



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **WILL TOURISM INDUSTRY JOBS SUPPORT FAMILIES?**

*LUDLOW, GARCETTI HEAR INDUSTRY ANALYSIS, DEMAND FAIR TREATMENT OF ROOM ATTENDANTS*

Councilmembers Eric Garcetti and Martin Ludlow heard testimony on the state of the tourism industry in Los Angeles this morning, concluding with a strong statement of support for proposed state legislation that would enforce safe working conditions for the 50,000 room attendants working in California hotels. Before a joint session of the Conventions and Business Enterprise Committee and the Housing, Community and Economic Development Committee, hotel workers, hotel operators, and industry experts addressed the industry's health.

"The testimony of hotel workers today caused me to have great concern about working conditions in the industry," said Councilmember Martin Ludlow, chair of the Conventions, Tourism, Entertainment Industry and Business Enterprise Committee. "My concern compels me to support Assembly Bill 606, the Humane Treatment of Hotel Room Attendants Act of 2004." AB606, sponsored by Speaker of the Assembly Fabian Nunez (D-Los Angeles), would step up enforcement of break laws for room attendants, who are often forced to work through their legally mandated breaks because of onerous room quotas. The bill would require employers to pay attendants three times their regular hourly rates of pay for each workday that a rest period was not provided.

"It's great to hear that the tourism industry in Los Angeles is on the rebound. Thousands more visitors to Los Angeles this year will take away great memories and souvenirs," said Councilmember Garcetti, chair of the Housing, Community and Economic Development Committee. "And they will leave behind the tourism dollars that support good jobs, healthy families and strong neighborhoods. The whole tourism industry should know that its workforce are our neighbors, families and friends, and that's why my colleagues and I, along with the entire city, will be watching this summer's hotel industry labor negotiations very carefully."

"After three years of punishing statistics, the Los Angeles visitor economy is seeing a strong rebound at every measurable level," said Michael Collins, Vice-President of LA, Inc., the regional convention and visitors bureau. "Occupancies are up. Rates are higher. Revenue per available room is up, and so are domestic and international arrivals."

*(continued)*

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# NEWS

FROM THE OFFICES OF COUNCILMEMBERS

MARTIN LUDLOW

ERIC GARCETTI



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Much of the testimony heard was from workers in Los Angeles’s tourism industry and members of Local 11 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union, currently negotiating a master contract with an employers’ council comprising nine hotels.

“They work room attendants like burros,” said Aida Marmol, a room attendant at the Westin Bonaventure hotel. “It doesn’t matter if a guest wants to leave his sheets on the bed to conserve water and energy – if there’s one hair on the linens, we can get fired. We change soiled mattress pads and clean the floor on our knees. We have a list of thirty-two things to check off before a bathroom is clean. And all this fifteen times a day—that’s our quota.”

“The message I want to get across to the employers today is this,” said Maria Elena Durazo, President of Local 11, who also testified. “Stop threatening workers with letters about lockouts and come back to the negotiating table. A good contract will be good for the industry and good for Los Angeles.”

Members of each committee in the joint hearing voted for a city resolution supporting AB606. The resolution will presently come before the full City Council.

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