

Wednesday 20 October 2021

The Hon. Rob Lucas MLC  
Treasurer of South Australia  
Level 8  
200 Victoria Square  
ADELAIDE SA 5000

**RE: Holidays (Christmas Day) Amendment Bill 2021**

Dear Treasurer Lucas,

I write to you regarding the Holidays (Christmas Day) Amendment Bill 2021. It is Restaurant & Catering Australia's belief passing this Bill would present extra costs to business on what will be one of their busiest trading days.

R&CA is the national industry association representing the interests of more than 48,000 restaurants, cafés and catering businesses across Australia. The café, restaurant and catering sector is vitally important to the national economy, generating over \$37 billion in retail turnover each year as well as employing 450,000 people.

Over 93 per cent of businesses in the café, restaurant and catering sector are small businesses, employing 19 people or less. In South Australia R&CA represents 2,687 restaurants and cafes who employ 42,078 South Australians.

One of the highest costs for any hospitality business is the price of labour. R&CA's 2019-2020 Benchmarking Survey indicates that wages and salaries represented 32 percent of overall business expenditure. This was down from 42 percent the previous year and was mostly attributable to the effects of the COVID-19 lockdowns. With South Australia at the present stage in COVID restrictions that it is, it is safe to say that the 32 percent figure will most probably return to the 42 percent mark in the 2021 Benchmarking Survey.

For the 93 percent of our industry that is small business, having to pay penalty rates on this day will mean that they will probably stay closed, rendering the point of this Bill redundant.

Not only will consumers miss out on dining in a restaurant or café or purchase takeaway, but it will also mean that workers will miss out on day's wage. The hospitality sector is the largest employer of young people with 43 percent of the industry being 15-24 years of age.

Given the lack of interstate and international tourism coming into South Australia due to COVID-19 this will be devastating to the local South Australian economy.

We look forward to hearing from you on this matter and thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Wes Lambert', written in a cursive style.

**Wes Lambert CPA FGIA MAICD**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Restaurant and Catering Australia