

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 27, 2022

OMICRON VARIANT HIT CONNECTICUT RESTAURANT INDUSTRY HARD; REPLENISHING THE RRF WOULD SAVE MORE THAN 18,000 CONNECTICUT JOBS

New Survey Shows 12,000 Connecticut Jobs Were Saved With First Round of RRF Funding

HARTFORD, Conn.-- The Connecticut Restaurant Association today released new state survey data highlighting the devastating impact the omicron variant has had so far, and the positive impact the Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF) had on the Connecticut restaurant industry. According to National Restaurant Association analysis, the first round of RRF funding saved more than 12,000 Connecticut jobs and helped 97% of grant recipients stay in business.

In addition, the survey found:

- Nearly 51% of restaurant operators that did not receive RRF grants feel it's unlikely that they will stay in business beyond the pandemic without a grant.
- 96% of restaurant operators that applied for an RRF grant, but did not receive funding, said a future grant would enable them to retain or hire back employees.

"The survey highlights how impactful RRF replenishment would be. The National Restaurant Association estimates indicate that full replenishment of the RRF will save an additional 18,000 Connecticut restaurant jobs," said Connecticut Restaurant Association President & CEO Scott Dolch. "The RRF was a critical lifeline to many, but far more remain on the sidelines, desperately looking for support amidst continued economic uncertainty. The decisions Congress could make in the coming weeks will be critical toward the future of the restaurants that are so proud to serve our communities."

The restaurant industry was hit hard by the latest surge of COVID-19 cases caused by the omicron variant. Forced to adapt to deteriorating consumer confidence, restaurants reduced hours/days of operation, cut seating capacity, and shutdown, pivoting to off-premises dining with the end result being lower sales volumes in 2021 than in 2019.

According to the survey, we know:

- 96% of restaurants experienced a decline in customer demand for indoor on-premises dining in because of the omicron variant.
- 87% of operators report that business conditions are worse now than three months ago.
- 80% say their restaurant is less profitable now than it was before the pandemic.

"This new data shows that restaurant recovery is paralyzed and nowhere near complete. The first round of RRF saved many in our industry when it provided more than 1,300 grants to Connecticut small businesses, but we need Congress to finish the job and fund the additional 2,066 pending state applications," said Dolch.

While the first round of RRF provided support to 1,300 small businesses in our state, Connecticut still has 2,066 pending applications that total more than \$489 million. The Connecticut findings were provided by the National Restaurant Association Research Group, which conducted a COVID-19 Restaurant Impact Survey of 4,200 restaurant operators Jan. 16-18, 2022. Read the report of key Connecticut findings [here](#).

###

ABOUT THE CONNECTICUT RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

The Connecticut Restaurant Association is a full service, not-for-profit trade association dedicated to supporting every type and size of restaurant. We are advocates for the Connecticut restaurant industry, a hub for information and a platform for networking. We commit ourselves to offering cost effective benefits and resources you need to run a profitable business. The industry plays an integral role in Connecticut's economy employing more than 160,000 foodservice workers and generating nearly \$9 billion in annual sales. Along with the Connecticut Hospitality Educational Foundation (CHEF), the Association protects, advances, and educates the growing industry. Learn more at www.ctrestaurant.org.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1919, the National Restaurant Association is the leading business association for the restaurant industry, which comprises 1 million restaurant and foodservice outlets and a workforce of 15.6 million employees. We represent the industry in Washington, D.C., and advocate on its behalf. We sponsor the industry's largest trade show ([National Restaurant Association Show](#)); leading food safety training and certification program (ServSafe); unique career-building high school program (the NRAEF's ProStart). For more information, visit Restaurant.org and find us on Twitter [@WeRRestaurants](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).