

An Open Letter to the California Legislature



Support AB 671: Make Life Easier for California Restaurants

California's restaurants are the heart of our neighborhoods and the engine of our local economies. With more than 86,000 restaurant locations statewide—supporting 10% of all jobs in the state—California is a culinary and cultural powerhouse.

But behind every new restaurant is an entrepreneur facing a daunting wall of delays, red tape, and outdated permitting processes. In some cities, it can take months or years to open a restaurant, with permits requiring registration up to nine months in advance. While restaurant owners await permits that allow them to operate, they are saddled with rent and other costs. These delays increase costs in an industry with famously tight margins, and discourage entrepreneurs from all walks of life from bringing their visions to life.

AB 671, introduced and championed by Assembly member Buffy Wicks, changes that. **It creates a streamlined, safety-conscious path to help restaurants get the permits they need to open and make improvements that help them operate.** Importantly, these streamlined processes would empower licensed professionals to certify compliance with applicable building, health, and safety codes, rather than requiring government agency review of plans for building improvements.

This reform is urgently needed. California's restaurant industry lost 22,000 jobs in the past year following wage and cost pressures. Restaurant operators are facing shrinking profits, rising labor and food costs, and lingering debt from COVID-era loans. **Yet despite the challenges, restaurants continue to power the state's economy, generating more than \$220 billion in sales in 2024.**

AB 671 is a smart step toward relief, revitalization, and growth. It supports entrepreneurs, creates good jobs, and ensures our communities stay vibrant and diverse.

As champions for the success of our state's vibrant restaurant industry, we're proud to support this legislation alongside restaurant leaders throughout the Golden State. Let's unlock the next generation of local businesses by making it faster, safer, and easier to open and run a restaurant.

Signed,

