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March 4, 2013

The Honorable Virginia Foxx  
2350 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Foxx:

On behalf of the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA) and our 10,000 members nationwide, I am writing to express our support of H.R.803, the Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills (SKILLS) Act.

In 2011, hospitality generated \$1.9 trillion in total economic activity, supported 14.4 million jobs, and represented 2.7% of U.S. GDP. The leisure and hospitality sector is the fifth largest employer in the United States and is poised to add between 2.1 million and 3.3 million jobs over the next 10 years.

Lodging serves as a top 10 industry in 48 out of 50 states providing employment, investment, and opportunity. We are proud to be leading economic recovery with 12 consecutive quarters of growth and providing job creation in every region of the country.

Because of this growth, hoteliers spend considerable time, money and resources attempting to fill the jobs they are creating. Despite this substantial investment and continued high unemployment, they are unable to fill all of those jobs.

The lodging industry appreciates your efforts to reform and modernize federal workforce development programs so that more Americans can obtain the skills they need to obtain employment.

Workforce development programs were created to assist Americans secure jobs, not to create a Byzantine maze of confusing and redundant bureaucracies to frustrate the unemployed and employers alike. The SKILLS Act would consolidate 35 existing federal employment and training programs into a single Workforce Investment Fund (WIF).

The new WIF would serve as a single source of support for workers, employers, and job seekers. In order to ensure that workforce development decisions provide the maximum benefit to job seekers, two-thirds of workforce board members would be job creators that would ensure programs focus on training for in-demand occupations such as lodging.

On behalf of America's lodging industry, thank you very much for your efforts. We urge your colleagues to support the SKILLS Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marlene M. Colucci".

Marlene Colucci  
Executive Vice President for Public Policy