleaning and disinfectant requirements for porous surfaces contradict CDC guidance.¹
- Mandating that employees open non-automatic doors for guests creates further exposure risks due to proximity.
- Daily cleaning of guestrooms is not grounded in public health or industry guidance and creates additional opportunities for COVID-19 exposure between guests and employees. Many jurisdictions have provided guidance or mandated that daily guestroom cleaning must be upon the request of a hotel guest.

And consumers are telling us they don't want the interaction with hotel staff either. A recent poll conducted by Morning Consult reveals that a majority of frequent travelers do NOT want daily room cleaning, and 65% would be uncomfortable with housekeeping entering their room without advance permission.

With hotels facing the worst economic crisis on record, nine times worse than September 11 and lower occupancy than the Great Depression, this ordinance jeopardizes small business hotel owners who could not afford to implement it and keep their doors open. It will force San Francisco hotels to shut down for the remainder of the year, putting many at risk at closing permanently and leading to **35,000** jobs lost and **up to \$800 million in tax revenue loss impacting funding for schools, transportation and other vital government services**. The ripple affect across San Francisco and California would result in hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue lost, impacting important funding for education, transportation, parks, and other vital government services.

We thank you for considering this request and for your continued work on behalf of the residents of San Francisco during this historic public health and economic crisis. We look forward to working with you to rebuild our industry so that we can continue contributing to the success of your state.

Sincerely,



Chip Rogers
President & Chief Executive Officer

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html>