

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 1, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

Thank you for your continued leadership to provide financial relief to American families and businesses during the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis. We write to urge you to prioritize significant, targeted financial support to restaurants as part of the next coronavirus relief legislation. As coronavirus cases continue to rise throughout our country, many states are imposing new restrictions on restaurants and bars, which intensifies the industry's need for increased federal support. These small businesses need expedited and substantial relief to keep their workers employed and their businesses from closing for good during the pandemic. Specifically, to provide the robust support the restaurant industry needs, we urge you to include the *RESTAURANTS Act* in forthcoming coronavirus relief legislation.

While the coronavirus stimulus relief that Congress has passed provided support for small businesses, the restaurant industry has been uniquely hurt during the pandemic and needs additional, targeted support to make it through this crisis. According to a January 2021 report from the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee, one in six restaurants nationwide— more than 110,000 restaurants— have closed permanently or long term. In addition, since the beginning of the pandemic, one in four of the 10 million U.S. jobs lost have been restaurant jobs. This amounts to a total of 2.5 million jobs eliminated, including 372,000 jobs just during the month of December 2020. The economic impact has disproportionately affected owners of small, independently owned restaurants.

We continue to hear from Pennsylvania's restaurant owners and employees about the devastating effects the pandemic is having on their ability to stay in business. The *RESTAURANTS Act*, which is supported by a broad, bipartisan group of House members, would provide immediate relief to restaurant owners and employees to help them survive this pandemic. The *RESTAURANTS Act* would establish a \$120 billion restaurant revitalization fund at the U.S. Department of Treasury to provide grants to independent restaurants, small restaurant chains, and catering firms. The aid could be used to cover most expenses, including payroll, benefits, mortgage, rent, utilities, food, debt obligations to suppliers, and more. To ensure that support

goes to independently owned restaurants, the relief would only be provided to restaurants with 20 or fewer locations doing business under the same name.

The restaurant industry continues to be uniquely devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic and needs more relief. This is particularly true for the 500,000 independent restaurants and 11 million workers who are directly employed by independent restaurants throughout the United States. These independent restaurants, which account for more than three-quarters of all restaurants and bars in our country, are counting on Congress to provide robust relief to keep the industry afloat. Without the significant relief that the *RESTAURANTS Act* would provide, tens of thousands of restaurants, many of them family-owned businesses, may permanently close, and hundreds of thousands of restaurant workers may lose their livelihoods. We stand ready to work with you to pass substantial support for restaurants into law as part of future coronavirus relief legislation.

Sincerely,



Susan Wild
Member of Congress



Mike Doyle
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
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/S/

Conor Lamb
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