



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG

RICK KRISEMAN, MAYOR

December 20, 2019

Conference for Food Protection
2020 Biennial Meeting
30 Elliott Court
Martinsville, IN 46151-1331

RE: Amend Food Code – Permit Pet Dogs in Outdoor Dining Areas

To Whom It May Concern:

I write on behalf of the City of St. Petersburg, Florida to provide my strong support for the 2020 Issue Submission titled Amend Food Code – Permit Pet Dogs in Outdoor Dining Areas.

St Petersburg is committed to the highest standards in food safety to protect a consumer's health and well-being. We also recognize that pets are increasingly becoming an integral part of the family – in fact, more than 84 million American families have a pet. Restaurants that allow pet dogs into outdoor dining areas provide greater opportunities for people to bond with their pets and interact with other pet owners, which creates stronger communities and drives economic benefits for businesses. It is our opinion that if rigorous food safety requirements are incorporated in the Model Food Code, allowing pet dogs in a restaurant's outdoor dining area would pose little to no public health risks. A growing number of states across the country have come to this conclusion as well and have begun enacting policies that allow pet dogs to accompany their owners into outdoor dining areas.

Eighteen states and the District of Columbia have already enacted policies to allow pet dogs in outdoor dining areas – including California, Florida, Ohio, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Texas. However, each state has implemented different regulatory schemes, including differing signage and sanitation requirements. These differences have caused confusion for both customers and businesses. The proposed language would eliminate confusion by creating one national set of standards for businesses that wish to allow pet dogs in outdoor dining areas, while establishing strong regulatory requirements to ensure public safety.

The City of St. Petersburg urges the Conference for Food Protection to accept this Issue and incorporate the suggested language into the Model Food Code.

Sincerely,


Rick Kriseman
Mayor
City of St. Petersburg