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It's spring and with "HELP" the lending freeze is thawing

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The Red Sox are in camp, we're driving to and from work in the daylight and we're feeling the stir of lenders awakening from hibernation!

The market has shaken off the European debt crisis and we are projecting a very exciting year for transactions. According to the December, 2011 Year End, Pinnacle Perspective, Boston finished the year with a 77.4% Occupancy and a \$198.22 Average Daily Rate with an overall RevPar increase of 5.6%. Better, 2012 is expected to be an outstanding year for Boston hotel performance due in part to city wide sell outs generated by the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center and other corporate and leisure group business.

This improved performance coincides with a general upward trend in rate and occupancy throughout suburban Massachusetts. Guestroom demand all across New England has increased and hotel owners are reporting improved performance from Vermont to Rhode Island.

Improved performance sparks two things; Investors hungry for high yield returns have raised a lot of equity and are searching for opportunities and those opportunities are converting to closed deals because Lenders have decided to be guardedly optimistic and are placing debt for existing hotel deals from \$5million to \$300 million. We have even heard the two sweetest words every developer longs to hear, "Construction Loans".

To spur more action in the New England capital markets, Capital Hotel Management and O'Connell Hospitality Group, in tandem with Conventus Media, have created a hotel investment networking event that this region has never experienced before called Hotel Equity & Lender Perspectives - "HELP" Conference. We have assembled lenders that have major interests in the New England region and across the country like Wells Fargo, US Bank, Deutsche Bank, Starwood Property Trust, Rockbridge Capital, Washington Trust, PMZ Capital, Archon and Cornerstone, to name just a few. Private Equity and Publicly traded REIT's like HPT, Chatham, Apple, Cornerstone, AEW, Cerberus, Square Mile, Starwood Capital and Lightstone Capital will be discussing their return requirements and their investment appetite. Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, IHG and every other major hotel brand will be there to offer guidance. We are supported by the largest hotel companies in this region, Pyramid Hotel Group and Ocean Properties and to provide a look into the future for successful investing we have national experts from PKF Consulting, Pinnacle Advisory Group, HVS International, RW Baird and Lodging Econometrics presenting critical data on the U.S. and world economy and future hotel industry performance.

We all deserve a little fun after the crappy years of 2009 and 2010. We've invited nationally recognized, but Boston's own Lenny Clarke to host the opening cocktail reception and we've created the "HELP Dine Around" and reserved the private dining rooms of the hottest restaurants on the Boston Waterfront, Strega, DelFrisco's and Legal's Harborside. Entertainment will be included at all three. When you register for the HELP conference, register for the HELP Dine Around! This is a

networking event that can't be missed.

Members of the NEREJ Hotel Experts Panel are actively supporting this event. Pinnacle Advisory Group, Sherin & Lodgen, Group One Architects, Roedel Companies, Stonebridge and Lodging Econometrics have all come together to try to advance the prospects for hotel investment in the region. We hope you'll consider attending this important event being held at the Westin Waterfront Boston Hotel on May 2nd and 3rd.

Please visit www.HELPconference.com and be a part of the region's top hotel investment event that brings together the critical components of every transaction: Investors, lenders, brands and advisors. In order to enhance your ability to network, attendance is limited to 300 participants so please register early.

O'Connell Hospitality Group, LLC, (OHG) was formed in 2000 and has grown to become one of the nation's top real estate firms specializing in hotel investment transactions. In that time, O'Connell has presided over more than \$2 billion of hotel investments ranging from oceanfront resorts, major urban hotel projects and suburban, upscale-limited service hotels.

Previous to OHG, James O'Connell was senior managing director for Insignia ESG/Hotel Partners and ran the hospitality practice in the northeastern U.S. region. He is a proud alumnus of RECOLL Management Corp., where he managed hotel dispositions from the failed Bank of New England, an active member of the International Society of Hospitality Consultants, and a REFA sponsor and he is a 1982 graduate of Massachusetts Maritime Academy.