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## **Maryland Restaurants Increase Presence in Annapolis**

### ***Greater Representation before State and Local Governments to Benefit Restaurant Operators throughout Maryland***

Columbia, MD—The Restaurant Association of Maryland recently announced the addition of a second in-house government affairs specialist to enhance its overall capabilities of representing the industry on public policy. As of late January, emerging issues impacting the industry will be faced by two State of Maryland Registered Lobbyists: Melvin Thompson, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs and newly registered Kesa Bruce, Government Affairs Liaison for the Restaurant Association of Maryland.

The united voice of the restaurant industry in Maryland has assisted the Association in attaining a number of wins on behalf of the industry and advancing its cause to ‘promote, protect and improve’ the industry. The Restaurant Association’s full-time lobbyists are the eyes, ears and voice of its members and the industry as a whole in Maryland. “I am happy to have Kesa join our lobbying staff. Our members tell us government affairs and regulatory compliance support are extremely important benefits. While we have earned a solid reputation for industry victories in Annapolis, Kesa will allow RAM to improve upon our success by broadening our lobbying efforts at the local level,” commented Thompson.

The Restaurant Association of Maryland is well versed on the extraordinary challenges facing foodservice operations in this difficult economy. Increased representation in the legislative arena will allow restaurateurs to devote the time necessary to overcome the uncertain economy without leaving potentially onerous policies unattended. “Our industry can take refuge in the knowledge that the Restaurant Association of Maryland now has two lobbyists proactively vying for their business’ best interests,” said Paul Hartgen, President & CEO of the Association. “With the significant increase in foodservice regulatory issues at the state and local levels, additional lobbying resources are critical to protecting our industry from burdensome policies, especially as we continue to face a challenging economy,” added Thompson.

For more information regarding current legislation and regulatory laws please visit [www.marylandrestaurants.com/laws](http://www.marylandrestaurants.com/laws) or contact RAM directly at 410.290.6800.

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The Restaurant Association of Maryland (RAM) has remained relevant to restaurateurs for over 80 years by maintaining core principles born out of the first national financial crisis. In 1927 a small group of Baltimore area restaurateurs met to deal with some of the challenges facing the economy and the Foodservice Industry. Today, RAM is a 2,000 member strong statewide trade association operated for the purpose of promoting, protecting and improving the foodservice industry in the State of Maryland. Since the very beginning, the Association has been run by restaurateurs and suppliers working not only for the benefit of dues paying members, but also for the restaurant industry as a whole. For more information about the restaurant industry in Maryland please visit our website at [www.marylandrestaurants.com](http://www.marylandrestaurants.com).