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Restaurants Statewide Applaud Lawmakers for Modernizing Illinois' Culinary and Hospitality Industries

SB398 will increase sales tax revenue for local municipalities and help create more jobs

(SPRINGFIELD; May 31, 2015) – In a measure designed to capitalize on one of Illinois' main economic engines, lawmakers in Springfield today approved legislation that will help advance Illinois' Culinary and Hospitality industry. SB398, or the **Culinary and Hospitality Modernization Act**, will not only help drive more sales taxes into municipal coffers but will create a better trained workforce in restaurants and bars across the state.

The bill, sponsored by State Representative Sara Feigenholtz (D-Chicago) and State Senator Antonio Muñoz (D-Chicago), updates the Liquor Control Act to modernize Illinois' robust culinary and hospitality industries by increasing training standards for industry workers and permits temporary price changes and other marketing tools allowing the industry to grow and better compete with other regional markets.

"For over two years the Illinois Restaurant Association has been working with key stakeholders to modernize the Liquor Control Act. We applaud the leadership and support of Representative Feigenholtz and Senator Muñoz for understanding the needs of our industry throughout the state," said Illinois Restaurant Association President & CEO Sam Toia. "This bill provides restaurants and bars with a fair opportunity to expand their customer base through modern marketing techniques. Ultimately, it will drive sales tax revenue and continue to propel Illinois as the world class culinary and hospitality destination it is today."

In 2015, Illinois restaurants supported more than 529,000 jobs or 9% of Illinois' workforce. This year alone, restaurants in Illinois are projected to generate more than \$23 billion in sales. In 2014, eating and drinking places in Illinois generated nearly \$1.8 billion in state and local sales taxes.

"A thriving restaurant and hospitality industry means a thriving economy in Illinois. People travel far and wide for great food and great experiences. That means more money spent on hotels and other ancillary businesses throughout our state. It just makes good financial sense to give these businesses the tools they need to succeed and better train employees in a major job sectors in Illinois," said Rep. Feigenholtz.

"I have witnessed the restaurant and hospitality industry help transform a city like Chicago into the world-wide tourism destination it is today, and I am proud to support the industry's continued growth which helps build economies all over our great state," said Sen. Muñoz.

SB398 updates certain areas of Illinois' 1934 Liquor Control Act while maintaining some of the act's longstanding traditions:

- Maintains home rule jurisdiction allowing local units of government to keep local control of alcohol related ordinances.
- Maintains prohibition on 2 for 1 sale of alcoholic drinks.
- Maintains prohibition on increasing the volume of alcohol in a drink without proportionally increasing the price.
- Requires mandatory Beverage Alcohol Sellers and Servers Education and Training (BASSET) for all alcohol servers in Illinois.
- Streamlines the process for hotels to manage and pursue a single liquor license on premises owned and operated by the hotel.
- Defines and permits meal packages, entertainment packages, and party packages, including wristband deals.
- Permits discounted drinks during a specified time period of the day, with stipulations on the following:
 - Drinks may not be discounted for more than 4 hours per day and not more than 15 hours per week.
 - Notice of the discount of alcohol drinks must be made publicly available 7 days prior to the specified time.
 - The drink may not be discounted between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and the licensed premise's closing hour.
 - The price of alcoholic drinks must not be changed during the time that it is discounted.

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