

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 8, 2019

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## **New Partnership is Expanding Human Trafficking Prevention for Hotels**

**Harrisburg, PA** (May 8, 2019) – The **Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association** ([PRLA](#)) today announced a new partnership with the Seattle-based nonprofit, **Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking** ([BEST](#)) to make human trafficking awareness training available to all PRLA’s hotel members and their staffs, free of charge. BEST provides expertise in human trafficking prevention, and BEST’s *Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training, sponsored by AAHOA, helps hotel employees learn the indicators of human trafficking and how to safely report it to law enforcement. By partnering with BEST to offer this valuable training, the PRLA is helping their member hotels and motels learn how to avert human trafficking at their properties.

Human trafficking networks often rely on legitimate businesses to sustain their operations and infrastructure. Given the transient nature of the hotel industry, with its service-focused culture that respects guest privacy, hotels are often an ideal environment for human traffickers. Therefore, it is essential that hotel employees, who have direct contact with guests, are trained in what to look for—so they can recognize the signs of human trafficking.

“There is no easy fix to the problem of human trafficking, but combatting this crime starts with awareness,” says Mar Brettmann, executive director for BEST. “That’s why our new partnership with PRLA is so important. They are making our human trafficking awareness training free to all their hospitality members and staffs. We know that educating employees about the warning signs of human trafficking can help witnesses know when to report suspicious behavior, and this helps recover more human trafficking victims.”

BEST’s *Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training for hotel employees is a 30-minute, online, video-based training. The training is available in English or Spanish, and it has been proven to increase hotel employee reporting. Researchers from the University of Washington evaluated BEST’s hotel training and found trained employees were more likely to come forward to report human trafficking incidents to their managers. Researchers also learned 96 percent of hotel employee participants believe the training made their hotel safer.

This new partnership will give more hospitality property owners and managers across the Commonwealth the opportunity to implement BEST's valuable anti-trafficking training at no cost to hotels. PRLA is the most recent hotel association to adopt BEST's human trafficking prevention training, joining a growing list of large hotel associations utilizing the program, including; Texas Hotel and Lodging Association (THLA), California Hotel and Lodging Association (CHLA), Washington Hospitality Association, North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association (NCRLA), Hotel Association of New York City (HANYC), and Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA).

"Everyone has a role in fighting human trafficking. Our industry is well-positioned to recognize and report it, so we want to ensure our members have access to the right training so they know what to look for. We chose to partner with BEST because BEST offers outstanding online training that will equip our members and their employees to take action when they suspect a problem," said John Longstreet, PRLA president & CEO.

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#### **About Businesses Ending Slavery and 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. For more information visit [www.bestalliance.org](http://www.bestalliance.org).

#### **About PRLA**

Founded in 1937, the Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association strives to promote, protect, educate, and improve the hospitality and tourism industries in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. PRLA conveys the unified voice of the hospitality and tourism industries to the Commonwealth's citizenry and elected officials. Its members play an integral role in the economic growth of the Commonwealth.