



Good Work Austin

Dear Council Member,

Good Work Austin was originally formed in 2018 by local independent business owners to help other similar businesses implement benefits like paid sick leave and equitable wages that would make their establishment, employees and our community healthier.

Since the first wave of Covid-19 hit and restaurants were the first businesses asked to close for the safety of the public and our employees, GWA has focused on helping the independent hospitality industry survive. We have worked with State and Local government to answer questions regarding Sales Tax payments, TABC rules, unemployment benefits and the PPP. We've served as advisors to numerous State and Local elected officials on the industry's immediate needs and subsequent policy proposals. Our membership swelled to over 120 businesses, mostly bars & restaurants, all local and independent, inarguably cornerstones of Austin's unique cultural fabric and a significant tourism draw.

Most recently, GWA has compiled a clear and comprehensive Re-Opening Agreement for restaurants to follow when opening their dining rooms that we are now adopting for other non food & beverage businesses. Our guidelines are considerably more stringent than those offered up by State government.

We understand that no protocols will eliminate the chance of an employee testing positive. We also understand that nothing is going to fundamentally change until there is a widely distributed vaccine. Opening and staying open is about a partnership between business and gov't. We adopt strict guidelines and open in a slow, cautious, consistent manner and gov't provides incentives and add'l revenue streams, in the form of jobs that increase food access to communities in need like several of our restaurants have been performing for AISD and will soon be for quarantined homeless and homebound seniors.

Independent restaurants are a cultural asset to our city. Our employees are, individually, cultural assets as well. They do not currently have jobs to return to and will not if a plan is not put in place to help independent restaurants get through the next 12-18 months of reduced capacity.

It is with this in mind that we ask you to support the attached draft cultural funding resolution. Restaurants face a unique challenge as business models in these conditions and they are not

being helped by going back and forth through the phases. If the independents go away, they will be replaced by large chains and corporate restaurants with the capital to weather this crisis.

We understand that what is attached is imperfect and ask for your input and help in getting us relief. If we do not begin to act now, there will not be much left to save.

Please contact us with your thoughts and questions,

Over 125 Good Work Austin Members