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**Coronavirus Legislation Benefits both Restaurants and Business Owners**

**with Two-Year 100% Tax Deductible Dining Expenses**

This is the 2nd pandemic for the iconic 103-year old Wayside Restaurant in Montpelier, VT.

There were no government programs to help them get back on their feet in 1918. Thanks

to newly announced coronavirus legislation, there is great opportunity on the horizon.

A business owner can now enjoy breakfast, lunch or dinner at a local restaurant with a

valued client or prospective customer and take a 100% tax deduction. This is great news

for restaurants struggling across America.

Congress recently passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which includes making business meals, to include alcoholic beverages, fully tax deductible. Employers are now able to deduct 100% of their business meal expenses that are incurred in 2021 and 2022. “This is a big deal for the next 2 years that nobody seems to know about,” says Brian Zecchinelli, co-owner of the Wayside Restaurant.

Since 1980 businesses have only been able to deduct 50 percent of their meal expenses

off their federal taxes. This coronavirus relief legislation was proposed by U.S. Senator

Tim Scott of South Carolina. It has been heralded as pro-worker, pro-restaurant, and

pro-small business—leading to increased spending in restaurants and more income for the employees.

The act, passed on December 21, 2020, encourages companies to conduct more business

over meals. “It’s a win-win for both sides,” says Zecchinelli. The companies get a tax

credit for supporting their local restaurants. “Any carrot that can entice our valued customers

to dine out more often, we’ll take it,” he said.

Restaurants have been severely impacted during the pandemic. Vermont Chamber of Commerce President Betsy Bishop said, “As of December 1, 2020, more than 110,000 eating and drinking establishments were closed for business either temporarily or for good across the country. We applaud the recent business-meals deduction, included as part of the COVID relief, that supports Vermont restaurants when they need it most.”

With COVID-19 cases on the decline and many safety protocols in place, restaurants are ready to serve more business customers.

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**Photo Caption**: Owners of the Wayside Restaurant, Brian and Karen Zecchinelli, proudly show off their new menu promoting the 100% Business Meal Tax Deduction through December 31, 2022.

**Photo Credit**: Gary Haas