

Restaurant Community Update

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Friends and fellow restaurant owners,

I wanted to send a quick update and share a few things happening at the local, state, and federal level that affect all of us. More importantly, I truly believe we need to continue sticking together as an industry — sharing information, best practices, and supporting one another. None of us operate in a vacuum. The stronger we are as a group, the stronger each individual restaurant becomes.

In addition to my work with the Arizona Restaurant Association and the Chamber, I've also been working with Cody Edgin from Cryin' Coyote to create a more informal group where local restaurant owners can openly share information, challenges, and ideas. The goal is simple — collaboration over competition. If you would like more information on any of these groups, please reach out to me or Cody

Hiring – Move Fast

Hiring continues to be competitive. Most applicants are applying to 15–30 jobs at once. The restaurants that move quickly are the ones that secure the best candidates.

Best practice: respond within 3–24 hours.

- Do you have relevant experience?
- Are you legally authorized to work in the United States?
- Is the commute realistic?
- Are you available 40 hours, part-time, weekends?
- Do you have reliable transportation?
- What is your expected pay range?

If qualified, schedule the interview within 24 hours. Speed matters and reduces no-shows.

Credit Card Competition Act

- Require major credit cards issued by large banks to support at least two competing payment networks.

- Allow restaurants to choose the cheaper network to process the transaction.
- Introduce competition that could reduce swipe fees nationwide.

The association says the bill could save about \$16–\$17 billion per year for businesses and consumers.

Washington, D.C. – This Month

I will be traveling to Washington, D.C. this month as part of the Arizona Restaurant Association delegation to meet with our Arizona congressional representatives.

- Credit card fee reform
- Immigration reform that supports workforce stability
- Work visa improvements to address labor shortages
- Commodity pricing and supply chain pressures

These conversations are critical to the long-term sustainability of independent restaurants like ours.

State & Industry Updates

The Arizona Restaurant Association is organizing a tech-focused conference highlighting affordable AI tools for scheduling, labor management, and operational efficiency — especially geared toward independent operators.

On the legislative front, we continue monitoring proposals regarding rounding cash transactions, as well as previous drink-testing kit mandates that would have placed liability burdens on restaurant operators. The Association has worked hard to protect our industry from unreasonable requirements.

Cave Creek's 40th

Steve Feld, Director of the Carefree Cave Creek Chamber of Commerce, is working with the Town of Cave Creek on plans for the town's 40th Anniversary of Incorporation. More details are coming soon on how all of us — restaurants, bars, retailers, and local businesses — can be part of it. This is a great chance for the whole business community to show up, support the town, and create something fun and positive together.

Let's Stay Connected

If you have issues, ideas, or challenges that should be elevated at the Chamber, the Restaurant Association, or at the federal level, please reach out.

We are better when we share information, support each other, and present a unified voice.

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