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Rt. Hon. Mel Stride MP
Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
Department for Work and Pensions
Caxton House
Tothill St
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08 November 2022

Dear Secretary of State,

Many congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State for Work and Pensions. We are writing as trade organisations representing thousands of businesses across the hospitality sector and as the key industry bodies facilitating the skills element of the Government's Hospitality Recovery Strategy. As you will be aware, the sector faces severe issues around staffing. Indeed, the seriousness of the crisis facing hospitality recruitment should not be underestimated – there are currently around 158,000 vacancies in an industry that provides around 2.5 million jobs. This, combined with the total UK labour market having been reduced by 900,000, makes for a grim picture.

Over the course of the pandemic, our sector lost hundreds of thousands of roles – due to uncertainty over closures and restrictions, to people permanently leaving the country and through changing personal preferences. We now have a finite pool of people in the UK to attract to fill our vacancies and staff shortages are costing hospitality businesses £22bn per year. In order to address this problem, we are supporting the Hospitality Rising campaign, which launched on 2nd November. This is the largest hospitality recruitment campaign ever, which aims to change the poor perception that our sector can have with potential recruits and those that advise them – currently only one in five people nationally would consider working in hospitality despite its opportunities for fast-progressing and fulfilling careers. The sector has united around this issue, across a range of businesses, and put significant resources into the 12-month campaign in order to double the talent pool.

We want to work in partnership with your Department to tackle the issues in the labour market. We believe this initiative can be a stimulus to reduce unemployment further and due to the accessibility of roles in our sector we can play a role in targeting some of the harder-to-reach groups in society.

We would like the Government to join us in this effort and endorse the campaign. The first phase of the campaign will focus on the under-30 talent pool and highlight a range of hospitality roles, but future phases will widen the scope to target the over-50s too.

We are available at your convenience if you wish to discuss any of the issues above or attend a session where we could present the Hospitality Rising campaign to you.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Emma McClarkin
Chief Executive of the British Beer & Pub Association



Steve Alton
Chief Executive of the British Institute of Innkeeping



Kate Nicholls
Chief Executive of UKHospitality



Robert Richardson
Chief Executive of the Institute of Hospitality



Chris Gamm
Chief Executive of Springboard

