



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As always there is a lot going on with UH&LA. I have started touring the state meeting with local lodging associations to go over changes from the 2011 legislature. There are some important changes to alcohol legislation and to the way we process tax exempt guests. If you can't attend one of these meetings please let me know and I will send you information about the changes.

In the meantime I have just returned from Washington DC where I was able to meet with the Utah Congressional Delegation. I was able to express issues with foreign visitors receiving travel visas, labor department audits, work visas, tourism promotion and lots of other issues. We are lucky to have a generally supportive delegation but it is good to remind them of the issues that are important to hotels. As I continue dialog with their offices I hope that as properties you will let me know of issues that I should address, you are the experts on the industry.

In light of the recent events in Japan I wanted to let you know about a new task force for the Department of Homeland Security. We are developing a plan for the State of Utah in the event a large disaster should occur which displaces large amounts of the population. Hotels will be central to the housing strategy in a serious disaster. I will have more information for you as we move forward and may request additional information from you in order to develop the best possible plan.

UH&LA is moving forward and I am excited about all that we are able to offer to our members. Please let me know if I can help you in any way.

Michael Johnson
Executive Director
Utah Hotel & Lodging Association

POST LEGISLATIVE TOUR:

The 2011 Utah legislative session has finally come to an end. Through your support and efforts UH&LA was able to influence senators and house representatives to pass bills that will positively affect the hospitality industry.

This Legislative session we were active in working on several pieces of legislation that directly impact lodging entities. We had a very successful session and were able to make improvements in the laws that regulate our industry.

These developments include changes in the liquor laws related to room service, tax law changes and that improve the way you process tax exempt guests and other important updates.

To keep you informed on these bills UH&LA will be visiting the different regions in Utah to update you on the legislative changes and issues that affect the industry.

Please take the time to attend the nearest location to remain updated on the new laws and how they will affect your business.

To find the closest location and time please see the next page.



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National Bills on the Hill:

UH&LA recently attended the American Hotel & Lodging Association Legislative Action Summit to keep its members informed on the national issues that affect the hospitality industry in Utah. UH&LA provided a voice for the hotel and lodging industry in Utah at Washington D.C.

Here is a list of the bills and topics that were discussed that AH&LA is following:

ONLINE HOTEL BOOKING TAX: AH&LA strongly opposes the draft legislation (referred to as the “Internet Travel Tax Fairness Act” or ITTFA) that would create a special tax preference for online travel companies, while banning hotels from the same tax category, thereby creating two different tax treatments for the same transaction. ITTFA would subject hotels nationwide to significant tax increases.

If OTC’s are exempted from paying tax at the retail rate, state and local jurisdictions will look to hotels to make up the difference in lost revenue. Although hotels pay all the taxes they owe and have not had their actions questioned, they and their employees will be the ultimate victims of this legislation. **UH&LA strongly opposes the ITTFA**

LABOR ISSUES FOR 2011: On March 10, 2009 the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) was reintroduced in the 111th Congress. As A result of AH&LA and our coalition partners efforts, the elimination of a secret ballot was deemed “toxic” and the legislation is considered dead. Due to EFCA’s failure at the legislative level, organized labor is shifting its strategies to incorporate aggressive regulatory initiatives. AH&LA remains strongly opposed to EFCA and regulatory back door attempts to impose it in wake of EFCA’s defeat. **UH&LA opposes EFCA and organized labor shifts.**

TRAVEL AND TOURISM: Travel and tourism is one of America’s largest industries and one of America’s largest employers. In 2010 the “Travel Protection Act” was passed and signed into law. The Law created the Corporation for Travel Promotion, which will help attract millions of new international visitors, explain U.S. security policies, and promote the United States as a premier travel destination. AH&LA is monitoring this act to help bolster the industry. It is vital that Congress not divert money from this low-cost/high-return initiative. Diverting money could cost jobs, tax dollars, and hurt the United States’ ability to attract lucrative international visitors. **UH&LA supports the Travel Protection Act.**

UH&LA Post Legislation Tour Dates

UH&LA will visit the following areas:

Salt Lake April 7th
Time: 12 pm
Where: Downtown Marriot

Cedar City April 13th
Time: 12:00 pm
Where: TBA

St. George: April 14th
Time: 11:00 am
Where: La Quinta

Springdale: April 14th
Time: 2 pm
Where: The town offices on Lion Blvd.