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## **Michigan Restaurant Association Third Quarter Trends Report Shows Surprising Sales Growth, Slow Down in Hiring**

**LANSING, Mich., November 20, 2017** – The Michigan Restaurant Association (MRA) today released its third quarter research report tracking economic and demographic trends within the restaurant industry on a statewide basis. The survey, conducted by independent research firm Cleveland Research and distributed to MRA’s nearly 4,500 members, suggests sustained sales growth in the third quarter, but a very notable drop-off in hiring in Michigan’s restaurant industry.

Highlights from the Q2-2017 Trends Report include the following:

- Same-Store sales across Michigan restaurants increased by a robust 3.2 percent in the third quarter of 2017 after seeing 2.7 percent growth last quarter.
- Sales in relation to expectations increased as well, with 28 percent of respondents reporting that sales exceeded internal projections. That is the highest percentage reported across the three quarters surveyed in the MRA’s Industry Trends Report to date.
- Despite positive sales figures, operators became more cautious in their hiring outlook in the third quarter. Only 18 percent of respondents expect to increase their total number of employees over the next six months, down substantially from the 31 percent in the second quarter. Conversely, 16 percent expect to have fewer employees over the next six months, a figure that is up from 7 percent in the second quarter.

“The same-store sales figures are an encouraging sign for Michigan’s restaurant industry because they demonstrate real growth and look stronger than many other parts of the country right now,” said Justin Winslow, President & CEO of the MRA. “The hiring slow down likely reflects the difficulty operators across the state experience recruiting and retaining enough employees to meet demand. As we have seen previously, operators are compensating for the labor shortage with simplified menus and more technology,” he added.

Participation was strong in the Q3-2017 Trends Report, with over 600 MRA member locations and \$814 million in annual revenue represented in the survey.

The **Michigan Restaurant Association Industry Trends Report** represents the first and only independent statewide research report tracking the state's second-largest private-sector employer.

**About the Michigan Restaurant Association**

The Michigan Restaurant Association (MRA) is the recognized leader of Michigan's hospitality industry, providing essential services to the foodservice community. Founded in 1921, the MRA represents nearly 4,500 Michigan foodservice establishments. The industry plays an integral role in Michigan's economy, employing more than 435,000 people and creating \$15.9 billion in annual sales.

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