



(submitted via email)

March 18, 2013

Co-Chair John W. Fonfara  
Co-Chair Patricia M. Widlitz  
Senator Scott L. Frantz  
Representative Sean J. Williams

**Re: Comments in Support of S.B. 1095**

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee:

On behalf of the Cumberland Farms, Inc., we are submitting written testimony in **support of S.B. 1095, AN ACT ELIMINATING THE INCREASE IN THE PETROLEUM PRODUCTS GROSS EARNINGS TAX.**

Cumberland Farms is headquartered in Framingham, Massachusetts, but we have a significant presence in Connecticut with a network of 65 company-owned and operated convenience stores. The company employs over 700 people in Connecticut and we pride ourselves as providing great service and quality, affordable products to our customers. We are very concerned with current planned increase in the gross earnings tax and the impact on our customers and offer the following comments:

- If the petroleum gross earnings tax is allowed to increase on July 1<sup>st</sup> Connecticut motorists will see a nearly 4 cent per gallon (cpg) increase at the pump;
- The 4 cpg increase makes Connecticut the highest gasoline tax that consumers will have to pay in New England. Our customers are already burdened by a sluggish economy and the recent increases in taxes at the federal level, and adding another tax increase will only increase the financial burden;
- The gas tax in Connecticut is currently 22 cents higher than in Massachusetts and after the tax goes up this summer, it will be 26 cents higher. While we have a large presence in Massachusetts, we believe it is unfair that our Connecticut customers are so disproportionately impacted by the gas tax each time they fuel up at the pump;
- The average gasoline tax in the United States is at 48.8 cpg, nearly 20 cpg lower than what is currently being paid in Connecticut. Other states are able to get by with the available resources, and Connecticut legislators should take a stand for their constituents by eliminating this pending tax increase; and,

- Connecticut is losing business to other states in the region because of the exorbitantly high gas taxes. Tax revenues and ancillary sales are being lost to neighboring states when Connecticut motorists seek fuel and services elsewhere. That means fewer sales taxes, cigarette taxes and all of the other taxes that are generated when Connecticut consumers stay in state.

Cumberland Farms, Inc. is asking that the Finance Committee **support S.B. 1095, AN ACT ELIMINATING THE INCREASE IN THE PETROLEUM PRODUCTS GROSS EARNINGS TAX.**

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ari N. Haseotes". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Ari N. Haseotes  
President & Chief Operating Officer  
Cumberland Farms, Inc.