

NATIONAL CENTER *on* SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

EXPOSING THE SEAMLESS CONNECTION BETWEEN ALL FORMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

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*Defending human dignity.
Confronting sexual exploitation.*

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October 14, 2015

Adam Aron
Chief Executive Officer and President
Starwood Hotels
1111 Westchester Avenue
White Plains, NY 10604

Dear Mr. Aron:

We are writing to you to express concern regarding the distribution of hardcore, possibly obscene pornography in your hotels and ask you to stop distributing such material. We ask you to do this as a matter of conscience, to avoid sexual exploitation as a means of profit. We also ask you to consider that you may be violating U.S. law, 18 U.S. Code Section 1468, which prohibits distribution of obscene matter by means of cable television or subscription services on television.

As you may be aware, Marriott, Hilton Worldwide, Omni, Drury, Ritz Carlton and, this week, Hyatt made a decisions to prohibit all pornography from all their branded or managed hotels.

All children, women, and men have a natural human dignity and thus a right to live in a decent society. Pornography and all sexual exploitation are degrading, dehumanizing, exploitive, and a violation of this right. We exist to make society aware of the many harms of pornography and other forms of sexual exploitation; to equip individuals and families to overcome or protect against those harms, and to advocate that all laws defending the right to be free from pornography are vigorously enforced.

Not only does pornography exploit, degrade and dehumanize the people in the films and photos, but it exploits, degrades and dehumanizes the people exposed to it, teaching them to view others as merely objects for selfish pleasure.

Our nation is now suffering a public health crisis from the widespread distribution of pornography and Starwood bears a measure of responsibility for that harm.

Sexual violence against women, including rape, and sexual harassment of women are directly tied to the consumption of pornography. Adults, and

even children, are developing life-long addictions to pornography. Pornography is a destructive force in marriage and research even demonstrates that it kills a desire to marry. There is increased demand for child pornography among many adult-porn users who find that they are no longer excited by adult images, and pornography is a contributing factor in the increased demand for prostitution and for sex-trafficked women and children in the U.S.

A wealth of peer-reviewed research demonstrates the many other harms of pornography. We maintain a database of such studies at PornHarmsResearch.com.

We also have many testimonials from people formerly caught up in the pornography industry, of being exploited, given illicit drugs, coerced to perform objectionable acts, and therefore sexually trafficked in violation of the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

It may be easy to detach from the issue and consider pornography as a mere profitable part of modern life—but only by avoiding common sense. We at NCOSE have dedicated countless hours to the promotion of awareness to its many devastating harms and thus we urge Starwood to discontinue promoting pornography.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with your representatives at your headquarters to discuss this matter at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Patrick A. Trueman
President & CEO

Dawn Hawkins
Executive Director

cc: Helen Horsham-Bertels
Senior Director, Consumer Affairs

Phil McAveety
Executive Vice President and Chief Brand Officer

Steve Williams
Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer