



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU**  
Governor

April 23, 2020

Jim Roche  
President, Business and Industry Association  
122 North Main Street  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Jim,

Thank you for your letter of April 17, regarding reinvigorating New Hampshire's economy. As we continue to combat the COVID-19 epidemic, my administration continues to consider how we can help our state's businesses of all sizes return to health.

We appreciate your specific concerns regarding, employer liability. Yesterday, I established a task force to consider how to re-open sectors of our economy. As part of their focus, they will consider this critical issue. Specifically, if an employer reopens, what kind of liability will they assume? This challenge is particularly true for businesses located in border communities, where residents from other states that might have higher infection rates could be frequenting. How can businesses that follow the protocols laid out by this task force protect themselves from this liability will be a key issue this task force will consider.

With regard to business taxes, I wholeheartedly agree that this is not a time to raise taxes by 12.5% on our small businesses. You are right to acknowledge that current revenue projections will likely trigger a tax rate increase but that this is through no fault of the business community. To punish our employers with a tax increase at a time when many of them are hurting would be terrible public policy and harm our economic recovery. As such, when the legislature returns to Concord, I will call on them to repeal the business tax "triggers" that were included in the state budget passed last year.

Finally, we appreciate your concerns regarding unemployment insurance (UI) taxes. We share this concern and will continue to work with our Congressional Delegation to pursue opportunities in Washington to ensure the health of our UI trust fund. We will also pursue opportunities under the CARES Act to replenish the UL trust fund as much as is prudent. Here again, we agree with the important underlying premise that given the economic recovery that lies before us this is not a time to be raising taxes.

As we work through the process of finding the best way to reopen our state's economy, there are ways in which your organization can provide critical insight to support our decisions. I would ask that you survey your membership to help us consider the following areas.

- 1) **Workforce** – How will we re-engage displaced workers? Many of these individuals are now receiving unemployment compensation at level as high or higher than their pre-COVID-19

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- levels. How will employers convince these workers to return? How can we ensure that businesses follow critical safety protocols if they are understaffed?
- 2) **Supply Chain** – Many businesses, particularly goods selling businesses, will see substantial disruption to their supply chains. How long will it take for them to restore their supply chains? Will they need time to reopen their businesses to employees before they reopen to the public in order to facilitate and coordinate these efforts?
  - 3) **Child Care** – With New Hampshire schools teaching remotely for the remainder of this academic year, how can businesses work to address child care needs of their employees?

Thank you for reaching out to me regarding these concerns and for your advocacy for our state's employers.

Sincerely,



Christopher T. Sununu  
Governor