



## Ohio Restaurant Association Testimony in Support of SCR 2

February 22, 2023

Chair Cirino, Vice-Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram and Members of the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee:

On behalf of Ohio's 23,676 restaurant and foodservice locations and Ohio's 520,000 restaurant and foodservice employees, the Ohio Restaurant Association appreciates the opportunity to support SCR 2 and thanks Senator Schaffer for sponsoring this important legislation.

The skills that young people learn by being a part of the workforce are invaluable and serve them well for the rest of their life. So much of a young person's time in today's world is spent in front of a screen. Employment opportunities, especially in sectors like foodservice, retail and hospitality, provide young people the chance to interact with the public and learn critical life skills such as customer service, problem solving, and time management. These experiences will provide a strong foundation as they progress through school and in their future career.

Urging Congress to make changes to the Fair Labor Standards Act to allow 14 and 15 year olds to have more skill building employment opportunities is appropriate and timely. Unfortunately, the current 7:00 pm limit keeps them from many of these opportunities. While a limit is appropriate for younger workers, we believe that 9:00 pm is reasonable, and will open up more personal growth possibilities for our nation's teenagers.

We appreciate and support the fact that this legislation clearly states that parents' consent is necessary for those young people who want to take advantage of this opportunity. This is a choice that appropriately belongs to the family, which this legislation makes clear.

Ohio's restaurants value all who work in foodservice in our state and look forward to this legislation giving additional opportunity to more younger Ohioans to learn, grow and earn.

Strong restaurants make for strong, growing communities. Thank you for all you are doing to help Ohio's hospitality businesses continue to provide robust employment and career opportunities and contribute to vibrant, thriving communities and neighborhoods throughout Ohio.

Tod Bowen  
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Ohio Restaurant Association