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CORPORATE HOUSING EXPERIENCES BOOST WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

Corporate housing providers help cities meet the needs of large scale events, partnering with other lodging sectors to serve thousands of travelers. Members of the Corporate Housing Providers Association (CHPA) have experienced increased sales and occupancy thanks to the presidential national conventions hosted in Denver, Colorado and Saint Paul, Minnesota. With citywide events, there is often a lack of hotels rooms and thousands of people expected to attend the conventions; corporate housing has answered the call for accommodations. Organizers expect attendance for the Democratic National Convention August 25 - 28 in Denver to reach at least 50,000. The number includes politicians, media and delegates from across the United States.

"This opportunity has allowed the corporate housing industry to connect with other people and organizations that it would not normally connect with," said Kimberly Smith, AvenueWest and a member of the CHPA Board of Directors. "The event brought many new clients to our business that could potentially turn into repeat clients and bring new corporate accounts." While large events like this normally bring out inexperienced entrepreneurs who call themselves corporate housing providers, Smith stresses the importance of using a qualified corporate housing provider, such as a member of CHPA, to ensure professionalism, ethical standards and a quality experience.

More than 45,000 people are expected to attend the 4-day Republican National Convention in St. Paul September 1 - 4. Local corporate housing providers have been booking accommodations for months in anticipation of the event. Most convention attendees want to stay in a place that is more comfortable and more like home instead of a hotel. Corporate housing is typically larger than a standard hotel room and is similar to a furnished apartment. The accommodations have all of the necessities a guest would have at home, including comfortable furniture and housewares.

"We have definitely seen an increase in demand for corporate apartments due to the Republican National Convention being in the St. Paul this year. Not only have we taken many calls from travelers that traditionally choose a hotel option, we have also assisted many of our current corporate clients with short term stays over that week in September," comments Jen Claude, Marriott ExecuStay. Claude also mentions the extra people in town have resulted in early reservations. "We also experienced increased bookings in August as our clients secured apartments sooner in anticipation of limited availability over this time period."

After consecutive years of profits and growth, the \$2.95 billion industry has proceeded with caution this year as similar industries have struggled with the country's economic downturn. Industry experts are tentatively optimistic, using the conventions to promote their presence in the marketplace.

"These conventions are opportunities for corporate housing providers to increase their sales and brand, while offering customers a great product. Large events like this always bring a large number of people who need places to stay and illustrate the flexibility of corporate housing worldwide," said Ned Scharpf, Corporate Apartment Specialists and CHPA President. "We'll be looking forward to similar opportunities in the future, including the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver."

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About CHPA

The Corporate Housing Providers Association (CHPA) is the only trade association dedicated to the corporate housing industry. The Association offers networking, educational and informational opportunities to providers and partners worldwide. For more details and membership information, please go to www.chpaonline.org.