JBF Contacts for Assistance

For assistance with press coordination please reach out to Emily Solomon at impactforward@jamesbeard.org.

Outreach to Congress:

Before starting your outreach, please email Emily Solomon at impactforward@jamesbeard.org to discuss prioritizing your Member of Congress, U.S. Senator(s), or all 3. The instructions below focus on steps for the U.S. Congress but can be replicated for the U.S. Senate. You can find your U.S. Senators here.
How Tos! | The Ask

U.S. Congress | In-District Meeting Planning

Step 1: Confirm what congressional district you live in and that your restaurant(s) is/are in by visiting: House of Representatives. If you live in or your restaurant is in a zip code that is split between congressional districts, you will need to enter in the full address at the next prompt – if this is needed, the website will automatically prompt you to enter in this information.

Step 2: Click through to your member of Congress website and go to the “contact us” section then select office location. Some members of Congress will have multiple in-district office locations, look for the one that is closest to your residence or restaurant.

Step 3: There should be a phone number listed for the in-district office – call that number and ask to speak to the in-district scheduler. If the in-district scheduler is not in, make sure to leave your name, business information, and full contact information and relay you are reaching out to schedule an in-district meeting with the Member of Congress on Farm Bill reauthorization and that you would be flexible on where to meet – but would welcome hosting the Member of Congress at your restaurant.

Before you end the call, make sure to:

- Ask the person you speak with for the in-district scheduler's name, direct number, and email address.
- Confirm the person you were speaking with name, title, and email. If by chance you got the district director, ask for their cell phone number.
- If you did not get the district director, ask for the district director’s name, email, and direct number.

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They may ask you to fill out a meeting request form and will either advise you where the form is on the website or send you a link to this form. Fill it out with the relevant details – similar to the email step below.

**Step 4:** Shortly after the call, follow up with an email to both the person you spoke with on the phone and the scheduler.

**Example Text**

**Subject Line:** In-District Meeting Request with [Insert Congress Member Name] | Owner of [Insert Restaurant Name]

Dear [insert scheduler name] and [insert name of staff person you spoke with],

Thank you for speaking to me [insert the date]. We are excited to possibly meet with [insert Member of Congress name] to discuss farm bill reauthorization.

[Feel free to edit this paragraph to fit your business’s situation in how it has been impacted by climate change.] Climate change is increasing and fluctuating costs, creating ingredient shortages, and spurring operational disruptions due to extreme weather events. Local farmers, who are vital to our supply chain, face unpredictable yields, increased vulnerability to pests and diseases, and altered growing seasons, further harming my business and theirs. I am looking forward to meeting with you to share how climate change is impacting my business and our community. We have xx employees and have been in business in our community for XX years, and climate change is making staying in business a much greater challenge.

We look forward to hearing back from you to confirm the Congress[man/woman]’s availability. And, if they are not available, then the possibility of meeting with the district director.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Restaurant Name]
[Restaurant or your home address, whichever is in the district]
[Phone number] [Email Address] [Social Media Handles]

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Step 5 | Follow Up If you don’t have a response in 2 weeks acknowledging the email request, follow up on your direct email chain and also leave a message at the office. Flag this for impactforward@jamesbeard.org.
Meeting Coordination

Step 1 Once you have confirmation of the meeting time, location, and if the Member of Congress or staff is able to participate, you will need to confirm the following.

- Who is your point of contact with the office moving forward for the meeting – likely will be the scheduler.
- Make sure to the point of contact’s name, title, email, and cell phone number.

Step 2 | Meeting Format

- Confirm if the meeting will be in person at the district office, another location, or virtually.
- Once you confirm the meeting location, you will need to verify who will be at the meeting and share that information with your point of contact at the Member of Congress’s office.
- You will need to include, name, address, phone number, email, and business if applicable. Try to keep speakers between 3 to 4 people – no more or it gets too long.
- Make sure you confirm in writing (via email) the meeting time, and location, and if the meeting is taking place at your restaurant or at a producer’s business – confirm who will be traveling with the Member of Congress that day and get their cell phone number.

Step 3 | Meeting Agenda

Assignments | Before the Meeting

Meeting Logistics

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• Assign someone take notes from the conversation on what is discussed.
• Have a discussion beforehand with the other speakers and decide the order people will speak and what subject each of you will focus on.
  o Decide between your attendees who will speak to what points and for how long. Make sure you incorporate points about the impact of climate change from the James Beard Foundation’s Climate Solutions for Restaurant Survival Campaign toolkit and also put the impact in your own words to your business.
• Have someone make sure materials are present from JBF, the JBF team will provide you with copies of The Climate Reality for Independent Restaurants A Deep Dive into the Supply Chain and New Economic Realities and the Climate Solutions for Restaurant Survival Leave Behind.
  o Once your event is confirmed make sure you email impactforward@jamesbeard.org and they will mail you materials for your event.
• Make sure someone has a camera or phone to take a photo before or after the meeting with the Member of Congress or their staffer if the Member of Congress cannot attend.

Meeting Agenda | Start Time [time]

Speaker 1:

• Thank & welcome the Member of Congress or staffer.
• Include some information from what they have done in the district, you can find this on their Official Office website (do not refer to their campaign website).
• Introduce why you are doing the meeting. Share out the meeting materials with the Member of Congress or staff person.
• Introductions on who is joining you for the meeting.
• Briefly state how climate change has impacted your business and the policy solutions you support and segue to speaker 2.

Speaker 2:

• Briefly state how climate change has impacted your business and the policy solutions you support and segue to speaker 3.

Speaker 3:

• Briefly state how climate change has impacted your business and the policy solutions you support and ask the Member of Congress what solutions they support?

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Post Meeting

Make sure to get a photo and share on social media. Use the campaign #hashtag in your post and also tag the Member of Congress you met with on social media. #JBFClimateCampaign and #JBFChefsLead

Please email photos from the event and any pertinent notes impactforward@jamesbeard.org.

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Talking Points for Engaging Reporters, Policymakers or Customers

The Importance of Independent Restaurants

- Independent Restaurants contribute significantly to the social and economic fabric of our communities, reflecting our diversity, culture and creativity.
- Restaurants bring people and communities together, providing a place to gather, celebrate and collaborate.
- But independent restaurants are not just part of the social fabric of our communities—we are a powerful economic force, providing jobs to millions, generating hundreds of billions in revenue, and supporting local agriculture and businesses.
- Here at my restaurant, we employ XXX amount of people and buy directly from local producers, such as XXX. On average, we spend XXX purchasing products from local, community producers.
- Nationally, the independent restaurant industry is the 5th largest employer in the U.S., employing 3% of the U.S. workforce—totaling 3.9 million workers, generating $75 billion in wages in local economies across the U.S. and over $209 billion in revenue.

Impact of Climate Change

- To be blunt, unmitigated climate change threatens the very survival of the independent restaurant industry.

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• Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, floods, drought, fire, and shifts in agricultural patterns are driving up costs for an already vulnerable industry and undermining our ability to meet consumers’ expectations for high-quality meals at all price points.
• The impact of climate change manifests in rising and fluctuating costs, ingredients and shortages.
• Due to climate change, local farmers, who are vital to our supply chain, face unpredictable yields, increased vulnerability to pests and diseases, and altered growing seasons, making farming and ranching more expensive.
• Extreme weather caused by climate change also causes massive operational disruptions.
• For example, here at [insert restaurant name] we have seen [insert specific example of cost increase due to climate change, lack of ingredients or disruption due to extreme weather].
• These added climate change-related costs are harming restaurants that now need to adjust by charging consumers more, laying off workers or, worse, shutting down altogether.

**James Beard Foundation Climate Solutions for Restaurant Survival” campaign**

• In response to this challenge, I am lending my voice to the James Beard Foundation’s “Climate Solutions for Restaurant Survival” campaign to drive action at the federal level.
• Through the “Climate Solutions for Restaurant Survival” campaign, I will work with chefs from across the country to raise awareness, educate federal policy makers, and galvanize action to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
• Working together, we will make it clear to federal policy makers that climate change is not only an environmental crisis - it is a clear and present danger to a thriving independent restaurant industry.

What Congress Needs to Do

• It is imperative that federal policymakers take action to address this crisis.
• As a starting point, we need Congress to protect the $20 billion in conservation funding in the Farm Bill - which is under consideration now - that fights climate change and helps producers continue to source affordable produce.

• We need them to support conservation programs to help farmers implement practices that help mitigate climate change, increase yields and source sustainable ingredients for restaurants.

• We need them to provide climate-smart technical support and capacity building to address the volatile aspects of farming and implement ecological strategies to make land more resilient.

• We need support for local and sustainable farming practices that diversify our supply chain, and provide opportunities for small, midsize, and disenfranchised farmers to thrive.

• And we need sustainable food policies and practices such as crop diversification, regenerative farming, efficient water and energy use, and reduced farm waste.

• All of this will help the producers who supply us and lead the larger fight against climate change.