

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ben E. Keith Beverages Donates \$25,000 to Texas Independent Beer Distributor Relief Fund

Donations Given Will Support Texas Restaurant Association Education Foundation for Benefit of Texas Restaurant Industry Workers

DALLAS, Texas (April 15, 2020) – Ben E. Keith Beverages donated \$25,000 to the Texas Independent Beer Distributors Relief Fund (IBDRF). These funds will support the Texas Restaurant Association Education Foundation TX Restaurant Relief Fund, an initiative that was established in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to provide immediate financial support to Texas’ independent restaurateurs and their employees. This donation comes after the Wholesale Beer Distributors of Texas (WBDT) and the IBDRF donated \$60,000 to the initiative on April 3rd, 2020. As a collective group, wholesale beer distributors in Texas have a storied history of charitable donations in times of need for all Texans.

In 2017, in the wake of Hurricane Harvey, WBDT and its member companies and partners established the Independent Beer Distributors Relief Fund (IBDRF) to financially support individuals, groups, and communities that are impacted by natural disasters or tragic events. Since it’s inception, the fund has generated \$267,000 in donations.

“In these difficult and unprecedented times, we are committed to supporting our bar and restaurant partners through the IBDRF donation,” said WBDT Board Member Kevin Bartholomew, President of Ben E. Keith Beverages. “Supporting our partners is at the heart of everything we do, and we are confident that by working together our industry will come back stronger.”

WBDT President, Tom Spilman said, “As beer distributors from across the state, we have banded together to reach the areas that have been hardest hit. We have been able to make a difference together more than we would have on our own.” “The WBDT and IBDRF and other member companies have given out donations to Harvey stricken areas all across Texas, the American Red Cross, the New Day Port A Fund, the Food Bank of Rio Grande Valley, and the National Compassion Fund, just to name a few,” said Spilman.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has caused an unprecedented challenge for our industry,” said Dr. Emily Williams Knight, President & CEO of the Texas Restaurant Association and Education Foundation. “Restaurants are a critical member of the supply chain. When they experience a high rate of closures and consumer visits drop by 75% or more, everyone suffers. Restaurants are the heart of our communities, fighting for survival. We are incredibly grateful to the Wholesale Beer Distributors of Texas for coming to their aid when their members too are experiencing the full catastrophic impact of COVID-19. This donation demonstrates that by working together and across the entire supply chain, we can support Texas’ many unique independent restaurateurs and their employees at a time when they need it most”.

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About Ben E. Keith Beverages

Ben E. Keith Company, established in 1906, began selling Anheuser-Busch products in 1933. Today, Ben E. Keith Company's Beverage division is the third largest independent beer wholesaler in the country. With fourteen Sales & Distribution Centers the company operates throughout the state of Texas and distributes import beers, craft beers, spirits, wine products, and nonalcoholic beverages. For more information, please visit www.benekeith.com. Follow us on [Facebook.com/benekeith](https://www.facebook.com/benekeith).

About the Wholesale Beer Distributors of Texas

The Wholesale Beer Distributors of Texas is the trade association representing beer distributors statewide since 1939. WBBDT advocates on behalf of the beer distributors at the Texas Legislature, Congress, and all regulatory agencies.

About the Texas Restaurant Association Education Foundation

Established in 1994 by the Texas Restaurant Association (TRA), the Texas Restaurant Association Education Foundation (TRAEF) is a 501(c)3 not for profit organization focused on providing the necessary resources to help restaurateurs confront educational and labor challenges with the latest innovations in education, technology, and training. It is the workforce development arm of the TRA.

On March 23, 2020, the TRAEF established the TX Restaurant Relief Fund initiative in response to the COVID-19 crisis to provide immediate financial support to independent restaurants.