



**03/05/26**

Members of the Senate Business, Labor & Technology Committee

Colorado General Assembly

State Capitol

Denver, Colorado

Dear Members of the Senate Business, Labor & Technology Committee,

On behalf of the Colorado Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, which represents Hispanic-owned businesses across Colorado, we are writing to share our perspective regarding Senate Bill 26-134.

Independent restaurants and small businesses are essential to the economic vitality of our communities, and we strongly support thoughtful policies that help them succeed. Many of our members operate restaurants, food trucks, retail shops, and service businesses that face significant pressures from rising labor costs, insurance premiums, rent, and regulatory complexity.

We appreciate the intent behind Senate Bill 26-134 to provide relief to businesses facing these challenges. However, after reviewing the proposal and discussing the issue with members of our business community, we have concerns that the bill may create unintended consequences for many small and Hispanic-owned businesses and need to oppose at this point.

The recently released Denver restaurant report—based on months of engagement with restaurant operators—identified labor costs, insurance, and regulatory burdens as the most significant challenges facing the industry. Credit card swipe fees were not identified among the primary policy priorities in that report.

While SB 26-134 may provide some benefit across the marketplace, the financial impact of interchange fee changes tends to scale with transaction volume. As a result, the largest dollar benefits may accrue to businesses processing the highest volume of credit card transactions, including large national retailers and mega-retail chains.

At the same time, many smaller businesses—particularly those operating with simpler payment systems—may face technology or compliance costs associated with implementing the changes envisioned in the bill. For immigrant and Hispanic-owned businesses that often operate with limited administrative resources, these unintended burdens could offset the intended benefits.



We would also encourage policymakers to ask an important question: are there more effective ways to target relief directly to the independent restaurants and small businesses that need it most? Public policy should prioritize solutions that meaningfully support smaller operators without inadvertently strengthening the competitive advantages of the largest national retailers.

This concern is particularly relevant at a time when many small businesses are still recovering from what many describe as a “triple disruption”: the lingering impacts of the pandemic, the rapid shift toward online purchasing that has reshaped retail markets, and the increasing market dominance of large national retailers that has made it increasingly difficult for family-owned businesses to compete.

Small businesses remain the backbone of Colorado’s economy. They create jobs in our communities, generate significant tax revenue, and provide the local character and entrepreneurship that drive innovation and opportunity across our state. Hispanic-owned businesses in particular represent one of the fastest-growing segments of Colorado’s entrepreneurial economy and play a vital role in employment and economic activity in communities throughout the state.

For these reasons, we respectfully encourage the committee to carefully consider whether Senate Bill 26-134 will deliver meaningful relief to the small businesses it is intended to support, or whether it could create additional operational complexity for smaller operators while delivering the greatest financial benefits to the largest market participants.

We remain committed to working with policymakers to advance solutions that directly address the most pressing challenges facing independent restaurants and small businesses across Colorado.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to the people and businesses of our state.

Sincerely,

Tish Maes

Board Chair

Colorado Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Mike Ferrufino

President & CEO

Colorado Hispanic Chamber of Commerce