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COALITION OF LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS LEADERS CALLS ON CITY COUNCIL TO PROTECT FLEXIBLE, PART-TIME JOBS AND KEEP NEW YORK CITY'S RESTAURANT AND RETAIL INDUSTRIES THRIVING

Proposed Legislation Takes Aim at New York City's Vibrant Restaurant and Retail Industries

New York, NY- *We Serve New Yorkers*, a coalition of local small businesses, employers and employees announced today a campaign calling on the New York City Council to protect the city's restaurant and retail industries by opposing proposed legislation that would greatly restrict worker scheduling flexibility.

A group of 20 restaurant owners and operators kicked off this effort on February 8th by meeting with nine City Council members about the proposed legislation, misleadingly referred to as the "Fair Workweek" bills. These bills would set a series of strict scheduling mandates that would have serious repercussions for the employees they are intended to help both in the restaurant industry, as well as the retail industry. Many employees working in the city's restaurants and retail stores rely on scheduling flexibility and part-time work to pursue passions in other industries, take care of family or work toward higher education degrees.

"Nothing is more important to New York City restaurant operators than the health, safety and satisfaction of their team members," said **Kevin Dugan, New York City Regional Director for the New York State Restaurant Association**. "Mayor de Blasio and City Council members need to understand the scheduling proposals would greatly restrict the part-time work and flexibility that restaurant employees rely on and value. The *We Serve New Yorkers* coalition will focus on educating the Mayor's Office and City Council officials about the consequences of these bills for business owners and employees."

If passed, repercussions for both employees and employers would include:

- Strained relations between employers and employees when trying to provide part-time and flexible shifts;
- Fewer opportunities for New Yorkers to supplement income with part-time work;
- A more difficult process for employees to get shifts covered; and,
- Financial hardships in the form of excessive fines imposed on employers who simply want to staff their small businesses.

New York City's strong restaurant and retail industries provide hundreds of thousands of jobs for New Yorkers. Restrictive mandates would only undermine the businesses within these industries, making it harder for local restaurants and retailers to provide growth opportunities to employees.

“Small businesses in New York’s vibrant restaurant and retail industries rely on flexibility in employee scheduling. It’s something that both employers and employees benefit from,” said **Thomas J. Grech, Executive Director, Queens Chamber of Commerce**. “The recent snowstorm is a perfect example of the need for flexibility. If the legislation passes as written, employees who drive to work would take unnecessary risks during snowstorms—and other weather events—since restaurant managers would no longer have the right to contact another employee who wants to cover the shift. This is one of many practical examples of why this legislation is flawed.”

Many of the restaurants and retailers that would be affected by this legislation are small businesses that are operating on very thin margins. Imposing a one-size-fits-all approach to regulating scheduling without input from the industry itself would increase the burden on the city’s small businesses, stifle business growth and harm those employees who value flexibility and part-time work.

We Serve New Yorkers is a coalition of local businesses, employers and employees that are working together to keep New York City’s restaurant and retail sectors thriving. To learn more, visit www.WeServeNewYorkers.com.