



The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers
Ranking Member, House Judiciary Committee
336 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: House Judiciary Markup for The ADA Education and Reform Act (H.R. 620)

September 6, 2017

Dear Chairman Goodlatte and Ranking Member Conyers:

I am writing on behalf of the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA). As you may know, AAHOA represents more than 16,000 small business owners nationwide. Our members own nearly one in every two hotels in the United States and employ over 600,000 workers, accounting for nearly \$10 billion in annual payroll. As small business owners, our members consistently contribute to the economy through job creation, tourism promotion, real estate development, and community investment.

On behalf of the thousands of hoteliers who strive to offer an accessible and welcoming environment to individuals with disabilities, we express our support for H.R. 620, "The ADA Education and Reform Act." The House Judiciary Committee is holding a markup on **Thursday, September 7th at 10 am**, and we strongly urge you to attend and oppose any amendments that would weaken this critical legislation.

Predatory litigation has crippled the hospitality community for nearly two decades. In the last two years alone, there were over 15,000 ADA Title III lawsuits issued against places of public accommodation.¹ In these cases, unscrupulous attorneys and vexatious litigants partner to file numerous "drive-by" lawsuits against places of public accommodations to extort quick settlements. Without the financial resources or legal acumen to verify the veracity of complainants, American small business owners continue to fall victim to this scheme, providing monetary settlements that consist principally of attorney's fees.

AAHOA members across the country regard the ADA as a critical civil rights measure and aim to provide fully accessible facilities and amenities to all guests. The intent of the ADA has always been to prohibit discrimination and to ensure all Americans have equal opportunities. However, it is clear that changes must be implemented to discourage duplicitous lawyers from targeting small business owners in an effort to make a quick buck.

H.R. 620 recognizes that alleged ADA access violations could be addressed more effectively by providing a "notice and cure" provision. This simple, common-sense approach would allow a business to actively identify and correct alleged ADA violations before engaging in a lengthy and costly litigation and settlement process. By removing the current perverse incentives to merely seek payment of legal fees, the emphasis can once again be placed on removing barriers and improving access. We strongly encourage you and fellow members of the Judiciary Committee to favorably report the bill as soon as possible.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. If you have any additional questions, please reach out to Jordan Heiliczzer, Director of Government Affairs for AAHOA, at Jordan@aahoa.com or 202-945-4955.

Respectfully,

Chip Rogers
President and CEO, AAHOA

¹ Vu, Minh, Kristina M. Launey, and Susan Ryan. "ADA Title III Lawsuits Continue to Rise: 8% Increase in 2015." *ADA Title III News and Insights*. Seyfarth Shaw LLP, 15 Jan. 2016. Web.