VACCINATIONS

In a nationwide effort - the American Hotel and Lodging Association is partnering with local Hospitality organizations to lobby the National Governor's Association, Governors of all 50 states, and the CDC to have hospitality workers classified along with other essential workers to become eligible for COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible.

Throughout the pandemic, hotel properties have been utilized due to their close proximity to critical infrastructure including airports and hospitals - housing medical workers and other First Responders for testing centers and now vaccine distribution.

Please CLICK HERE to learn more about how you can help hospitality workers be prioritized in vaccine distribution plans.

DEMINGS

The CFHLA Governmental Affairs Committee met on Wednesday, February 10th at Universal CityWalk Orlando (Thank you, Melanie Becker and John McReynolds!) with Orange County Mayor Jerry Demings. Members of the committee heard from Mayor Demings about the progress of vaccinations in Orange County, and that the Florida Department of Health in Orange County was prepared with the capacity to administer more vaccines to the public as they became available. He also provided the committee with updates on the paused Orange
County Transportation Sales Tax Initiative, SunRail funding, and the status of the Orange County Convention Center projects.

Orange County Mayor Jerry Demings

CFHLA Board Member and Governmental Affairs Committee Chair Jon McGavin of Grande Lakes Orlando, Orange County Mayor Jerry Demings, and CFHLA Board Chairman Jesse Martinez of the Alfond Inn at Rollins

The next Governmental Affairs Committee is scheduled to occur on Wednesday, April 14th at the Mall at Millenia (Thank you, Steven Jamieson!).

DR. PINO
During the 2021 CFHLA STR Membership Luncheon Thursday, February 18th, Dr. Raul Pino and the Florida Department of Health in Orange County were honored as the 2020 CFHLA Public Servant of the Year for their inspiring leadership throughout a challenging year. Dr. Pino was selected unanimously by the Governmental Affairs Committee to be honored for his collaboration with Orange County and Central Florida's local elected, community, and business leaders in guiding the region with sensible and safe opening and re-opening procedures.

Upon accepting the award from CFHLA PAC/PC Board Chairman Jay Leonard and CFHLA Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Jon McGavin, Dr. Pino took a moment to acknowledge Mayor Demings and Orange County Staff as well as the employees in his department - who have worked tirelessly without breaks since the State of Emergency was put in place in March of 2020.

CFHLA was proud to honor Dr. Raul Pino and the Florida Department of Health in Orange County at the annual CFHLA STR Membership Luncheon.
CFHLA 2020 Public Servant of the Year, Dr. Raul Pino of the Florida Department of Health in Orange County, CFHLA Board Member and CFHLA PAC/PC Boards Chairman Jay Leonard of the Wyndham/Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Disney Springs Resort Area, and CFHLA Board Member and Governmental Affairs Committee Chair Jon McGavin of Grande Lakes Orlando

Orange County Commissioner, District 3 Mayra Uribe and City of Orlando Commissioner District 3 Robert Stuart
PEP RALLY

On Wednesday, February 24 CFHLA produced a 2021 Legislative Session Pep Rally to gather Members of the Board, PAC/PC Boards and the Allied Relations Council Board with industry leaders and members of the Florida Legislature prior to the start of the 2021 Legislative Session. New CFHLA President and CEO Robert Agrusa offered the opening remarks. Additionally, Robert Stuart, Jr. and Chris Carmody presented a 2021 Legislative Preview focused on the issues facing the hospitality and tourism industries in 2021. Members were also joined by State Senator Jason Brodeur, State Representative
Kristen Arrington, and State Representative Rene Plasencia. The program concluded with a keynote address from VISIT FLORIDA President/CEO - Dana Young, where she shared upcoming marketing campaigns for in-state, drive, and west-coast target markets. She also discussed the 2021 Legislative Session priorities including long-term continuation of the VISIT FLORIDA enabling statute and level funding from the state.

The 2021 Legislative Session will kick off on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 and is set to conclude on April 30, 2021.

CFHLA is tracking a number of issues going into the legislative session, including bills that will impact the future of VISIT FLORIDA, the regulation of shared lodging platforms, and much more. In the Senate and House, identical bills - SB 778 and HB 3645 were filed to provide an additional 1-time appropriation of $2 million to assist in an in-state tourism campaign.
In the Senate, SB 522 has been filed which will preempt regulations of shared lodging platforms to the State. If the bill passes, local governments will also not be able to pass any ordinances or laws that would place regulations specifically applied to vacation rental or shared lodging properties not already established by the State. HB 219, an identical bill, has been filed in the House, and both bills have passed favorably through their first committees.

Additionally, the legislature is considering bills to fully fund the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund, pass COVID-19 Liability Protections to protect businesses from frivolous COVID-related lawsuits, and a number of other issues CFHLA will be tracking over the next two months.

LINKS

Vacation Rentals Regulation Bill Gets Senate Panel Nod
Florida tourist count in 2020 falls to lowest number since 2010
Visit Orlando unveils $2.2 million tourism marketing campaign