



270 Farmington Avenue, Suite 142- Farmington- Connecticut- 06032– www.ctrestaurant.org
Phone: (860) 278-8008

Testimony Before the Public Health Committee

February 28, 2018

HB 5158 AA Requiring Food Allergy Training in Restaurants

The Connecticut Restaurant Association (CRA) represents over 600 restaurants and affiliated businesses across the state. Our members range from quick serve to casual to fine dining establishments. The Connecticut hospitality industry employs an estimated 145,000 people, making up 9% of our states' workforce. Restaurants are a driving force in the state economy and generate tremendous tax revenue. Restaurants in Connecticut take allergies, food allergens, foodborne illnesses, contamination, and the safety of their customers and staff very seriously.

Many establishments have their own specific procedures in place to address each of the aforementioned issues but all are mandated by the Connecticut Public Health Code to employ two Qualified Food Operators. A QFO is defined as a food operator employed in a full time position who has demonstrated knowledge of safe food handling techniques including but not limited to food allergies. A QFO is required to train all other food preparation personnel, maintain written documentation of a training program and training records of individual employees, and make those records available to the local health department upon regular inspections. If the QFO is not on site, they are required to designate an alternate that is.

The CRA is a DPH approved testing organization and utilizes the National Restaurant Association's ServSafe Manager textbook and test to teach food safety courses in Connecticut. Included in this course is education on food allergens, safety and protection. Each chapter of the ServSafe Manager book includes a chapter summary, chapter review case study, study questions and answers. At the end of the class, a test is given and a score of 75% or better must be attained to pass and receive a ServSafe certificate. The CRA proctors this course every Monday throughout the year to help ensure all restaurants are up to date with their certificates. The CRA believes the current DPH regulations are sufficient and will continue to help ensure public safety while also educating restaurant employees on the dangers of food allergies.
