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November 9, 2022

County Manager Mark Schwartz
2100 Clarendon Blvd.
Suite 302
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Future of Outdoor Dining (FOOD) Study

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

The Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington (RAMW) thanks you and your office for the opportunity to provide comment on the Future of Outdoor Dining (FOOD) Study and incorporating the successful Temporary Outdoor Seating Areas (TOSAs) into Arlington's existing rules for permanent outdoor cafes.

Established in 1920, RAMW is an advocate, resource, and community for our more than 1,400 members in the Washington metropolitan area, many of whom are proud Arlington residents and restaurateurs. Our community includes everyone from beloved neighborhood spots, to family owned restaurants, to first-time entrepreneurs, to homegrown restaurant groups, to beloved regional and national favorites. Together, we are one of the region's largest employers and leading contributors to local revenues.

RAMW fully supports making TOSAs an ongoing feature of Arlington outdoor dining. TOSAs have been wildly successful in its efficiency and efficacy of maximizing use of public space for its greatest return. Additionally TOSAs are popular among residents, and we have not yet maximized either the demand or capacity for outdoor dining. For these reasons, we welcome the introduction of regulations that provide reason for restaurateurs to further invest in TOSAs and incentivizes the establishment of new outdoor dining. For example, unique outdoor dining/drinking venues like the Terraces on 23rd Street and other TOSAs built on private property that previously served as parking spaces are necessary workforce amenities.

Our only wish for TOSAs is to enjoy more of them, and we would like to see location eligibility criteria expand, for example:

- Create a regulatory framework that enables TOSAs located on private parking previously needed to meet parking minimums to become permanent in metro corridors.
- Existing TOSA regulations prohibit the ability to seek permits for live entertainment/music within them. Create a regulatory framework for live music in existing TOSAs compatible with surrounding communities and would be in line with existing County goals to create vibrant

streetscapes and support local small businesses.

- Existing TOSA requirements require restaurants to eliminate indoor seats for seats added outdoors. The rationale is that if sudden inclement weather hit, patrons would move indoors and exceed existing capacity limits. Similar requirements are not imposed in other jurisdictions.

RAMW shares the same goals as you and other partners in this process, which is to continue a program that has contributed so much curbside vibrancy and economic activity to the County. We look forward to continuing to be a partner in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CTR' or similar initials.

Che Ruddell-Tabisola
Director, Government Affairs and Member Advocacy