

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 53

BY SENATORS TALBOT AND PEACOCK

A RESOLUTION

To commend the Louisiana Restaurant Association on the occasion of its seventy-fifth anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to recognize the Louisiana Restaurant Association (LRA) on the occasion of its seventy-fifth anniversary and for its continued service as an advocate for the state's restaurant, bar, catering, and food service industry; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's restaurant industry employs more residents than any other industry and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 217,000 Louisiana residents were working in more than nine thousand eating and drinking establishments; and

WHEREAS, each January, the LRA recognizes its incoming leaders, and in 2021, the association elected Keith Bond as chairman, Michael Boudreaux as vice chairman, Michael Maenza as treasurer, Alan Guilbeau as secretary, and Mark Latter as at-large officer; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Restaurant Association recognized and extended its sincere appreciation to Peter Sclafani, immediate past chairman, for his leadership during an unprecedented year as the industry faced a multitude of challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the LRA hosted its first trade show in 1953 at the Jung Hotel in New Orleans with presentations on the newest phase of restaurant operation, the "take home" business; and

WHEREAS, in 1964, in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Education, the association offered a series of free waitress training courses throughout the state, which included various service skills and techniques; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, resulting from a collapse in the workers' compensation market, the Legislature of Louisiana authorized the formation of Association Group Self-Insured Funds to provide an industry-specific solution for restaurants, bars, and hospitality-related businesses; today the Louisiana Restaurant Association's self-insured fund provides coverage for payrolls valued in excess of \$925 million; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, the Louisiana Restaurant Association's board of directors, in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Health, developed a plan that requires all retail food establishments to have one manager who has completed food safety and sanitation training; and

WHEREAS, the LRA Education Foundation, organized to promote the industry as a career path, administers the ProStart program, a culinary arts and restaurant management curriculum in schools throughout the state, and awards funding through its Scholars Program to qualified students to continue their education; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, the Louisiana Restaurant Association's work to expand culinary education in Louisiana was recognized when the Board of Regents approved a Bachelor of Science degree program in culinary arts at Nicholls State University, the first of its kind at a public institution of higher education in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Restaurant Association's partnership with the National Restaurant Association provides effective advocacy across federal, state, and local levels in service to its members; and

WHEREAS, the LRA has proudly provided leadership to the National Restaurant Association with Ralph Brennan and Melvin Rodrigue serving as chairman in 1995 and 2020, respectively; and

WHEREAS, during times of crisis in Louisiana, the association quickly centers its focus on advocacy and communication to provide relevant and timely information to its members through ongoing relationship management with elected officials at every level of government; and

WHEREAS, under the guidance and leadership of LRA President and CEO Stan Harris during the 2020 pandemic, the LRA served as the primary source of information for the entire restaurant industry, regardless of membership status, given the severity of the public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, as the LRA moves into the recovery phase after the pandemic, it is appropriate to recognize its seventy-five years of dedicated service to the restaurant and food service industry and the state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the Louisiana Restaurant Association upon the celebration of its seventy-fifth anniversary and for its continued service in advocating on behalf of the state's restaurant, bar, catering, and food service industry.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the president of the Louisiana Restaurant Association.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE