



## Stop Online Booking Scams Act

**Congressional Bill Numbers:** S. 2229 and H.R. 3956

### Why this matters to you:

- Online booking scams are impacting our ability to conduct business.
- Our industry needs additional protection from the estimated 15 million fraudulent bookings caused by these scams.
- Attendees must be educated so they don't fall prey to these scams.

**Praise for co-sponsors:** Check to see if your legislators are among the co-sponsors we praise for support of S. 2229 and H.R. 3956. Better yet, [reach out to them in writing](#) (and [let us know](#) when you do)!

- S. 2229 Sponsor: Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT)
- Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME)
- Sen. Deb Fischer (R-NE)
- Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS)
- Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)
- Sen. Jacky Rosen (D-NV)
- Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)
- H.R. 3956 Sponsor: Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT)
- [26 co-sponsors to H.R. 3956](#)

**Our Call to Action:** We urge Congress to sign on S. 2229 and H.R. 3956 to prohibit third-party hotel-booking websites from marketing, or selling reservations for, a hotel room if the booking site states or implies that it is affiliated with the hotel owner or operator when it is not.

**Overview:** Upwards of 15 million fraudulent bookings are caused by these scams, resulting in more than \$1.3 billion in lost revenue for hotels and money from consumers. Senator Daines' office, the Federal Trade Commission and the American Hotel & Lodging Association have worked together to craft this legislation. IAEE along with the Events Industry Council have worked with AH&LA to ensure that our issues and concerns have been added to the bill's language.

**Our message:** The ability to conduct business, in exhibit halls, is vital to the health of our country and is a critical element to achieving our nation's economic goals. The growing use of all types of



communications from poachers and scammers have a major effect on booking hotel rooms at exhibitions, making our industry a target for criminals.

- The \$91 billion exhibitions industry plays an important role in facilitating these valuable business deals. Issues such as hotel booking fraud can impede the success of these imperative face-to-face gatherings.
- We need stronger policy in place to protect consumers, associations, and exhibitors from these scams.
- Here's how scammers and poachers prey on exhibitors and our attendees:
  - By attempting to get exhibitors to buy either fraudulent rooms that do not exist, taking a pre-payment and providing the exhibitors with fraudulent confirmation numbers
  - By attempting to get exhibitors to book rooms outside of the contracted room block of the show organizer, which can cause the show to meet their contractual obligation with the hotels in their official room block, thus causing attrition with the contracted hotels, costing the show organizer a penalty

**Additional resources:**

- [Track S. 2229 on Congress.gov](#)
- [Track H.R. 3956 on Congress.gov](#)
- [Let us know your experience and contacts around this issue](#)