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THE ILLINOIS HOTEL & LODGING ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT OF MARC GORDON, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CHICAGO (February 2018) – The Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association (IHLA) announces today the retirement of President and CEO, Marc Gordon, at the end of 2018. Gordon joined IHLA in 1997 and under his leadership, the Association has grown significantly in annual revenues, financial reserves, and number of programs and benefits offered to members.

“After 21 years as CEO, I feel very proud of what we have accomplished and what I have contributed to the growth and success of our organization. I am excited to see what 2018 brings and how my successor will take the Association to the next level,” said Gordon, when asked about his retirement and the future of IHLA. “I will do everything I can in this last year to make IHLA bigger and better, and to ensure a smooth and successful transition.”

Gordon is a 44+ year veteran of the hospitality industry. His current role as President and CEO of IHLA has him overseeing staff in both Chicago and Springfield who work to promote, protect, educate, and serve the Association’s members and constituencies. During his 21-year tenure, Gordon has accomplished a variety of Association expansions and has overseen the implementation of an array of industry events and recognitions. Some of these include the expansion of the Stars of the Industry program from one small recognition event in Downtown Chicago only honoring a few hotel people in the area to three statewide recognition luncheons annually attracting over 1500 industry participants from 125 Illinois hotels, the development of the StayGreen program to recognize Illinois’ environmentally friendly hotels, and the exponential growth of the Educational Foundation’s Scholarship Fund.

“Over the last 20 years, Marc Gordon has become an institution in Illinois,” says Robert Habeeb, President and CEO of Maverick Hotels & Restaurants and Past IHLA Chairman. “He is widely respected nationwide in the hotel industry, as well as at every level of government in the state. He has been a remarkable leader and will be difficult to replace.”

In addition to his work with the Association, Gordon served as the Chairman of Visit Illinois from 2000 to 2002 and President of the International Society of Hotel Association Executives in 2005. He was also recently appointed by the Governor to the Bicentennial Commission which will oversee the celebration of Illinois’ 200th Birthday in 2018. Gordon received the DePaul University School of Hospitality Leadership Industry Recognition Award in 2013, was recognized as the 2006 Alumnus of the Year by Michigan State University’s School of Hospitality Business and was inducted into the Michigan State University School of Hospitality Business Alumni Hall of Fame in 2010.

“A ‘Search Committee’ comprised of IHLA Officers and past Chairs has been established. This committee has the dubious task of selecting a President over the coming months,” says Thomas Robertson, 2018 IHLA Chairman of the Board and General Manager of Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile. “Marc is certainly a tough act to follow. I have had the pleasure of working with Marc over the past decade with his ever present vigilance for our industry. While we welcome the transitional challenges ahead, we wish Marc all the very best in his future endeavors.”

About IHLA

The Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association (IHLA) is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(6) trade association that represents the lodging industry in Illinois. IHLA members consist of over 500 hotels and their employees throughout the state as well as related industry partners and suppliers. IHLA provides significant benefits to its members by advocating the industry’s position on political issues, educating through quality, relevant seminars and webinars, providing promotional exposure and access to current industry news, resources, and contacts through IHLA’s website, marketing initiatives, member programs, and networking events, and recognizing hotel employees for their outstanding accomplishments, service, and leadership in the Illinois hospitality and lodging industry.