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HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY WELCOMES THE RETURN OF THE FRIDAY LUNCH

The state's peak hospitality bodies – AHA NSW and Tourism Accommodation Australia NSW – have both welcomed the State Government's plan for \$100 Friday meal vouchers in the Sydney CBD.

AHA NSW CEO John Whelan said the \$50m scheme, to be announced in next week's Budget, would help struggling hotels by bringing more people into the CBD on Fridays.

"Sydney's hotels have been struggling ever since the pandemic hit and are still only at 50% capacity," Mr Whelan said.

"A lot of people have been working from home during the pandemic and staying away from the city centre. We welcome any move that encourages people back into the CBD to enjoy a discounted Friday lunch at one of our top CBD pubs.

"I would like to congratulate NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet on this great new initiative to breathe some life back into the city centre on what is traditionally one of our busiest days of the week."

Tourism Accommodation Australia NSW CEO Michael Johnson said the voucher scheme would also be a boost for the city's accommodation hotels which have been languishing at under 50% capacity in recent weeks.

"This is something we pushed for during the government's recent CBD Summit. Used in combination with dine and discover and accommodation vouchers it gives people the perfect chance to re-discover their city centre and eat and stay at one of our venues," he said.

"Our message is simple – come back into the CBD, stay a night and re-discover the joys of Australia's best city."

The scheme will allow 500,000 people to access the CBD Friday vouchers.

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