

FIGHT FOR ILLINOIS RESTAURANTS

MEMBERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT: TALKING POINTS

*Take action to keep Illinois restaurants open and call
for federal relief – Pass the RESTAURANTS Act!*



INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your valued membership with the Illinois Restaurant Association. We know this is a difficult time for everyone working to make ends meet and keep your restaurants open. In this communications toolkit, you will find talking points for you to use and share with your network to help advocate for federal relief for Illinois restaurants so you can remain open both now and long-term.

We understand the reality of COVID-19 and its devastating effects, and, for the safety of everyone who works in the restaurant industry and our patrons, we have taken it very seriously from the beginning and prior to the pandemic, have always operated under the strictest of health and safety measures.

However, with current restrictions to our operations, the restaurant industry – the nation’s second-largest private-sector employer – will not survive without federal aid. Congress will consider their final coronavirus response bill for 2020 soon. **We have made steady progress, but Congress needs to do much more for the restaurant industry, so we need your help to get the RESTAURANTS Act passed!**

The materials in this toolkit were created to support Illinois’ incredible restaurants. **Our livelihoods depend on it.**

Thank you,

Illinois Restaurant Association

TALKING POINTS

On the next two pages are the suggested talking points for conversations or meetings you have to discuss our call for federal aid for the restaurant industry. If we collectively use the same messages, our voice will be stronger and our message will be more likely to resonate with those around us to build support and encourage others to take action.

- The Illinois Restaurant Association is calling for the federal government to provide direct financial support to struggling restaurants through the RESTAURANTS Act. Unless we take action, thousands of Illinois restaurants are at risk of permanent closure and approximately 594,000 Illinoisans' jobs are at risk.
- We understand the reality of COVID-19 and its devastating effects, and, for the safety of everyone who works in the restaurant industry and our many patrons, we have taken it very seriously from the beginning.
- The restaurant industry has always been the most highly regulated when it comes to health and safety. We have taken additional and comprehensive steps to address COVID-19.
- We have been meticulous about implementing health and safety measures, and we have always supported steps such as reduced capacity, reconfigured spaces, social distancing, and the use of masks and PPE for the safety of patrons and the many hard-working employees of the restaurant industry.

TALKING POINTS

- We are also concerned that closing all indoor dining at restaurants, which are among the mostly highly regulated businesses in terms of health and safety, will force people into less-controlled private gatherings with no safety precautions which could result in the spread of COVID-19.
- We have all been impacted by the pandemic. We don't deny this a difficult time for everyone, but the complete shutdown of indoor dining at restaurants will affect the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people across Illinois – and we need help.
- Federal aid is the only lifeline left for restaurants in Illinois. Nearly 70% of operators in Illinois say they will be forced out of business in the next six months if there is not additional aid, according to a survey by the National Restaurant Association. As the state's largest private sector employer, we cannot allow this statistic to become a reality.
- Congress will soon consider their final coronavirus response bill for 2020. We have made steady progress, but Congress needs to do much more for the nation's second-largest private-sector employer. That's why we need your help to get the RESTAURANTS Act passed!
- Visit illinoisrestaurants.org now to join us in our call for the federal government to provide direct financial support to struggling restaurants across the state. Our livelihoods depend on it.