

Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund Study Commission 7/22  
Public Hearing

Attendees:

Senator Patricia Jehlen, Co-Chair  
Representative Josh Cutler, Co-Chair  
Evan Horowitz  
Hannah Tanabe  
Jon Hurst  
Eileen McAnneny  
Dan Wolf  
Rosalin Acosta  
Chris Anderson  
Diana Estime  
Stephanie Herron Rice  
Matt Blackbourn  
Chris Carlozzi  
Sam Gebru  
Kelsey Cintolo

Members of the Public

Evan Murphy - UTCA

- Springfield based national unemployment TPA
- Support allocation of ARPA funds to reduce insolvency, view Covid-19 recovery assessment as potentially disastrous
- Wants weekly benefit amount freeze to be considered

Gary Rucinski

- Massachusetts coordinator for Citizen's climate lobby
- Argued that strengthening the state's unemployment program necessary for transition of workers who lose jobs in fossil fuel industry

Tara Nickerson-Lopes

- Woburn resident, years of experience working in the restaurant industry
- Argued that it is wrong that undocumented workers are paying in to the UI system without being able to receive unemployment assistance

Molly Kivi

- Creator of unemployment tax and benefit reform campaign
- Argued for the elimination of the experience rating, implement sliding scale benefit system, get rid of taxable wage base cap, and that the legislature should not provide ARPA/CAREs money to the Trust fund to reduce required employer contributions

Erin Chow

- Organizer with the Chinese Progressive Association
- Discussed how the loss of jobs in restaurant and gig economy had real hit on Chinese immigrant working class community
- Supports increasing and indexing taxable wage base will improve finances of unemployment insurance trust fund

Lisette Le

- Executive Director at VietAid
- Discussed difficulties for 1099 nail salon workers who struggled to access unemployment insurance, argued that many manicurists are misclassified as independent contractors

Mike Firestone

- Coalition to protect worker's rights
- Argued that addressing misclassification in unemployment context is critical to ensuring a solvent trust fund and access to benefits