



AAHOA Files Amicus Brief with U.S. Supreme Court to Defend Hoteliers' Fourth Amendment Rights

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ATLANTA, Feb. 3, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The Asian American Hotel Owners Association filed an amicus curiae brief with the United States Supreme Court in the case of *City of Los Angeles v. Patel*, to defend the constitutional rights of hoteliers against illegal searches by law enforcement officers.

A group of hotel owners, including at least six AAHOA members, came together to challenge Section 41.49 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code which permits police officers to search hotel guest registries on demand and without a warrant. Some officers viewed this law as a license to continually harass hotel operators and their guests. The most egregious examples included review of registries during the busiest hours of operation, demands of master keys and awakening guests in the middle of the night to verify documentation.

In 2013, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with the hoteliers and determined the ordinance to be unconstitutional. The city of Los Angeles subsequently appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court will hear oral arguments on March 3, 2015.

"As the largest hotel owners association in the world and as a representative of several of the plaintiffs in the original action, AAHOA has a compelling interest in the outcome of the case. AAHOA's amicus brief shares the association's unique perspective into the importance of privacy rights for hoteliers and we believe it will prove persuasive in shaping the Court's decision." AAHOA Chairman Pratik Patel said.

"AAHOA strongly supports law enforcement officials and we depend on them to keep our guests, families and businesses safe and secure. We also believe that the opportunity for judicial review of requests for business records will allow for a reasonable balance between promoting public safety and ensuring the right to privacy," Patel continued.

In addition to AAHOA's efforts, other organizations submitting briefs to Court supporting the hoteliers' position include: the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Google Inc., the Cato Institute, the Rutherford Institute, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the Institute for Justice, professors Adam Lamparello and Charles MacLean of Indian Tech Law School, the Electronic Privacy Information Center, Gun Owners of America, Inc., the U.S. Justice Foundation, the Lincoln Institute for Research and Education, the Abraham Lincoln Foundation, the Downsize DC Foundation, Downsize DC.org, the Conservative Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the Policy Analysis Center.

Founded in 1989, AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world, with over 14,000 small business owner-members. AAHOA members own more than 20,000 properties amounting to more than 40 percent of all hotels in the United States and employ nearly 600,000 workers, accounting for over \$9.4 billion in payroll annually.