



**Testimony
Robin Wilson
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Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce
Before the
Labor Committee
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The Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce has heard from countless members regarding the difficulties of remaining competitive and, in some cases - remaining open - in this difficult economy. Bills that increase taxes and labor costs further erode our economy, causing job losses in almost every sector. We cannot say it enough - to help stem the tide of job losses, we must refrain from adding to the cost of doing business in Connecticut.

We do, however, understand that there must be some adjustment in the amount employers pay with respect to unemployment compensation due to the insolvency of the fund. If the insolvency is not addressed, employers could wind up paying more down the road. We are therefore comfortable with the approach outlined in **SB-258, An Act Concerning an Increase in the Maximum Allowable Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund Balance, which was negotiated with the business community last year.**

However, we absolutely must do more to tighten up the eligibility standards and work search verification requirements to ensure that the system works as intended - that it provides individuals who are unemployed through no fault of their own with temporary assistance until they can find employment. Given that the federal government has extended the timeframe for collecting unemployment, the fund is going to continue to run into financial issues unless Connecticut acts to address inequities in the current system that allow individuals to collect without actively seeking employment. We also need to address issues regarding eligibility to ensure that individuals who are terminated due to absenteeism or violation of drug and alcohol policies are not eligible for benefits. Failure to address eligibility requirements to ensure that the system continues to be a temporary measure to tide people over while the actively search for work will result in a system that imposes an untenable burden on the employer community.

The Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce serves more than 650+ member companies from the North Haven and Wallingford area. We are the largest non-metropolitan chamber in the state.