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## **Gov. Wolf: More Than \$2.3 Million in COVID Relief Helping Lackawanna County Restaurants**

*Gov. Wolf secured \$145 million in pandemic relief for the hospitality industry*

**Old Forge, PA** – Governor Tom Wolf today visited Cafe Rinaldi in Old Forge to highlight \$2.3 million in state grants awarded to Lackawanna County restaurants adversely affected by the pandemic. The governor secured \$145 million for the [COVID-19 Hospitality Industry Recovery Program](#) (CHIRP) last year to provide pandemic relief to the restaurant and hotel industry in Pennsylvania.

“Restaurants and bars are an important part of the Lackawanna County economy, and this funding is helping them to rebound from the difficult times caused by the pandemic,” said Gov. Wolf. “My administration is proud to have secured \$145 million to support the industry statewide and I’m grateful to our local partners and the small businesses for their tremendous effort of the past year and a half.”

The governor was joined for a press conference in Old Forge by Sen. Marty Flynn, Rep. Bridget Kosierowski, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce President Bob Durkin, other local officials, and the owner of Café Rinaldi.

“These CHIRP grants helped the owners and employees of local businesses through very tough times,” said Sen. Marty Flynn. “These restaurants are vital to our area, allowing us to gather socially and making us a real community.”

“The COVID-19 Hospitality Industry Recovery Program was a great step forward to helping people, helping families and helping local businesses keep the doors open,” said Rep. Bridget Kosierowski. “It delivered nearly 150 million dollars to help our restaurants and hotels and theaters – and the people who work there. This was money for every single county across the commonwealth. This was real help for real people who had spent the last year fighting to

survive. Governor Wolf made this funding possible because he recognized that this funding would help put us in position to bounce back faster and reach greater heights.”

The Wolf Administration worked with counties and economic development partners to quickly send assistance to the hospitality industry.

Counties administered the funding through one or more designated Community Economic Development Organizations (CEDO) or Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI), which began processing applications from businesses in each county on March 15. All funding was distributed to businesses as of last week.

“Throughout this pandemic we at the Chamber have been proud to partner with The Commonwealth and Lackawanna County to play our part in addressing the financial, operational and health needs of our small businesses,” said Robert Durkin, President of Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce. “These funds have helped hundreds of business owners and thousands of employees sustain their operations in the face of the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19.”

Lackawanna County received \$2,374,844 in CHIRP funding from the state, which local officials supplemented with \$141,406 for a total of \$2,516,250. CHIRP grants were received by 171 businesses, including a \$25,000 grant for Café Rinaldi.

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