

July 26, 2021

**Testimony of Brian Moran**  
**Director of Government Affairs, New England Convenience Store & Energy Marketers Association**

**Massachusetts General Court**  
**Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund Study Commission**

Chair Jehlen, Chair Cutler, and Members of the Committee:

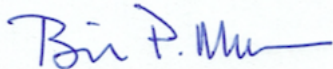
Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments to the Commission. The New England Convenience Store & Energy Marketers Association (NECSEMA) represents convenience store and gasoline retailers, transportation fuel distributors, and the businesses which supply them. NECSEMA members own, operate, and/or supply the 3,400 convenience stores in Massachusetts which employ approximately 54,000 people.

NECSEMA applauds the significant work being undertaken by the Commission to tackle the long-term UI solvency issues facing the Commonwealth as exacerbated by the Covid-19 Pandemic. We appeal to the Commission with appropriate urgency that your recommendations include support for appropriating a significant sum from the funds the Commonwealth received under the Federal CARES Act and/or ARPA to immediately reduce the multi-billion dollar deficit that MA employers are facing over the next 20 years while also being asked to replenish the UI trust fund. NECSEMA appreciates the immediate steps that were taken to freeze UI tax rates and address the solvency assessment, but these are short-term solutions.

Through no fault of employers or their employees, but through state and federally mandated business closures implemented to contain the spread of the Covid-19 virus, Massachusetts had the highest unemployment rate in the country during the height of the pandemic. That dramatic shift put an unsustainable burden on the UI Fund and NECSEMA is extremely concerned that UI Fund solvency obligations appear headed toward being the sole responsibility of the employer community. Urgent action is needed to address the long-term functionality of the UI Fund as well as the immediate concern with solvency assessments imposed upon employers. NECSEMA is hopeful that the Commission will recommend strong measures to mitigate the long-term impact of the UI deficit, which threatens to significantly erode the Commonwealth's regional competitiveness as businesses in MA attempt to recover and grow jobs.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our positions on this matter.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian P. Moran Director of Government Affairs  
[Brian@necsema.net](mailto:Brian@necsema.net) | (781) 297-9600 ext. 5