



October 27, 2021

Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Chair  
House Committee on Ways and Means  
24 Beacon Street, Room 243  
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Ways and Means  
24 Beacon Street, Room 42  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Michlewitz and Vice-Chair Ferrante,

On behalf of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and our 1,300 members, I write to thank the House Ways and Means Committee's efforts to prioritize an equitable recovery in the spending package of federal American Rescue Plan Act funds.

Thank you for the \$500 million that will fund the depleted Massachusetts Unemployment Insurance (UI) Trust Fund. We hope that you will consider additional funding of up to \$2 billion from the unspent funds that remain. This would help to restore the UI Trust Fund and protect Massachusetts small businesses and their employees from overwhelming UI Trust Fund payments. The Chamber [submitted testimony advocating](#) for increased funding to the UI Trust Fund to provide the small business community relief during the economic recovery.

The Chamber supports the following investments and thank you for including these in the spending package:

- Line item 1599-2027 provides that \$150 million will fund Career Technical Institutes (CTI), rapid reemployment contracting, learn-to-earn and additional models intended to enhance workforce development and workforce opportunities. The Chamber and the Massachusetts Business Coalition on Skills (MBCS) [submitted testimony advocating](#) for the increased funding of CTI, which enables the state to train a projected 20,000 new workers in skills trades over the next four years.
- Line item 1599-2037 provides that not less than \$100 million will fund capital investments at vocational and career and technical schools (CVTE). The Chamber and MBCS [submitted testimony in support of H.666/S.34 and H.652/S.357](#) to increase access to CVTE in Massachusetts. For employers, CVTE provides a direct pipeline of homegrown talent trained for in-demand jobs using labor-market aligned curriculum. As a result, employers prefer to hire CVTE graduates for both entry-level and higher-level positions. Increasing CVTE capacity expands students career potential and closes opportunity gaps. Because CVTE curriculum is aligned with the in-demand skills and competencies sought after by employers, CVTE prepares students who can access this learning model for college pathways and careers that provide financial stability and meet growing labor market demands.
- Line item 1599-2026 provides a \$100 million reserve for cultural and tourism assets. The Chamber [submitted advocacy](#) in support of a relief package to save cultural institutions. Cultural and tourism institutions continue to struggle due to the pandemic and require investments during this economic recovery to survive and thrive.
- Line item 1599-2036 provides \$40 million for the Summer Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth. The Chamber [submitted advocacy](#) in support of the Summer Jobs Program to help employ at-risk youth during summer months. Private businesses and organizations can also participate in this successful summer jobs program by hiring youth and giving them first-hand experience in workplaces.

Thank you for your support of our Commonwealth's economic recovery that will reach every community and person. We look forward to continued conversations on the state's funding needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'James E. Rooney'.

James E. Rooney  
President & CEO  
Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce