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NEWS

Independent lodging group to counter chains

March 18, 2011

By William Ehart

The Independent Lodging Industry Association was launched March 8 to represent the interests of lodging owners who are not part of larger hotel chains.

"Every year, laws are passed that impact the lodging industry," the group said in a statement. "Chain hotels and corporate franchises have dominated the policymaking process and independently owned hotels currently do not have a seat at the table."

The Sacramento, Calif.-based group says it has 1,000 members, including owners of hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, franchise hotels and resorts. Its executive director is Bobbie Singh-Allen. The association says it was founded by the California Lodging Industry Association, which represents independent owners in that state.

Recent proposed legislation has put independent owners at odds with major corporations, ILIA spokesman Tim Rosales told *CEO Update*.

Legislation in Florida that would increase taxes on travel agency bookings harms smaller operators because they depend on online travel agencies, he said. Larger chains usually have internal booking systems and web sites.

The ILIA plans to open an office in Washington, D.C., Rosales said.

Joseph McInerney, president and CEO of the rival American Hotel & Lodging Association, suggested the new group was funded by online travel agents.

"We believe that our association really represents all of the true interests of the hotel industry," he said.

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