

“Inside Edition” Statement from OABA September 9, 2008

The Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) is a national trade organization representing the carnival industry for over 40 years, striving to communicate with and educate its members. Because we continually try to improve, we have developed **Best Practices** and **Quality Assessment Audit** guidelines for our members. These guidelines also include ride safety programs based on **ASTM International standards** for the amusement industry and conformance with all applicable State amusement ride regulations.

Portable amusement ride statistics prove that riders enjoy one of the safest forms of recreation available to the public. We estimate that over 300 million guests enjoy portable amusement rides annually at fairs, festivals and community events. Our ongoing efforts have greatly reduced injuries to our guests. The **Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)** has estimated in previous years that some 1,600 to 3,500 ride incidents take place on portable amusement rides annually. Over this same eighteen-year period the **CPSC** reported 11 fatalities on portable rides. The **CPSC** also has reported that while a number of these incidents are treated in emergency rooms, less than 1% are serious enough to require overnight hospitalization. In addition, the **CPSC** has reported in the past that over 60% of ride incidents are caused by patrons not adhering to safety warnings, operator instructions, or acting foolishly on rides, endangering themselves and others riding amusement rides.

All American employers using unskilled labor have severe shortages, and we face the same challenges, as this industry is mobile. In recent years, many carnivals have invested in hiring legal, temporary foreign labor under the **Department of Labor’s H-2b** visa program. We believe that these efforts have helped to improve our guests' experience, but this legal program has been stymied by our nation's inability to solve other immigration problems.

The **OABA** does not condone the use of illegal drugs and supports substance abuse policies and criminal background investigations for seasonal labor. The **OABA** supports **ASTM F-24** safety standards for **Operation Procedures for Amusement Rides and Devices**, in addition to state regulations.

For more information on these programs please visit our website at www.oaba.org.

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