

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3302

January 26, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on
Appropriations
H-307, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madame Speaker and Chairwoman DeLauro,

We appreciate your ongoing efforts to provide relief to American workers and small businesses devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. As you continue to work diligently on passage of the omnibus spending bill for fiscal year 2022, we urge you to include critical assistance for the restaurant industry.

North Carolina is home to nearly 20,000 eating and drinking locations, approximately 76% of which are independently owned – many by women and people of color. Food service businesses in North Carolina generate \$21.4 billion, account for 8.7% of all employment in the state and made up 16% of the state's sales tax revenue in 2019. In short, independent restaurants are critical to our state's economy.

Unfortunately, the resurgence of COVID-19 cases due to spread of the omicron variant has disproportionately impacted these businesses. As of November 2021, North Carolina's restaurant sector lost over 26,300 workers as compared to November 2019. Although more than 6,600 restaurants and bars across the state requested federal assistance through the Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF), 40% of those businesses did not receive aid before the funds were depleted.

Restaurants are already feeling the impact of the recent rise in COVID-19 cases. The economic impact of reduced patronage exacerbates challenges that have plagued the restaurant industry for nearly two years and these losses reverberate throughout the economy. All parts of the supply chain are affected, including North Carolina's 40,450 small farms.

As discussions regarding COVID relief in the omnibus spending bill continue, we urge you to make restaurants a top priority. The industry needs additional assistance to enable restaurants to keep their doors open until conditions improve. We also ask that you consider longer-term solutions for the restaurant industry, such as those offered by the RESTAURANTS Act.

Thank you for considering this request. Restaurants continued to serve our communities during an incredibly challenging time and we must ensure that they get the support they need to fully reopen and thrive once again.

Very truly yours,



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph. D.
Member of Congress



Kathy Manning
Member of Congress