



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Ohio Restaurant Association Endorses
Mike DeWine for Governor and Jon Husted for Lt. Governor**

COLUMBUS, Ohio (March 22, 2022) – The Ohio Restaurant Association (ORA) Board of Directors today enthusiastically announced its endorsement of Mike DeWine for Governor and Jon Husted for Lieutenant Governor.

“Mike DeWine is an advocate for Ohio’s business community and has demonstrated an appreciation for the unique challenges that face the restaurant community” said ORA president and CEO John Barker. “This has never been truer than over the past two years during the pandemic where he consistently reached out to listen and understand our industry’s complex issues.”

Barker added, “Governor DeWine and Lieutenant Governor Husted spent countless hours with the ORA and our restaurant, foodservice, and hospitality industry leaders, and we are thankful for their thoughtful approach. The Governor’s Restaurant Advisory Group developed the roadmap to safely reopen restaurants in Ohio in May of 2020. We partnered on the Ohio Restaurant Promise for guests and employees, and the state provided a grant program with more than \$200 million in COVID relief for impacted operators. These steps and more enabled Ohio to fare significantly better than other states that suffered from overreach on mandates and restrictions, which devastated their hospitality communities.”

“It is critical to our members that Ohio’s leaders are balanced and pro-business, pro-economic growth, and pro-job creator, especially now as our economy continues to rebound and we position restaurants to thrive again. Because of this, DeWine and Husted have earned our endorsement in the 2022 election.”

Barker added that DeWine’s track record of support on issues important to ORA members was key to the decision to endorse him again. The ORA endorsed DeWine and Husted in 2018.

“Mike and Fran DeWine are long-time supporters of the ORA Education Foundation’s [Ohio ProStart® program](#), a two-year high school program that connects students in the classroom with real-world experiences, and develops the next generation of leaders in restaurant management, culinary arts and the foodservice industry,” said Sheila Trautner, Chair of the ORA Board of Directors. “The DeWines have awarded several [scholarships](#) to Ohio ProStart students over the

years to help them further their post-secondary education, and also personally supported the [Ohio Restaurant Employee Relief Fund](#).”

The ORA honored Husted with its [Public Official of the Year Award](#) in 2021. Husted was recognized for his extensive interaction with the ORA since 2018, weekly calls with restaurant leaders during the pandemic, and consistent focus on decisions to support operators, employees, and communities.

“Ohio’s restaurant industry is the state’s second-largest private sector employer, with more than \$20 billion in annual sales and 500,000-plus employees,” Barker said. “As Ohio attracts new businesses such as Intel and helps existing business grow, it’s critical that our top leaders have an in-depth understanding of the impact our industry has on the economy and the vibrancy of our communities. Mike DeWine and Jon Husted have a strong record of service to Ohio and its people, and they consistently demonstrate respect and compassion, which is particularly important to people in the hospitality industry.”

About the Ohio Restaurant Association

Since 1920, the Ohio Restaurant Association (ORA) has proudly served Ohio's restaurant and foodservice industry, with its members always being its number one priority. Founded on thought leadership and focused on finding sound business solutions for their members, the ORA offers advocacy, education, events and select products & services. For more information, visit [**ohiorestaurant.org**](http://ohiorestaurant.org).

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