Statement on the Governor’s Budget Proposal – Connecticut Voices for Children

NEW HAVEN – This past Monday, the Governor released an overview of his recommended revisions to the FY 2019 budget, with a focus on revenue and spending changes to balance it. Ellen Shemitz, Executive Director of Connecticut Voices for Children issued the following statement in response:

“The long-term fiscal stability and health of our state depend upon economic growth that affords shared prosperity to families, businesses, and communities. This kind of growth can only occur in a state that has a competitive business environment, a prepared workforce, a commitment to race equity and a fiscally sound state government.

The state budget announced Monday by Governor Malloy includes some welcome and decisive steps to narrow our long-term deficit, move the state toward fiscal stability, and tackle some of our pressing infrastructure needs. The proposal, however, fails to recommend a number of structural changes essential to grow the economy and move toward sustainable, shared prosperity.

Last year’s budget created substantive and harmful restrictions on economic growth through the combined effect of a newly defined spending cap, volatility cap, bond cap and bond lock. To build a vibrant, inclusive economy and remain competitive, our state needs to make strategic investments in transportation, education, healthcare, workforce development, and early childhood: the very kind of bold investments that our neighboring states have already launched. To the south, New York City is moving toward universal free preschool for all three-year-olds. To the east, Rhode Island is offering free community college. Connecticut must similarly invest and innovate or be left behind.

We remain hopeful the Governor will offer a bold call for investment and innovation in today’s budget address. We hope the Legislature will address some of the missing elements in Monday’s proposal, such as full restoration of the Earned Income Tax Credit, modernization of our tax system, and targeted state funding to assure equity in educational opportunity.

But first, both the Executive Branch and Legislative Branch need to free themselves from the unintended consequences of last session’s fiscal restraints. They need to amend the spending cap, volatility cap, bond cap and bond lock so that our state is free to meet today’s fiscal, economic and social challenges.

Working together, we can open pathways to opportunity for every child as we build a solid, inclusive economic foundation that benefits all our residents and communities.”

About Connecticut Voices for Children: Connecticut Voices for Children is a research-based child advocacy organization working to ensure that all Connecticut children have an equitable opportunity to achieve their full potential. In furtherance of its mission, Connecticut Voices for Children produces high-quality research and analysis, promotes citizen education, advocates for policy change at the state and local level, and works to develop the next generation of leaders.