

## Letter from the Chair



*“Chairman” Justin  
Doucette’s Chair*

Finally. It only took Nevada Restaurant Association Chairman Justin Doucette *one year* to come to his senses and give me an opportunity to speak my mind. I really don’t understand why a person would be interested in being a chair. I’ve been a chair (though some people call me a seat) for as long as I can remember and, quite frankly, I’m now considering my options. And I’m not the only one. I have a cousin that works in a 24-hour Mexican restaurant serving nothing but refried bean dishes and queso. His job literally stinks. In short, being a chair is not easy.

First of all, we’re always on call. We have to be ready, willing and able seven days a week, 24 hours a day. You need a seat, we’re there – whenever, wherever. Not only do we have to be ready to accommodate you people, we have to be multitasking. One minute you’re standing on us to reach a shelf, the next minute you’re sitting on us to take a break. I’ll be the first to tell you that the only break a chair ever gets is when they, well...break. You’d think a broken chair would get a retirement party or put out to pasture like a horse, but you’d be wrong. Call it what you want: garbage, recycling, renovating or kindling – I call it “chairicide” (that’s *murder* to you humans).

Second, we don’t get any credit for a job well done. There’s an old saying that to be successful in the restaurant business is to “put butts in seats”. That’s cute. And successful restaurants give huge pats on the back (not to mention bonuses) to managers, owners, marketing gurus, chefs, and everyone else under the sun. But what about us? Without chairs, these guys would be “putting butts on floors”.

Third, when something goes wrong, we take the blame. Heck, sometimes we even take physical abuse. Some common complaints from owners and managers:

- Guests aren’t filling the chairs.
- We have too many chairs.
- We don’t have enough chairs.
- We aren’t getting the right customers in our chairs.
- We don’t turn over enough seats.
- The revenue per seat is too low.

Just when our jobs were hard enough, you load us with not only the burden of attracting humans, but also the benefit of having to worry about how many and what kind of human we attract. And if we don’t get the right human in the right quantity, some owners, who shall remain nameless, have even been known to throw or kick a chair.

Speaking about burden, what’s all the hubbub about obesity? My relatives in the restaurant industry are totally offended by the accusations that they somehow have contributed to the widening beltline of humans. This is simply not so. It’s not our fault. In actuality, we have been trying to get you outdoors for years. The less you sit on us, the more we get to rest. In fact, there are actually studies (from some university-types) that show that if you exercise more, and sit down less, you will become a healthier human. To blame restaurant chairs for contributing to obesity is like blaming a ball for being thrown. Humans have got to learn to do what we chairs have known for years – take responsibility for your actions. But in doing so, don’t neglect us. In maintaining an active lifestyle and healthy diet, you can also keep a restaurant chair out of the scrap heap. Just be responsible.

So please forgive me if I don't jump for joy at Chairman Justin Doucette's dedication and devotion to the Nevada Restaurant Association or the countless hours (that is, during business hours and no weekends) that he spends pretending to be a chair. Maybe, just maybe, if he works hard enough next year, I'll give him a cookie.