

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 14, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer,

We write to respectfully urge you to swiftly replenish the Small Business Administration's Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF).

The American Rescue Plan provided nearly \$28.6 billion of economic relief to restaurants under the RRF. These robust investments served as a critical lifeline for more than 101,000 restaurants who had been struggling to keep their doors open since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, due to high demand, the RRF was not able to meet the full needs of restauranters in our communities. In fact, two-thirds of eligible restaurant applications have been denied, including \$43.6 billion in requested funds.<sup>1</sup>

In Massachusetts, the restaurant industry has been especially hard-hit. More than 3,400 restaurants – 23 percent – have closed their doors.<sup>2</sup> In a survey of Black-owned restaurants in Massachusetts, 13 percent were closed for business and 44 percent were uncertain about their ability to reopen.<sup>3</sup> Of the restaurants that remain open, nationwide an estimated 82 percent of restaurant and bar owners think they will have to close if the RRF grant is not refilled.<sup>4</sup>

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to devastate our communities and put the survival of these small businesses and their workers on the line. Restauranters and their staff have worked throughout the pandemic, sacrificing of themselves, providing essential services, and feeding our communities. The federal government has a responsibility to fully fund the RRF and prevent any further closures, layoffs, and losses for our hard-working restauranters and dedicated workers.

Legislation in the House of Representatives (H.R. 3807) led by Congressman Blumenauer, and in the Senate (S. 2675) led by Senator Cardin are widely supported. We urge you to prioritize the replenishment of this critical investment to save our restaurants.

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<sup>1</sup> *Restaurant owners shut out of federal COVID rescue plead for relief*, CBS NEWS, (Sep. 09, 2021), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/covid-restaurant-owners-denied-grants-ask-congress-to-replenish-rrf/>

<sup>2</sup> *It's just terrible': Massachusetts restaurants dealt another blow with step back in reopening*, WCVB BOSTON, (Dec. 9, 2020), <https://www.wcvb.com/article/it-s-just-terrible-massachusetts-restaurants-dealt-another-blow-with-step-back-in-economic-reopening/34911469#>.

<sup>3</sup> *Survey of 1,868 Massachusetts Small Businesses*, MASSINC POLLING GROUP, (Sep. 20, 2021), <https://files.constantcontact.com/e6e14db6301/c5b5e871-19b2-466d-b4dc-f0c9add0f47a.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> *82% of restaurant/bar operators think they'll have to close without another Restaurant Revitalization Fund grant*, RESTAURANT HOSPITALITY (Sep. 09, 2021), <https://www.restaurant-hospitality.com/coronavirus/82-restaurantbar-operators-think-they-ll-have-close-without-another-restaurant>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ayanna S. Pressley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ayanna Pressley  
Member of Congress

Richard P. Neal  
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

Katherine Clark  
Members of Congress

William R. Keating  
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch  
Members of Congress

Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton  
Members of Congress

Jake Auchincloss  
Member of Congress