

**Maura Gast**

**From:** Texas Restaurant Association <communications@txrestaurant.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 4, 2025 9:01 PM  
**To:** Maura Gast  
**Subject:** Special session, new laws, and more – Texas Restaurant Industry Update

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*Thursday, September 4, 2025*



## *A Note from Emily*

Happy September, friends! I hope you had a nice Labor Day weekend.

Hard to imagine we're firmly in the second half of the year already. Maybe because it's still over 100 degrees most days, but I'm just not quite ready to embrace the fact that it's fall. Still, we're moving a mile a minute, so there isn't much time to complain about the weather.

This week, I traveled to speak to the Women in Restaurant Leadership (WiRL) Workshop and the Texas Tourism Women's Conference. At both events I got to visit with key leaders across our industry. Plus, at the second, I connected with Mayor Parker of Fort Worth—an ally on childcare, tourism promotion, and more. Kelsey also

traveled to Houston to speak about our childcare work at the Greater Houston Partnership. The business and community leaders in attendance were impressed by our commitment to expanding and strengthening Texas' workforce. Kelsey also made several connections that will be helpful as Mike and Stephanie on our team expand our reach in this critical market.

Early this morning, the second special legislative session that Governor Abbott called to address THC regulations, redistricting, and the July 4<sup>th</sup> flooding came to a close. As you know, we used the special sessions to assemble [a large business coalition](#) to advocate for adding small businesses to an existing disaster response loan program that was already in place in Texas for micro businesses. The legislature agreed this should be a priority and added our language to SB 2—the primary disaster response bill. [SB 2 passed both legislative chambers with our language weeks ago, but last night the bill died when the two chambers didn't take a final vote to resolve differences on other sections in the bill.](#) This is unfortunately one of those times where we did our job, but factors outside of our control decided the outcome.

While this is an incredibly disheartening setback, the good news is we've assembled near unanimous agreement that the program needs to be fixed. We appreciate the leaders in both legislative chambers who included our language in the priority bill. There is some talk that there will be another special session after some time has passed and tempers cool. Whether we get another special or must tackle this again in the next regular session, please know that we have made tremendous progress and are committed to getting this done.

The special sessions also ended in a stalemate on two other issues we were tracking closely—local government spending/property taxes and THC regulations. The bills on both topics also failed to pass due to disagreements between legislators.

While the special session wound down, our team was busy spreading the word about [new laws from the regular session that took effect this past Monday.](#) Hopefully by now you know about SB 1008, Consistent Restaurant Regulations, our signature bill of the 2025 Texas Legislative Session. Make sure to read below for the details and to download resources from our toolkit that you can use to ensure your local government partners understand the new provisions.

One other note I want to flag on new laws: we're seeing a lot of incorrect information being spread on the topic of shrimp labeling. A new law did take effect on September 1 that essentially prevents restaurants from describing their shrimp as Gulf or American shrimp if it was imported from a foreign country. Unfortunately, some are either confused or are intentionally misleading restaurants by saying that they must identify the country of origin on their menus or make similar changes that are not

required by the new law. We have also heard rumors that the TRA supported a menu labeling requirement; again, this is simply not true. We have consistently and successfully pushed back against menu labeling requirements that would be difficult and expensive for restaurants to comply with in this supply chain environment.

If you're wondering what is actually in the new shrimp bill, and how we stepped in to protect restaurants, I highly recommend the webinar we hosted last month with our partners at Warren Kalyan Mattocks. You can find the recording and the slides in our Members Only Resource Center in the Webinars section [here](#).

Lastly, I want to acknowledge that last week marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. Many in our community were deeply impacted by this storm; some have permanently moved to Texas, and many have family or loved ones that were or are still in New Orleans. To any who have been impacted, know that we appreciate you and at the TRA we remain committed to learning how we can be a better partner when disasters strike. It's why I'm so proud of the work Kelsey and our team are doing to get small businesses added to the disaster recovery loan program, plus the work Heather is leading with the [TX Restaurant Relief Fund](#). Restaurants are simply too important to communities for us to not have these kinds of safety nets in place.

As I say so often, thank you for all that you do for your teams and your communities. Please be good to yourselves and to each other.

Best,  
Emily & the TRA Team

## TODAY'S MENU

### [DAILY SPECIALS](#)

- TRA Making Headlines
- A Note from the Foundation
- Consistent Restaurant Regs Took Effect 9/1
- Tariffs in the Courts
- Last Call: NRA Immigration Survey
- Prosper Accelerate in Dallas

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