



HIGH ROAD RESTAURANTS

November 18, 2021

Dear Governor Hochul,

We the undersigned call on your office to use your executive authority immediately to end the subminimum wage for tipped workers and allow for tip sharing among all non-management employees. Given the current staffing shortage, we can't fully reopen without this policy change. It is essential and desperately needed to signal to all New York workers that it is worth returning to work in restaurants, ensure a level playing field among all employers, and allow the industry to fully reopen.

In August of last year, we recommended a relief package that would have ensured a strong restaurant industry recovery: tip-sharing; payroll tax relief; and the elimination of the subminimum wage.

In our letter, we outlined our case:

"In April 2018, Congress passed a bill allowing restaurant employers nationwide who pay the full minimum wage to share tips with kitchen staff. This has helped owners in other states manage labor costs and create greater pay equity in regards to race, gender, and position in their restaurants. Many New York restaurant employers are prepared to move to a full minimum wage if tip sharing becomes permissible—along with modest tax relief only applicable to increased wages.

Some modest tax relief coupled with a wage increase for tipped workers would pay for itself. We have done fiscal analysis that shows that income taxes coming into the state from a \$5 wage increase for tipped workers would bring in far more in revenue than would be lost through moderate payroll tax relief for struggling restaurant owners. And of course, it would allow restaurant workers to survive in a time when a subminimum wage is not livable, as tips are down 75-90%.

It has become clearer than ever that hospitality professionals' economic futures are deeply insecure, with many facing hunger, housing destabilization, and additional debt. Being forced to rely solely on tips, creates a system that encourages rampant sexual harassment of women, reinforces a wide delta of inequity of race, mass

disenfranchisement of immigrants, people of color and working poor. With tips vastly down in this climate already, it's clear that having to rely on tips alone could never be sustainable.

New York must take this opportunity to ensure a sustainable and just future for all. In this case, that means government working hand-in-hand with hospitality professionals—both front line team members and owner/operators—to ensure that we have a living wage, and that the hard hit restaurants New Yorkers love have the tools needed to lead our industry and thrive.”

These changes were important then, but now they are critical. This is a crisis moment for restaurants in New York, as our workforce has decided that it is not worth going back to our industry with so many inequities and insecurities. We need a level playing field that helps us attract and retain the talent needed to make our industry as resilient as it is delicious. Please enact these changes immediately to help us recover and rebuild.

Sincerely,

NEW YORK RESTAURANT OWNERS

Michael Lastoria, &pizza
Jose Andres, ThinkFoodGroup
Dennis Meheil, Buffalo Wild Wings
Tom Collicicco, Craft
Danny Meyer, Union Square Hospitality Group
David Chang, Momofuku
Russell Jackson, Reverence
Amanda Cohen, Dirt Candy
Evan Hanzcor, Egg
Michael Fuquay, The Queensboro
Yency Perez, Barepas
Maria Simon, Corazon de Mexico
Dragan Ristovski, Marlow Bistro
Yajaira Saavedram, La Morada
Claire Sprouse, Hunky Dory
Beejhy Barhany, Tsion Cafe
Peter Cheung, Hide-Chan Ramen
Mary Cleaver, Cleaver Co, The Green Bottle, and Table Green
Elena Barcenés, Rincón Salvadoreño
Soogil Lim, SOOGIL
Chaim Mischa Mishulovin, Sushi Tokyo
Elizabeth Murray, The Marlow Collective

Marjanne Motamedi, Cibo E Vino
Zachary Sharaga, Dear Mama
Melissa Morales, Pomp and Circumstance Hospitality
Giselle Malave, Sapoara
Mutale Kanyanta, LOCALS BKNY
Elisa Lyew, Love Bites Dessert Atelier
Stephanie Gross, Wonderville
Ioana Hercberg, La Cantine
Ingrid Ammann, Mad Tropical
Leo Tineo, The Sampler
Greg Curley, Abe's Pagoda Bar and The Double
Windsor Scott Hawley, Otis
Paul Cacici, Carmenita's Italian Specialties
Julian Mohamed, The Wandering Barman
Darren Grenia, Yours Sincerely
Gavin Morse, Darkness Ventures
Henry Glucroft, Sunrise/Sunset and Petra
Rachel Allswang, Le Garage
Jae Lee, Nowan
Sabrina De Sousa, Dimes
Laura Regan, Outerborougharts LLC
Latoya Anderson, Caribbean Starr
Restaurant Matthew Hamilton, Rosalu
DIner
Josh Morales, Slick Willie Table & Bar
Koorosh Bakhtiar, Jajaja Plantas
Mexicana Marie Tribouilloy, Ops
Brian Keyser, Casellula
Christopher Bates, FLX Table
Molly Fisher, 232 Bleecker
Michael Van Camp, Amali
Wei Dong Yie, Baodego
Shannon Kimball, Bar Bruno
James Mallios, Bar Marseille
Hollis Barclay, Bleu Fin Bar & Grill
Donna Drake, Brooklyn Beso
Yvon Lemoine, Casa Nomad
Helen You, Dumpling Galaxy
Brian Chunton, Eat Gai
Tiffany Bowen, Harlem Hookah
Tomoyuki Iwanami, Kaikagetsu NYC
Barbara Sibley, La Palapa

Cassandre Davilmar, Lakou Café
Emmeline Zhao, Little Tong Noodle Shop
Alex Antimisiaris, Loi Estiatorio
Ana Medrano, Q44 Bar & Grill
Frantz Metellus, Rustik Tavern
Davis Alexander, Savannah Café
Leah Abraham, Settepani
Jesus Caicedo-Diaz, Skäl
Wiki Wang, Spicy Moon Vegetarian
Szechuan Jess Li, Stand Up Café
Ioannis Berbeis, Telio
Raphael Benavides, The Cecil
Steakhouse Brett Isbell, The Corners
Andrew Ding, The Expat
Stephen Young, Tsismis NYC
Ricky Dolinsky, Tzarevna
Kurt Gutenbrunner, Wallse Restaurant
Group Bryan Chunton, Zen Yai