



February 7, 2022

The Honorable John Cornyn  
United States Senate  
SH-517, Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr  
United States Senate  
SR-217, Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Ramiro A. Cavazos  
*President & CEO*

The Honorable Rob Portman  
United States Senate  
SR-448, Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Re: Replenishment of the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF).**

Dear Sen. Cornyn, Sen. Burr, and Sen. Portman,

On behalf of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) and our Board of Directors, we write to express our support for the replenishment of the Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF) that the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) executed and showed great economic success for the restaurant industry amid the COVID-19 global pandemic.

The USHCC actively promotes the economic growth, development, and interests of more than five million Hispanic-owned businesses that, combined, contribute over \$800 billion to the American economy every year. We also serve as a platform for our nationwide network of over 260 local Hispanic chambers of commerce.

The RRF was extremely successful in bringing the financial support that restaurants all over the country desperately needed. The service industry was amongst the hardest hit by the COVID-19 global pandemic and, although we keep making significant strides towards economic recovery, we are still not where we were before the pandemic.

During the first round of the RRF, more than 278,000 applications were submitted, but the SBA was only able to fund approximately 101,000 businesses. This means that only about one third of the applicants were able to leverage this lifeline to save their business. Moreover, the approval process for the distribution of these funds was complicated, and there has been a concerningly large number of applicants who initially received a notice of approval only to later be rejected.

Congress did not intend for this lifeline funding to be distributed as a lottery. It is clear that, while our economy cannot continue to depend on government relief to stay afloat, the service industry is still very affected and has vast limitations as they attempt to safely reopen. According to a December 2021 National Restaurant Association survey, 52% of operators said their sales volume in October 2021 was still significantly lower than it was in October 2019.

The SBA already communicated to thousands of business owners that due to the overwhelming demand, they were unable to fund all qualified applicants. Those applicants who have not received funding will have their applications held within the SBA's application platform. If Congress provides additional funding for the RRF this will allow for processing in the order received. We must make sure that the nearly 200,000 restaurants that were left out receive a fair chance to access the necessary funds to save their business and support their employees.



Thank you for your service and partnership in supporting America's Hispanic and minority owned businesses as well as the more than 63.5 million Latinos/as living in America. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to C. LeRoy Cavazos-Reyna, Vice President of Government and International Affairs via phone at 956-844-9628 or email at [LCavazos@ushcc.com](mailto:LCavazos@ushcc.com). We commend you for your leadership in the United States Congress and look forward to a positive outcome on this important legislative matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ramiro Cavazos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the last name "Cavazos" being more prominent.

Ramiro A. Cavazos  
President & CEO  
U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

CC: The Honorable Ben Cardin, United States Senate  
The Honorable Roger Wicker, United States Senate  
The Honorable Susan Collins, United States Senate  
The Honorable Roy Blunt, United States Senate  
The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith, United States Senate  
The Honorable Joni Ernst, United States Senate  
The Honorable Bill Cassidy, United States Senate  
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, United States Senate  
The Honorable Raul Ruiz, Chairman, Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC)