



NC Restaurant
& Lodging Association



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**A Powerful New Solution to Help End Human Trafficking
is Now Free for North Carolina Hotels**

RALEIGH, North Carolina – The North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association (NCRLA) announces a new partnership with the nonprofit, Businesses Ending Slavery & Trafficking (BEST), to provide free human trafficking training for NCRLA hotel members and their employees. BEST's *Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training explains human trafficking in relation to the hotel industry, how employees can identify the warning signs, and how to report human trafficking incidents to law enforcement. By partnering with BEST to offer this free training, NCRLA is offering a powerful new solution for preventing human trafficking in North Carolina hotels.

Recognizing the hotel industry's proximity to the activities of human trafficking, Lynn Minges, President & CEO of NCRLA, sought the expertise of BEST to help protect North Carolina's hoteliers and ensure the safety of their guests.

"We have a responsibility to our members and to the communities we serve to be educated about the serious issue of human trafficking," said Minges. "We have a unique opportunity to have a significant impact tackling this humanitarian crisis if we equip our employees to recognize and report any suspected trafficking activity."

Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery that occurs in every state, including North Carolina. In 2017, there were 221 cases of human trafficking reported in North Carolina to the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

Congressman Richard Hudson, who has worked to develop legislation to help prevent human trafficking, said, “As Representative of North Carolina’s eighth district, I helped lead landmark, bipartisan legislation to crackdown on human trafficking and to assist victims. This legislation is working, but there’s still much more work to do. I commend the NC Restaurant and Lodging Association for working to confront the scourge of human trafficking in our community and partnering with BEST.”

BEST’s *Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training is sponsored by the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) and was developed specifically for employees in the hospitality industry. Researchers at the University of Washington evaluated BEST’s hotel training and found trained hotel employees were more comfortable coming forward to report human trafficking incidents to their managers. The researchers found that before taking BEST’s in-person training, participants reported eight percent of the time, but after BEST’s training, reporting increased to 44 percent. The researchers also learned that 96 percent of hotel employee participants believe the training made their hotel safer.

“It’s extremely important for hotels to invest in the time it takes to train their staff in human trafficking awareness so employees know how to recognize the warning signs of human trafficking and they can bring potential trafficking incidents to the attention of their managers,” explains Mar Brettmann, Executive Director for Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking. “Our training clearly explains what to watch for in hotels, and it has been proven to increase the reporting of human trafficking.”

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About North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association (NCRLA)

NCRLA is the uniting force of the North Carolina hospitality industry. The NCRLA brings together restaurant and lodging establishments and partners who support these industries. The association impacts legislation and policies, cultivates relationships and provides valuable resources to help members run their business. To learn more, www.ncrla.org.

About Businesses Ending Slavery & Trafficking (BEST)

Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking (BEST) is a Seattle-based nonprofit organization with the mission to align and equip leaders to use the power of business to prevent human trafficking. BEST is the first organization in the country dedicated entirely to working with businesses to disrupt human trafficking. BEST has provided consultation and training to hundreds of businesses on how to prevent human trafficking, and they have trained thousands of hotel employees in how to protect their hotel from human trafficking. For more information, visit www.bestalliance.org.