



February 25, 2026

Members of the House Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee
New Hampshire House of Representatives
GP Room 158
Concord, NH 03301

Re: *NECSEMA Opposition to HB 1797*

Chair MacDonald and Members of the Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee:

On behalf of the New England Convenience Store and Energy Marketers Association (NECSEMA), we respectfully submit this written testimony in opposition to HB 1797. NECSEMA represents convenience stores, fuel retailers, and energy marketers throughout New Hampshire and the broader New England region.

HB 1797 would impose new requirements related to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that would have a disproportionate and damaging impact on convenience stores. These businesses operate on thin margins, limited floor space, and inventory models built around high-volume, fast-turnover sales. Mandated product requirements that do not reflect consumer demand undermine this model and threaten store participation in SNAP altogether.

New Hampshire convenience stores are uniquely dependent on cross-border commerce. Each year, millions of consumers from Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont cross into New Hampshire specifically because of the state's competitive pricing environment. These out-of-state customers generate substantial sales volume in convenience stores, purchasing fuel, food, beverages, and other essentials in a single stop.

Policies that increase compliance costs, restrict product flexibility, or reduce SNAP participation risk eroding this competitive advantage. Even small disruptions to store layout, inventory mix, or pricing structure can result in lost impulse sales and reduced foot traffic. When out-of-state consumers change their purchasing behavior, those losses are immediate and unrecoverable for local retailers.

For many convenience stores, SNAP transactions are closely tied to broader in-store purchases. If HB 1797 forces stores to exit SNAP due to infeasible requirements, the result will not simply be lost SNAP sales, but a cascading loss of non-SNAP purchases that depend on customer traffic. This is especially harmful in rural and border communities where convenience stores function as essential economic anchors and in many cases are the only grocery store within a community.

HB 1797 also raises serious concerns regarding regulatory complexity and enforcement. Vague or overly prescriptive rules expose convenience store operators to penalties for inadvertent violations, diverting time and resources away from operations, workforce investment, and customer service. Small retailers should not be placed in the position of policing purchasing behavior at the register.

NECSEMA supports efforts to improve nutrition outcomes and expand access to healthy food options. However, those goals are best achieved through incentive-based, collaborative approaches that recognize the operational realities of convenience stores. Education, voluntary participation, and targeted assistance are far more effective than unfunded mandates that risk driving retailers out of the program entirely.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to vote “Inexpedient to Legislate” on HB 1797. Maintaining a business environment that supports convenience stores is critical not only to local employment and food access, but also to preserving New Hampshire’s ability to attract and retain out-of-state consumer spending and defend the New Hampshire Advantage.

Respectfully submitted,



Peter Brennan
Executive Director
NECSEMA