

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### MEDIA CONTACT:

Martha Davenport  
VBRA Executive Director  
757-567-9304  
director@dineinva.com



## Virginia Beach Restaurant Association Launches “86 VB Meals Tax” Campaign

### A Bold Initiative to Reduce and Eliminate the City’s Meals Tax

**Virginia Beach, VA** — April 15, 2026— The Virginia Beach Restaurant Association (VBRA) today announced the launch of its new advocacy campaign, “**86 VB Meals Tax**,” a city-wide initiative aimed at reducing—and ultimately eliminating—the Virginia Beach meals tax.

The campaign name draws from a common restaurant term—“86”—meaning to remove or eliminate. Through this effort, VBRA is calling attention to the growing financial strain placed on restaurants, employees, residents, and visitors by the current meals tax structure.

“Restaurants are the backbone of Virginia Beach’s tourism economy and a vital part of our community identity,” said Martha Davenport, Executive Director of VBRA. “The ‘86 VB Meals Tax’ campaign is about creating a more competitive, sustainable environment for our industry while making dining more accessible for everyone.”

### A Call for Immediate Relief and Long-Term Change

As outlined in VBRA’s recently adopted policy resolution, the campaign supports:

1. An immediate reduction of the meals tax rate to 3.5%
2. Development of a clear, measurable path toward full elimination
3. A formal impact study to evaluate the tax’s effects on restaurant sustainability, employment, tourism competitiveness, and consumer spending

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VBRA emphasizes that restaurants are already navigating rising operational costs, workforce shortages, and economic pressures. The current tax structure, layered on top of state sales tax, creates a significant burden that impacts both businesses and consumers.

## **Supporting a Stronger Local Economy**

The “86 VB Meals Tax” campaign highlights the broader economic opportunity tied to tax reform. With continued tourism growth, population increases, and consumer spending, VBRA believes Virginia Beach can maintain strong revenue streams while reducing reliance on meals tax.

“Lowering the meals tax isn’t just about relief—it’s about growth,” Davenport added. “It strengthens our ability to compete as a destination, supports job creation and retention, and ensures our restaurant community can thrive long-term.”

## **Community Engagement & Next Steps**

VBRA will engage restaurant owners, employees, residents, and community partners through a series of outreach efforts, including:

1. Public awareness campaigns
2. Stakeholder meetings and City Council engagement
3. Advocacy tools and community education
4. Collaboration with industry and civic leaders

The association also plans to support candidates and policymakers who recognize the economic importance of the restaurant and hospitality industry and are committed to fostering a business-friendly environment. For more information, please visit: <https://www.dineinvb.com/meals-tax-reduction/>

## **ABOUT THE VIRGINIA BEACH RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION**

The Virginia Beach Restaurant Association (VBRA) is the only dedicated restaurant business association in Hampton Roads, representing over 130 local restaurants.

VBRA advocates for policies that support a vibrant, sustainable hospitality industry while promoting Virginia Beach as a premier culinary destination.

[www.dineinvb.com](http://www.dineinvb.com)

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