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## **New Collaboration Strengthens Arizona's Travel & Tourism Industry**

The Southern Arizona Lodging and Resort Association Teams with the Arizona Lodging & Tourism Association

(Tucson, AZ) The Southern Arizona Lodging and Tourism Association (SALARA) and the Arizona Lodging & Tourism Association (AzLTA) are forming a new collaboration to enhance the business operating climate for hotels, resorts, bed and breakfasts, sports teams, airlines, airports, tourism attractions, Convention and Visitors Bureaus and many other businesses serving the travel and tourism industry. Working together the two associations will convene a broader cross-section of the commercial sector in highlighting its vital role as an economic engine for Arizona.

"Tourism is now one of the world's largest industries and one of its fastest growing economic sectors, demanding we align and work cohesively in support of a strong operating environment conducive to important visitor experiences," said Kim Sabow, President & CEO of the AzLTA. "An AzLTA-SALARA synergy supports the future of travel and tourism, Arizona's number one export industry."

The tourism sector, particularly hotels, play a vital role in attracting foreign investment, as well as acting as a stimulus for the development of ancillary businesses catering to tourists. One in nine jobs in the U.S. is impacted either directly or indirectly by travel and tourism according to the U.S. Travel Association.

"The money spent by visitors supports jobs and generates tax revenue important to communities across Southern Arizona, as well as statewide," said Charles Wetegrove, Immediate Past Chair of SALARA. "With AzLTA, we can better share the important facts about our industry with policy leaders from our city and town councils to elected leaders at the State Capitol and to our Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. SALARA is very excited to elevate the voice of Southern Arizona through this new collaboration."

As part of the agreement, AzLTA will assume management of SALARA to strengthen the membership experience for Southern Arizona members and provide a holistic communications and engagement platform for the broader hospitality industry across the region.

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#### Additional information:

Tourism is the number one export industry in Arizona. 43 million people visited Arizona in 2016 who collectively spent \$21.2 billion in the state according to the most recent data from the Arizona Office of Tourism. The \$3.09 billion in 2016 tax revenue equals an annual tax savings of \$1,186 for every Arizona household.

#### About AzLTA:

The Arizona Lodging & Tourism Association (AzLTA) is the leading public policy advocate for Arizona's Lodging and Tourism Industries. Representing more than 40,000 guest rooms statewide and members, including hotels, resorts, attractions, destination marketing organizations, B&B's and related industry partners, AzLTA delivers on its mission to advocate, collaborate and educate on the sectors' interests. For additional information, please contact the Arizona Lodging and Tourism Association at 602-604-0729 or visit [www.azlta.com](http://www.azlta.com).

#### About SALARA:

SALARA is southern Arizona's only membership organization focused on the education and advocacy needs specific to the hotel and resort industry, providing a unified voice on issues that impact our businesses and employees. SALARA's mission is to create and sustain an environment which enhances member & industry success. Visit [www.salara.org](http://www.salara.org).