



Member Update

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By Tony Burton • Feb 16, 2026

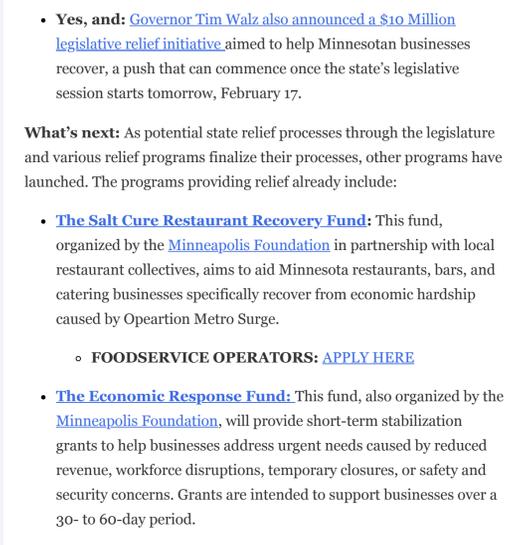
Smart Brevity® count: 4.5 mins...1188 words

In today's February 16, 2026 Update:

- **Minnesota ICE Operations:** [Operation Metro Surge Ends](#), Recovery Begins
- **Real Impact, Real MN Campaign:** Join Before Feb 22 Launch
- **Wednesday:** Hospitality Conditions Survey Opens
- **The BIG Schmooze:** [Join Us Thursday](#) at Pints & Paddle
- **Operators:** [Share Your Paid Leave Experience](#)
- **2026 Advocacy Opportunities:** [Register Today](#) for 2026 Advocacy Opportunities
- **ServSafe Offerings:** [Find A Class Near You](#)
- **In the News**

Is your organization interested in sponsorship? [Email us](#) to learn more.

ICE Operations in Minnesota: Operation Metro Surge Ending, Road to Recovery Begins



Border Czar Homan announced the end of Operation Metro Surge on Thursday, February 12, 2026.

Drawback imminent: Last week, Border Czar Tom Homan [announced Operation Metro Surge is ending](#), and that ICE Operations in Minnesota will return to pre-surge levels.

- **Yes, and:** [Governor Tim Walz also announced a \\$10 Million legislative relief initiative](#) aimed to help Minnesotan businesses recover, a push that can commence once the state's legislative session starts tomorrow, February 17.

What's next: As potential state relief processes through the legislature and various relief programs finalize their processes, other programs have launched. The programs providing relief already include:

- **The Salt Cure Restaurant Recovery Fund:** This fund, organized by the [Minneapolis Foundation](#) in partnership with local restaurant collectives, aims to aid Minnesota restaurants, bars, and catering businesses specifically recover from economic hardship caused by Operation Metro Surge.
 - **FOODSERVICE OPERATORS:** [APPLY HERE](#)

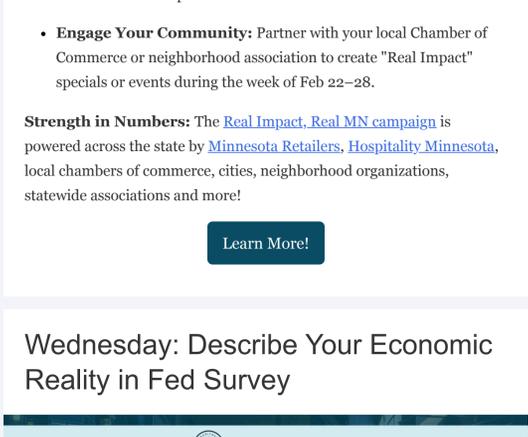
- **The Economic Response Fund:** This fund, also organized by the [Minneapolis Foundation](#), will provide short-term stabilization grants to help businesses address urgent needs caused by reduced revenue, workforce disruptions, temporary closures, or safety and security concerns. Grants are intended to support businesses over a 30- to 60-day period.
 - **SMALL BUSINESS OPERATORS:** [APPLY HERE](#)

- **LEDC Emergency Relief Fund:** This fund, launched by the [Latino Economic Development Center \(LEDC\)](#), originally aimed to support Saint Paul East Side Latino-owned businesses facing sudden financial strain, but now invites all immigrant-owned businesses to apply as they coordinate further funding opportunities.
 - **IMMIGRANT-OWNED OPERATORS:** [APPLY HERE](#)

Go deeper: We've been compiling a list of resources for those most impacted by Minnesota's federal occupation on our [Immigration Resources](#) webpage.

[Browse Our Resources](#)

Add Your Community to Our Real Impact, Real MN Campaign!



Calling all marketing teams and operators—we need you! Last week we announced the [Real Impact Real MN](#) campaign on socials—a statewide initiative designed to encourage Minnesotans to "show up" for the hospitality and retail spaces that anchor their communities.

How to get involved: As with any good party, the more the merrier. We've made it easy to get involved. Here is how you can participate and capture the momentum:

- **Download the Toolkit:** Access [ready-to-use social media graphics, posters, and messaging](#) to let your customers know you are part of the Real Impact Real MN movement.
 - **Pro-tip:** When finalizing your designs, replace *[Community]* in the initiative's [editable canva files](#) with your own city, town, economic district, or area. Personalize the designs further by replacing the background provided with community-specific imagery.

- **Share Your Story:** Use the campaign hashtags to highlight your team and the "real people" behind your doors. Putting a face to your business creates a powerful incentive for locals to visit.

- **Engage Your Community:** Partner with your local Chamber of Commerce or neighborhood association to create "Real Impact" specials or events during the week of Feb 22–28.

Strength in Numbers: The [Real Impact, Real MN campaign](#) is powered across the state by [Minnesota Retailers](#), [Hospitality Minnesota](#), local chambers of commerce, cities, neighborhood organizations, statewide associations and more!

[Learn More!](#)

Wednesday: Describe Your Economic Reality in Fed Survey

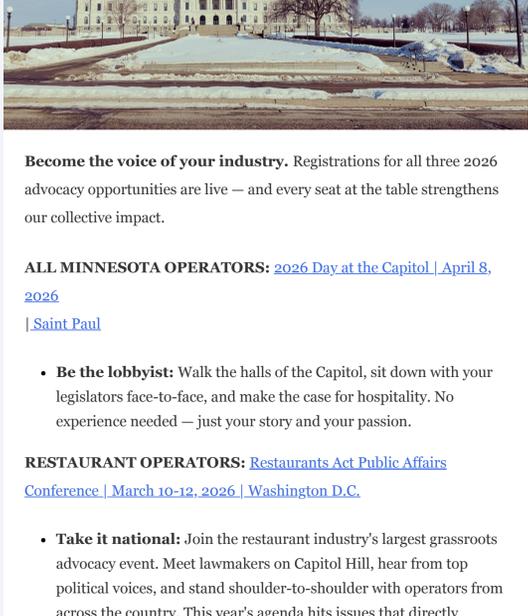


Your voice fuels our advocacy. Hospitality Minnesota is joining forces with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis this Wednesday, February 18 for the first 2026 Hospitality Conditions Survey.

- **Why it matters:** With statewide immigration enforcement remaining steady, real-time input from operators is critical to making our case at every level.

What your participation revealed last time: [Key takeaways from September's Hospitality Conditions Survey](#) painted a clear picture of an industry navigating declining revenue, harmful tariffs, and compounding obstacles — evidence we put to work in every policy conversation.

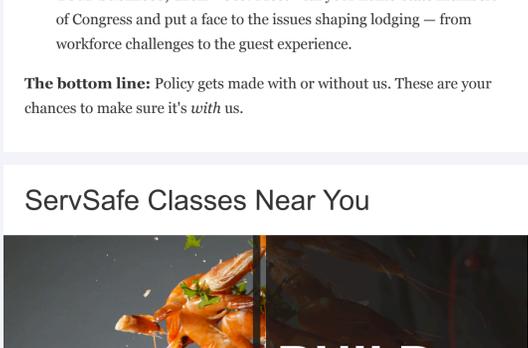
Thursday: Join Other Industry Leaders for The BIG Schmooze



You're invited! [Join us Thursday at Pints & Paddle for The BIG Schmooze!](#) This free networking event is a laid-back, come-as-you-are gathering that brings together Allied Business members with restaurant, hotel, and resort operators from across Minnesota. Registration encouraged!

[Register Now!](#)

Your Perspective is Needed: Share Your Paid Leave Experience



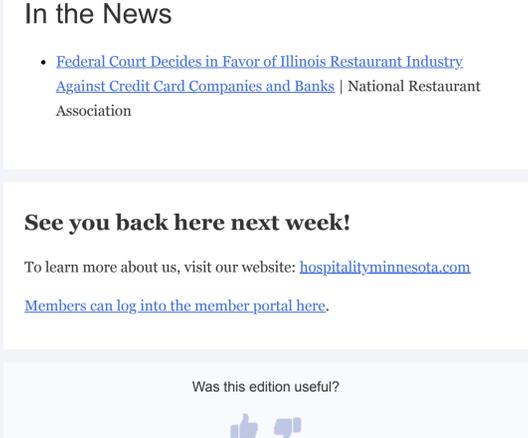
We need your data. Hospitality Minnesota is collecting member feedback on the state's Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) program to shape our advocacy strategy for the 2026 legislative session.

The big picture: Legislators need to hear more than just "it's difficult"—they need specific data on:

- Expected administrative burdens.
- The financial impact of the 0.88% and 0.66% premiums.
- Staffing challenges related to the 20-week maximum leave.

[Share Your Experience](#)

REGISTER TODAY: 2026 Advocacy Opportunities



Become the voice of your industry. Registrations for all three 2026 advocacy opportunities are live — and every seat at the table strengthens our collective impact.

ALL MINNESOTA OPERATORS: [2026 Day at the Capitol | April 8, 2026 | Saint Paul](#)

- **Be the lobbyist:** Walk the halls of the Capitol, sit down with your legislators face-to-face, and make the case for hospitality. No experience needed — just your story and your passion.

RESTAURANT OPERATORS: [Restaurants Act Public Affairs Conference | March 10-12, 2026 | Washington D.C.](#)

- **Take it national:** Join the restaurant industry's largest grassroots advocacy event. Meet lawmakers on Capitol Hill, hear from top political voices, and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with operators from across the country. This year's agenda hits issues that directly impact your bottom line:
 - **Immigration Reform** — This isn't abstract policy for us. We know firsthand how workforce disruptions are affecting our businesses. Comprehensive reform is both a policy priority and an economic imperative for our industry.
 - **Credit Card Swipe Fees** — Efforts are underway to inject real competition into credit card networks and bring down the fees that cut directly into your margins.
 - **Preserving the USMCA** — With the U.S.–Mexico–Canada Agreement up for review this summer, we need to ensure food and beverage products remain duty-free.

- **New Hotel Block Added:** Due to a strong registration bump, we've added an additional hotel block at the Hilton Garden Inn DC Downtown for March 9–12 with a cut-off date of February 23. [Click here to book.](#)

LODGING OPERATORS: [Hotels on the Hill | May 12-23, 2026 | Washington D.C.](#)

- **Your business, their vote:** Meet with your home-state members of Congress and put a face to the issues shaping lodging — from workforce challenges to the guest experience.

The bottom line: Policy gets made with or without us. These are your chances to make sure it's *with* us.

ServSafe Classes Near You

Did you know: Minnesota law requires at least one certified food manager on staff at nearly every food establishment.

[Check our Event Calendar](#) for upcoming ServSafe classes!

- [Roseville - February 17](#)
- [St. Cloud - February 18](#)
- [Minneapolis - February 24](#)
- [Fridley - February 25](#)

[Find A Class Near You!](#)

In the News

- [Federal Court Decides in Favor of Illinois Restaurant Industry Against Credit Card Companies and Banks](#) | National Restaurant Association

See you back here next week!

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