

Dear [c3#],

Over the course of this year, many important issues will arise that are critical to our restaurant advocacy efforts and require your ongoing participation. As we continue to work closely with Congress and President Obama to advance pro-restaurant policies, we urge you to stay engaged and informed by tuning into our monthly newsletter.

In this edition, we discuss how the economic stimulus package will impact our industry, share the latest news on the card check issue, and showcase our nation's upcoming Health and Nutrition Month by discussing the LEAN Act. You'll also find some tips for eating well while eating out. We hope you enjoy these stories, and we invite you to provide feedback by clicking the links at the end of each article to tell us how helpful the information is to you.

What's Happening in Restaurant Advocacy

Nearly every time Congress meets, they make decisions that have the potential to impact the restaurant industry-and your business. Our government affairs team is tracking dozens of issues that affect the many different aspects of our business. Here's a look at the most pressing issue on our radar screen today:

Economic Stimulus Package: What it Means to Restaurants

As you know firsthand, America's restaurant industry rises and falls with the health of the economy. With this knowledge in mind, the National Restaurant Association has been a vocal proponent of policies promoting economic stimulus that place cash in the hands of consumers, provide relief to restaurant operators, and create and preserve restaurant jobs. As the House and Senate debated the details of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, we shared these concerns with Members of Congress, making clear our recommendations to provide relief for the restaurant industry.

On February 13, after the House approved the \$787 billion package by a vote of 246 to 183, the U.S. Senate granted the bill's final passage with 60 votes, and President Obama signed the bill shortly thereafter. Among the positive provisions for the restaurant industry, key benefits include:

- Tax credits that will provide \$400 for working individuals and \$800 for working families in both 2009 and 2010. This helps the restaurant industry by increasing consumers'

Dish of the Month

In honor of Health and Nutrition Month this March, we'd like to call your attention to the



Labeling Education and Nutrition Act (LEAN Act)- a bill that will provide a national nutrition labeling standard for chain restaurants. This legislation will end the confusing maze of city, county, and state laws mandating menu labeling, which present considerable inconsistencies that frustrate consumers and restaurateurs alike. We hope you will join us in urging Members of Congress to stand behind this bill, which will not only help consumers make smart dietary decisions, but also reduce the expense and potential for frivolous restaurant lawsuits resulting from the current, disjointed laws.

Nearly 80 percent of Americans want the kind of nutrition information the LEAN Act provides, and a uniform national standard will ensure consumers get the information they need to make smart eating choices. With the obesity epidemic on the rise, empowering consumers with this information cannot come a moment too soon. Please let your legislators know that the LEAN Act is important to you and the health and wellbeing of your customers, family, and friends!

cash-on-hand.

- Extension of the maximum carry-back period from two years to five years for small businesses experiencing net operating losses arising in both the 2008 and 2009 tax years. This provision should provide an immediate infusion of cash into eligible restaurant businesses, as it allows them to apply their current losses against taxes paid during the previous five years.
- Extension through 2009 of the \$250,000 maximum write-off for small-business expenses, rather than recovering the costs over time through depreciation, and extension through 2009 of the ability for businesses to immediately write off 50 percent of the cost of depreciable property.

We appreciate the inclusion of these provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and look forward to witnessing the positive benefits America's restaurants will experience as a result of this legislation.

For a more detailed breakdown of how the American Investment and Economic Recovery Act impacts the restaurant industry, [click here](#).

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Card Check Legislation

Card check legislation remains a top priority on our agenda, and we urge you to voice your opposition to the deceptively named Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). In 2008, RAN members sent a clear message to Members of Congress urging them to defeat EFCA—a bill that clearly favors Big Labor's objectives over business interests in what are already challenging economic times. We need you to continue to speak out against this undemocratic legislation, which would revoke workers' rights to vote in union-organizing elections, adopt a card-check process that exposes employees to coercion and harassment, and increase federal government intrusion in our workplaces.

National labor organizations continue to press for EFCA legislation, which is why we encourage you to keep communicating your opposition to the bill to your Members of Congress. Let your elected officials know your position by writing a letter, sending an email, or placing a call. Upcoming Congressional recesses will likely also offer a great opportunity to communicate your opposition by participating in any number of local recess activities, such as town hall discussions or other in-district meetings. View the [House](#) and [Senate](#) recess schedules to maximize your voice in this highly important

For more information on this issue, visit the [National Restaurant Association website](#).

Eating Well While Eating Out



With so many choices on any given menu, there are plenty of options to meet the dietary needs of many different customers. In this spirit, and in

celebration of Health and Nutrition month, here are a few tips for eating healthy while dining out:

Think ahead. Afraid of being lured into decadent dining when the choices confront you on the menu? A little advance thought and preparation can go a long way. First, consider your daily caloric needs and work within those general guidelines (i.e., if you've had a small breakfast, you may enjoy a larger lunch). Take a peek at the restaurant's online menu and hone in on healthy items that fit your diet and are kind to your waistline, such as fish, salads, and whole grains. And don't be shy about talking with restaurant staff about the healthiest choices on the menu.

Study the menu. You don't need to be a nutritionist to decipher the caloric pitfalls on any menu. Cream-based sauces and soups are higher in fat and calories, and fried items are packed with fat. Instead, zero in on broth-based soups; pasta with tomato-based sauces; items that are grilled, baked, broiled, dry-sautéed, poached, or steamed; leaner cuts of meat; vegetable or fruit-packed dishes; healthfully prepared seafood; salads free of heavy dressings, cheese, or croutons; whole grain offerings; and light desserts like sorbet or fruit.

Tailor your order. Most restaurants are happy to accommodate diners' requests, and will adapt a dish to your needs. For example, swap out a baked potato or French fries for a salad; ask that grilled fish or vegetables be prepared with a light amount of oil or butter; order

debate. To read more about card check legislation, visit the [National Restaurant Association website](#).

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sandwiches with mustard instead of mayo; and order vinaigrette instead of creamy salad dressing.

Most importantly, though, make sure you enjoy your restaurant experience! Savor an appetizer or dessert by sharing it with a friend, or take half of your meal home to prolong the enjoyment! Bottom line: have a good time as you keep your commitment to good health.

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