



October 28, 2021

Representative Ronald Mariano, Speaker
Massachusetts House of Representatives
State House, Room 356
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means
State House, Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Speaker Mariano and Chairman Michlewitz,

On behalf of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and our 1,300 members, I write to support Amendment #336 to *H.4219 An Act relative to immediate COVID-19 recovery needs*. This amendment directs \$135 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding towards recovery of the hospitality and tourism industry in Massachusetts.

Hospitality and tourism are essential parts of Massachusetts, both the economy and way of life, and play pivotal roles in the state through employment, economic contributions, and tax revenues. In March 2020, hospitality and tourism businesses, like others, took on great risk and closed their doors to protect public health. In many instances, they have been slower to return because of factors outside their control. Now, with an end in sight for the public health crisis and an infusion of federal money, the state should provide direct support so the same businesses can survive, recover, and thrive.

The pandemic has underscored just how many residents are employed in hospitality and tourism jobs. Prior to the pandemic, the hospitality and tourism industry was the third largest in the state and employed one in 10 Massachusetts residents. In 2018, more than 375,000 workers were employed in hospitality, with another 232,000 jobs indirectly supported by the industry. Many young workers, students, and immigrants work in the hospitality industry.¹ These jobs often are individuals' first exposure to the workforce and for many this industry is a lifelong career.

These jobs translate to economic activity and tax revenues. In 2018, the hospitality industry generated more than \$28 billion in direct economic output, plus another \$41 billion in supported economic activity.² This translates to billions of dollars in tax revenue: in fiscal year 2019, room occupancy taxes generated \$512 million in state and local revenue while meals taxes generated \$1.4 billion in total revenue.³

We hope that the state commits to sustaining and growing this crucial industry in the post-pandemic world. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'James E. Rooney'.

James E. Rooney
President and CEO

CC: Members of the Massachusetts House of Representatives

¹ The Boston Foundation and University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute. June 2018. [The Work of Leisure: Behind the Scenes of the Massachusetts Leisure, Hospitality and Tourism Industry.](#)

² The Boston Foundation and University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute. June 2018. [The Work of Leisure: Behind the Scenes of the Massachusetts Leisure, Hospitality and Tourism Industry.](#)

³ Department of Revenue. June 2019. [Monthly Report of Collections and Refunds.](#)