2025 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

CONNECTICUT VOICES FOR CHILDREN

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Introduction..... 3
Budget Summary..... 4
Appropriations..... 4
Revenue..... 4
More Money In The Pockets Of Hardworking Families..... 5
To put more money in the pockets of hardworking families, we proposed to:... 5
Important Progress Made on New, Progressive Revenue..... 6
A Strong & Diverse Workforce Free From Discrimination..... 7
To grow a strong and diverse workforce free from discrimination, we proposed to:..... 7
Affordable Housing & Child Care In Every Town Across Our State..... 8
To ensure affordable housing is accessible in every town across our state, we proposed to:..... 8
To ensure affordable child care is accessible in every town across our state, we proposed to:..... 9
Important Progress Made on Affordable Child Care..... 9
Safe, Healthy & Just Communities For All..... 9
To promote safe, healthy and just communities for all we proposed to:..... 9
Child Welfare..... 9
Important Progress Made on Child Welfare..... 10
Criminal Legal System Reform..... 10
Health & Health Coverage..... 11
Important Progress Made on Health & Health Coverage..... 11
Emerging Issues..... 11
Conclusion..... 13
Acknowledgments..... 13
Appendix..... 14
Legislative Highlights..... 14
Legislative Highlights - Money in the Pockets of Hardworking Families..... 14
Legislative Highlights - Affordable Housing..... 14
Legislative Highlights - Affordable Child Care..... 15
Legislative Highlights - Safe, Healthy & Just Communities..... 15

Introduction

At the beginning of the year we launched our Connecticut Families Plan 2.0, which advances our vision of a Connecticut where all children can achieve their full potential, regardless of family income, race, religion, or immigration status. To do this, we need an economy that works for all of us, not just the privileged and lucky few.

The Connecticut Families Plan 2.0 expands upon our vision first laid out in 2022 and provides a comprehensive set of policies that lawmakers can enact these next five years to grow our economy in a way that provides families the freedom to make the choices that allow them to lead self-directed and prosperous lives.

Our Connecticut Families Plan focuses on four key issue areas that, together, can help eradicate child poverty and advance family economic security:

- put more money in the pockets of hardworking families;
- grow a strong and diverse workforce;
- ensure affordable housing and child care are accessible in every town across our state; and
- promote safe, healthy and just communities for all.

Our 2025 legislative agenda includes an array of policies that get us closer to our goal. To provide a summary of the legislative actions made towards our major policy priorities outlined for the year, this document provides an overview of progress made.

Budget Summary

Connecticut's 2025 legislative session began on Wednesday January 8, 2025 and adjourned on June 4, 2025 with the passage of a $55.8 billion two-year budget for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 (FY26 and FY27). The budget is the clearest reflection of our state's priorities and values. This year, significant investments were made into special education and early care and education (ECE). Efforts to galvanize the conversation around the state's fiscal guardrails and progressive revenue have also made significant progress this session with minor adjustments to the state's fiscal controls and a capital gains tax being proposed by the finance and revenue committee.

Appropriations

The overall budget has increased and with adjustments to the fiscal controls, more money is able to go toward programs and services that serve Connecticut residents while keeping total appropriations under the spending cap. This year, budget appropriations total $27.2 billion for FY26, an increase of $1.2 billion (4.6 percent), and $28.6 billion for FY27, an increase of $1.4 billion (5.3 percent). For the General Fund, budget appropriations total $24.0 billion for FY26, an increase of $1.2 billion (5.4 percent), and appropriations are under the spending cap by only $0.9 million. For FY27, General Fund budget appropriations total $25.4 billion, an increase of $1.3 billion (5.5 percent), and appropriations are under the spending cap by $69.7 million, meaning policymakers have additional room to increase spending in the second year of the budget, even when taking into account the revenue cap.

Overall this budget makes some progress in line with our recommendation in the Connecticut Families Plan 2.0 by providing additional funding for early childhood care and education, increasing Medicaid rates, and providing additional funding for special education. However, this budget falls short of the level investment families in Connecticut need to see to grow the economy in a way that allows for families to truly thrive. Because the spending cap was not adjusted, the budget may require future adjustments in order to protect current programs from potential federal funding cuts.

Revenue

Total revenue for the General Fund is estimated at $24.3 billion for FY26 and $25.9 billion for FY27. The amount and use of that revenue is largely shaped by the state's major revenue controls: the volatility cap, the revenue cap, and the Budget and Reserve Fund.

The volatility cap limits the amount of tax revenue from two volatile sources that can be used to support the General Fund. In line with our recommendation to increase the volatility cap threshold, H.B. 7287 raises the threshold to generate an additional $150 million in tax revenue in FY25 and an additional $600 million in FY26, for a combined increase of $750 million. In FY27 and each year thereafter, the volatility cap will once again adjust based on the compound annual growth in personal income, but those annual adjustments will apply to the new increased threshold and therefore the volatility cap will continue to allow for the use of more tax revenue

than would otherwise be the case. In FY27, the changes to the threshold are estimated to generate additional $632 million in tax revenue for the General Fund.

The revenue cap limits appropriations to 98.75 percent of the total revenue for the General Fund, resulting in an unappropriated surplus equal to at least 1.25 percent of total revenue. The unappropriated surplus—if not ultimately used to cover revenue shortfalls over the course of the fiscal year—is used first to increase the Budget Reserve Fund (BRF) to its maximum capacity of 18 percent of net General Fund appropriations. Any remaining surplus funds are then used to pay down debt. In line with our recommendation to allow for the use of surplus funds beyond debt reduction, S.B. 1 requires that the Treasurer transfer to the Early Childhood Education Endowment the estimated amount of the unappropriated surplus that is not required to increase the BRF. In FY25, this transfer is limited to up to $300 million, but in subsequent fiscal years, the transfer is not restricted to a set dollar amount but rather the size of the unappropriated surplus and the remaining capacity of the BRF. For FY26, the unappropriated surplus is estimated at $309 million. And for FY27, the unappropriated surplus is estimated at $557 million.

More Money In The Pockets Of Hardworking Families

To put more money in the pockets of hardworking families, we proposed to:

Create a Connecticut Child Tax Credit. Establishing a fully refundable state-level child tax credit will reduce child poverty, mitigate income and wealth disparities and bolster economic stability for families with children—all of which helps our economy to grow.

- **BUDGET UPDATE**: Households with at least one child that qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) will receive an additional $250. (The EITC helps people earning up to $62,688 for a family of four). The Legislature passed a supplemental EITC for families that is partially refundable, meaning that a taxpayer will receive the full $250 tax credit so long as they have children and earn at least $1 in personal income tax liability. This is not the Child Tax Credit we hoped for ($600 per child, up to 3 children, for married couples earning up to $200,000) but it is necessary help for families, especially in light of the increased costs that will come from excessive tariffs and the recently enacted Congressional reconciliation budget. ***This is a partial win.***

Responsibly Adjust the State's Fiscal Controls. Connecticut can pay off long-term liabilities and invest in our families, communities, and economy by making changes to the fiscal controls, which have been saving more money than originally intended.

- **BUDGET UPDATE**: The budget increased the volatility cap by $750 million. The volatility cap stabilizes the budget by directing revenue from volatile sources into savings and additional payments on debt. A well-designed volatility cap is essential because of the state's volatile tax revenues. However, the existing volatility cap was set too low, putting an excessive amount of revenue into savings. This adjustment to the volatility cap will continue to allow for the use of more tax revenue than would otherwise be the case, helping to keep our communities funded. ***This is a partial win.***

Increase Special Education Funding. Our special education student population has grown but funding has not kept pace.

- **BUDGET UPDATE**: The State budgeted $250 million in special education funds via a new Special Education Expansion Grant program, and an increase in Excess Cost Grants. For many school districts, the excess cost grants that they were receiving were not enough to offset the high costs of educating students with special needs but the new grant programs are a big step in the right direction. This year the budget appropriated $221 million in FY26 *and* FY27 to cover Excess Costs. (This is in addition to the $40 million appropriated in the emergency certification earlier in 2025—Public Act 25-2—that helped to fill this year's shortfalls.) This marks an increase in appropriations for Excess Costs compared to FY24 and FY25 where $181 million were appropriated for each year. Adjustments were also made in the budget to the Education Cost Sharing Formula. The Education Cost Sharing Grant formula is the largest source of state funding for education and it will now factor in special education costs, helping towns and school districts with the rising cost of special education. This was one of CT Voice's policy recommendations in our 2021 report, *Reimagining Connecticut's Special Education Systems for a Post-Pandemic Future*. ***This is a win.***

Implement New, Progressive Revenue. Connecticut's tax system is regressive: It asks low- and middle-income families to pay a greater share of their income compared to wealthiest residents. Progressive revenue (like a capital gains surcharge) asks those who can afford it the most to pay more.

- **BUDGET UPDATE**: The budget closes a major corporate tax loophole. The budget eliminated the $2.5 million combined unitary reporting cap which limits how much more tax a multi-state (or multi-national) corporation must pay. This $2.5 million cap helped corporations avoid paying their full share. This new measure however ensures that large businesses pay their fair share in taxes, and is estimated to generate $133.1 million FY26. In our testimony for the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee we explained how the unitary reporting cap hurts small businesses. Connecticut-based businesses and small companies pay their full tax obligations with no cap or special tax break, while big businesses could take advantage of the existing tax loophole. As a result, Connecticut loses millions in potential tax revenue, shifting a greater tax burden onto small businesses and low- and middle-income residents. ***This is a win.***

Important Progress Made on New, Progressive Revenue

In the substitute for S.B. 1246 "An Act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Biennial Budget," the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee included a 1.75 percent surcharge on capital gains income when Connecticut adjusted gross income exceeds $1 million for single tax filers, $1.6 million for head of household tax filers, and $2 million for married tax filers. This would have generated an estimated $260 million per year in revenue. Ultimately, this proposal was not included in the final version of the state budget, but places an important marker in the campaign for a more progressive Connecticut tax system.

A Strong & Diverse Workforce Free From Discrimination

To grow a strong and diverse workforce free from discrimination, we proposed to:

Increase Public Sector Jobs within the Department of Revenue Services and the Department of Labor. Hiring more workers at these state agencies has the potential to protect more workers from wage theft and collect more revenue through closing Connecticut's tax gap.

- **BUDGET UPDATE**: New Department of Labor Wage and Hours inspectors may be coming soon to help combat wage theft. This year the budget includes additional funding for personnel services within the Department of Labor consistent with the fiscal note on the amendment for H.B. 6843: "An Act Concerning the Number of Wage and Hour Inspectors," for the Department of Labor to hire fifteen new wage and hour inspectors by FY27. We testified that "Increasing the number of wage and hours inspectors will help to reduce Connecticut's high level of wage inequality and substantial gender, racial, and ethnic wage gaps because wage theft disproportionately harms low-wage workers, which disproportionately includes women and workers of color." ***This is a partial win.***

Allow Parents to Plan for Care Through Predictable Scheduling. Parents too often cannot access the early care and elder care they need due to last-minute changes in their work schedules. Having predictable work scheduling is good for them as well as for educators and caregivers who are counting on providing that care for their income.

- **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**: Unfortunately, predictable scheduling legislation died in committee. We testified that "Hourly wage workers have irregular schedules, negatively impacting their health, well-being, and economic security" and "unpredictable scheduling often has a negative impact on covering child care needs..." ***This is a loss.***

Reduce Non-compete Clauses in Contracts. While it's important to keep proprietary information confidential, too many jobs unnecessarily include non-compete clauses in their work agreements. This limits the pool of work opportunities for Connecticut residents seeking employment.

- **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**: Unfortunately, reductions to non-compete clauses legislation died in committee. We testified that, "Contrary to their intended purpose, many low-wage workers who sign non-compete agreements have no access to trade secrets yet are still restricted from seeking better job opportunities. Their widespread use also suppresses job growth by discouraging new business formation and reducing job mobility, making it harder for workers to fill open positions." ***This is a loss.***

Important Progress Made on Increasing the Public Sector Workforce

H.B. 7196: "An Act Concerning Limitations On The Use Of Noncompete Agreements," moved through the Labor and Public Employees Committee but ultimately did not pass after being referred to the judiciary committee. However, it's important to note the good progress made.

Affordable Housing & Child Care In Every Town Across Our State

To ensure affordable housing is accessible in every town across our state, we proposed to:

Increase Housing Stability Through Eviction Mitigation Measures. Tenants in Connecticut should live without fear of eviction due to no fault of their own; a universal “just cause” law would provide this safeguard for families. However, when legal procedures are underway, tenants have benefited from Connecticut’s first-in-the-nation Right to Counsel program. Expanding Right to Counsel provides free legal support to families, often preventing evictions.

- **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**: Unfortunately "Just Cause" legislation died. We testified that by expanding Connecticut's just cause eviction statute, as proposed by H.B. 6889, no-fault evictions in the state could be reduced by more than 11 percent, increasing housing stability for Connecticut’s tenants and families and preventing more people from experiencing homelessness. ***This is a loss.***
- **BUDGET UPDATE**: Right to Counsel is funded. This year’s budget funds the Connecticut Right to Counsel program for the next two years as a part of the legal aid package appropriated to the Judicial Department. We testified that the most recent estimate of Right to Counsel’s fiscal returns, released in December 2024, found that the program has created economic benefits of at least $36.6 million in its three years of operation. ***This is a win.***

Increase Land-use and Zoning Reforms that Allow for More Affordable Housing Development. Connecticut faces a supply and demand challenge. More housing stock can be built in every town through mixed-used developments along Connecticut’s transit lines, an expansion of public housing authorities’ jurisdiction as developers, as well as protecting and strengthening the existing laws that affirmatively further fair housing.

- **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**: H.B. 5002: “An Act Concerning Housing and the Needs of Homeless Persons,” this year’s housing omnibus bill, included some of our tenant protection priorities, supported homelessness services and, most importantly, addressed key planning and zoning reforms including, 1) commercially zoned land reforms to allow middle housing development as-of-right 2) parking reforms that allow for more housing development overall and 3) the discretionary state grant funding to towns based on their efforts to build a certain number of new housing units necessary to meet the state’s housing need. Unfortunately, while the bill was passed by the Legislature, the Governor vetoed it. ***This is a loss.***
- **BUDGET UPDATE**: The budget also includes changes to the Connecticut Municipal Development Authority (CMDA) to make it easier for towns to collaborate with them. Similar to H.B. 1361: An Act Establishing a Housing Growth Fund for a Municipal Grant Program, that we testified on, the budget also authorizes $150,000,000 in bonds for the Housing Trust Fund in FY26 and FY27. ***This is a partial win.***

To ensure affordable child care is accessible in every town across our state, we proposed to:

Invest in Universal Access to Early Childhood Care and Education. CT's early care educators and providers are underpaid and overworked while costs are prohibitive for Connecticut families. We believe child care should be funded like the public good it is.

- **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**: Up to $300 million will be invested in the new Early Care and Education Endowment. Up to 12 percent of the fund will be released next year. This important and lasting investment will help bring down costs for families, create more slots for children and increase pay and benefits for providers. ***This is a win.***
- **BUDGET UPDATE**: Family Care Center owners will receive a $500 income tax credit, a measure meant to assist owner-providers. In our 2024 State of Early Childhood report, our modeling found that owner-providers of family child care homes make approximately $27,700 annually. When accounting for hours worked, their hourly wage amounts to $8.14, which is well below the state minimum wage. ***This is a win.***

Important Progress Made on Affordable Child Care

The 2025 Legislative Session marked a historic year in the campaign for universal access to high quality early childhood education. Connecticut made strides in funding child care like the public good it is. Advocacy efforts will continue on to ensure these investments are continued.

Safe, Healthy & Just Communities For All

To promote safe, healthy and just communities for all we proposed to:

Child Welfare

Extend Higher Education Tuition Reimbursement for Foster Youth up to Age 28. Connecticut can better support young people exiting the DCF system by extending the time frame that foster youth can access higher education resources for college.

- **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**: This year we made progress in the push for Connecticut to better support its foster youth by advocating for H.B. 6182, "An Act Extending Financial Assistance For The Postsecondary Education Expenses Of Foster Youth." This bill would have extended the state's postsecondary education tuition reimbursement program for foster youth leaving care from DCF to the age of 28. While this bill made it out of committee, it was ultimately not included in the final budget by the Appropriations Committee. ***This is a loss.***

Change The Appointing Authority of the Office of the Child Advocate. The Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) is the only government accountability office whose Advisory Committee doesn't have appointing authority of the head of the office. This is important considering the statutory responsibility and tools to assess the performance of our state agencies and

state-funded entities caring for Connecticut's most vulnerable children and youth lives with OCA alone, and accountability reports have decreased.

- **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**: H.B. 6183: "An Act Concerning the Appointment of the Child Advocate" revises the process for appointing and reappointing Connecticut's Child Advocate, extending the term from four to five years and establishing a structured performance evaluation and reappointment process led by the advisory committee. It maintains the governor's authority to appoint the Child Advocate from a ranked list of candidates submitted by the advisory committee and clarifies procedures when a vacancy occurs or if the governor fails to act. The bill also increases transparency and accountability by requiring annual evaluations of the Child Advocate's effectiveness to be submitted to legislative committees and posted publicly online. ***This is a partial win.***

Important Progress Made on Child Welfare

The budget makes adjustments to the state's foster youth policy by expanding funding for Community Kidcare and strengthening behavioral health services outside of institutions. Legislators also used the budget to enhance accountability by requiring an annual report on Specialized Trauma-Informed Treatment Assessment and Reunification STTAR Enhancement Plan, DCF's group home program that provides developmentally appropriate care for children removed from high-risk situations.

Criminal Legal System Reform

Reduce Surveillance Culture in Schools. To eliminate the school-to-prison system and better support young people, we should remove police officers (SROs) from schools and reinvest those savings in mental health services; eliminate chemical restraints on youth and increase the age of arrest from 10 to 14 years old.

- **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**: While there were no changes made to any of the aforementioned policies, S.B. 1542: "An Act Concerning the Use of Handcuffs on Young Children," prohibits the use of handcuffs on preadjudicated children under age 14 from the point of initial police contact, unless necessary for public safety, to prevent harm to an officer, or by court order under existing policy. Additionally, the budget includes recommendations from the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee, mandating new annual reporting on chronic absenteeism, diversion practices, trauma-informed treatment, and reentry outcomes. It establishes a statewide youth diversion policy and training curriculum, supporting efforts to reduce system involvement. The budget also includes support for Reentry Welcome Centers statewide, as well as measures to improve health care services for incarcerated individuals, requiring the Department of Correction (DOC) to provide evidence-based mental health services within two business days of intake and to ensure access to improved nutrition. In addition the budget also funds a number of initiatives across departments that impact child welfare. ***This is a partial win.***

Health & Health Coverage

Expand Medicaid through Increased Reimbursements to Providers and Increased Coverage to Children up to the Age of 26 (including immigrant children). Parents are struggling to find high-quality, affordable healthcare options. Connecticut's economy is healthiest when all of its residents are healthy and can receive the care they need.

- **BUDGET UPDATE**: The budget increases Medicaid rates by $60.5 million over the next two years. The state budget also maintains the expansion of HUSKY Health coverage of undocumented children up to the age of 15 years old from the 2024 session. Legislators also use budget language to implement an annual maternity care report card developed by the Department of Public Health in addition to an advisory group mandated to consider patient acuity and demographic variables. ***This is a partial win.***

Important Progress Made on Health & Health Coverage

While one of our ultimate goals is to expand health coverage for all immigrants irrespective of immigration status, the political and fiscal reality during the legislative session is that HUSKY for immigrants was in jeopardy of being repealed due to federal language in the Congressional reconciliation budget on the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) penalty. As such, defending HUSKY for immigrants is an incredibly important win. However, although the aforementioned changes to the FMAP were eliminated from the final Congressional reconciliation budget, we expect state changes as implementation rolls out. As such, we will continue to protect this vital program that provides healthcare for our state's children and families.

Emerging Issues

This legislative session the Legislature made forward progress on a number of bills around artificial intelligence.

- **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**: A modified version of S.B. 1295 was enacted, which protects against cyberbullying and limits artificial intelligence (AI) in the process. We testified on the importance of prioritizing the well-being of young internet users, highlighting that "Just as government regulations protect children from unsafe products, harmful substances, and exploitative labor practices, legislative action is necessary to establish guardrails that ensure social media platforms operate responsibly."
- **BUDGET UPDATE**: The budget proposed by the legislature at the end of the 2025 legislative session puts some additional restrictions on the use of Artificial Intelligence by criminalizing the dissemination of an intimate synthetically created image. Similar to some of the language from S.B. 2 "An Act Concerning Artificial Intelligence" that we testified on, Section 279 of H.B. 7287 prohibits intentionally distributing digitally altered images (synthetically created, not wholly recorded by a camera, or partly computer-generated) that depict identifiable individuals in states of nudity (genitals, pubic area, buttocks, or female breasts below the nipple) or engaged in sexual

intercourse. Unfortunately, the original budget was amended to remove the provisions on the artificial intelligence (AI) disclosure requirements that were more in line with S.B. 2. A senate priority bill, S.B. 2 outlined new policies regarding equity and accountability in the development, deployment, and use of Artificial Intelligence while supporting education and innovation in the field via multiple initiatives. This bill in its entirety would have established clear definitions and standards for AI governance, implemented strong accountability measures by establishing a duty of care for high-risk AI stakeholders and integrators, and established opportunities to strengthen the workforce. Though we testified on and strongly supported S.B. 2, very little of the original text made it across the finish line and renewed efforts to enact more comprehensive legislation addressing AI governance will be needed going forward. ***This is a partial win.***

This legislative session the Legislature made forward progress on a number of bills around educational resources available in libraries.

- **BUDGET UPDATE**: The budget helps prevent arbitrary book bans. Similar to S.B. 1271: An Act Concerning School and Public Libraries, a bill we testified on this session, sec. 345-347 of the budget calls for public libraries and each local and regional board of education to adopt policies on the collection development and maintenance of library materials, programs and displays as well as establish their own protocols for library material review and reconsideration. Each policy is meant to ensure that all library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 10-15c of the general statutes, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. ***This is a win.***

Conclusion

In spite of numerous challenges, we were able to get many of our 2025 legislative priorities across the finish line. We're pleased that lawmakers took steps toward reforming Connecticut's fiscal controls and enacting other important policies that have huge potential to change the trajectory for our children and hardworking families. We will re-up many of the issues where we fell short on in the hope to build more momentum toward their eventual passage. However, as Connecticut determines what it will do in response to the Congressional reconciliation budget as well as current and future federal fiscal actions, it is incumbent upon us to not only restore devastating funding cuts but also continue the good progress our state has made.

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A special thank you to Yale School of Public Health Practicum Students Arisa (Rei) Marshall and Ella Suh for your incredible work this semester and continued work this summer.

At Connecticut Voices for Children, we recognize that we are not in this work alone and know that our work is only strengthened by the people and organizations who we are in allyship, partnership, and deep collaboration. In any given year, we work with dozens of organizations and coalitions. This year, we are so grateful to have worked closely with the following:

- CT Bar Foundation
- CT Child Tax Credit Coalition
- CT Early Childhood Alliance
- CT End Child Poverty Now
- CT For All
- CT Justice Alliance
- CT Tax Fairness & Equity Coalition
- CT Tenants Union
- Desegregate CT
- Growing Together CT
- Husky 4 Immigrants
- Protect CT
- SUN Scholars

Our intention is to lift-up the work of others as we advocate for economic justice and racial equity across the state so that Connecticut can be a place where all children reach their full potential. While we have explicitly named some of our allies, partners, and collaborators in this section, the individuals and organizations listed do not represent an exhaustive list.

Appendix

Legislative Highlights

Legislative Highlights - Money in the Pockets of Hardworking Families

- **S.B. 1**: “An Act Increasing Resources For Students, Schools And Special Education,” establishes new initiatives and additional resources to strengthen special education services and support student well-being. Public Act 25-93 | Our Testimony
- **H.B. 6921**: "An Act Implementing The Recommendations Of The Office Of Early Childhood," extends changes to the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula. For FY25 and each fiscal year after, students enrolled in interdistrict magnet schools will be counted as resident students of the town in which they reside. Public Act 25-143
- **H.B. 5001**: “An Act Concerning The Quality And Delivery Of Special Education Services In Connecticut,” increases funding for special education to expand access to special education services and seeks to regulate the cost of special education. Public Act 25-67 | Our Testimony
- **Public Act 25-2.** The Legislature passed and the Governor enacted PA 25-2 in March of this year, which appropriated $40M from the General Fund for Excess Cost (Special Ed funding). This funding was placed into a new account known as the "special education emergency municipal assistance account” created by Special Act 25-1 and was used to provide emergency grants for municipalities for special education funding.
- **H.B. 7287**: “An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027, and Making Appropriations Therefor, and Provisions Related to Revenue and Other Items Implementing the State Budget.” Among its many provisions, this bill increases the volatility cap threshold, eliminates the cap on a combined group’s tax liability on a unitary basis, extends the corporation business tax surcharge, and establishes a $250 supplemental credit to the Connecticut Earned Income Tax Credit for taxpayers with at least one qualifying child. These provisions are the same or similar to provisions that were included in, or that we recommended be included in, S.B. 1246: “An Act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Biennial Budget.” Public Act 25-168 | Our Testimony

Legislative Highlights - Affordable Housing

- **H.B. 5002:** “An Act Concerning Housing and the Needs of Homeless Persons,” this year’s housing omnibus bill, included some of our tenant protection priorities, supports homelessness services and enacts major reforms in a number of areas of housing policy. While H.B. 5002 did successfully pass in the House and Senate, the bill was ultimately vetoed by the governor. Public Act | Our Testimony
- **H.B. 7036:** “An Act Requiring the Establishment of Fair Rent Commissions,” proposed the requirement that all towns with more than 15,000 people have a fair rent commission, a decrease from the current requirement of 25,000. This language was ultimately folded into H.B.5002. Bill Language | Our Testimony

- **H.B. 6831:** “An Act Concerning Transit-Oriented Communities.” This bill introduced what is known as “Work, Live, Ride”, a policy which encourages municipalities to establish transit-oriented development districts near public transportation hubs. This language was ultimately folded into H.B.5002. Bill Language | Our Testimony
- **H.B.6478:** “An Act Prohibiting the Use of Certain Software to Establish Occupancy Levels and Rental Rates for the Purpose of Increasing Landlord and Property Manager Profits” sought to limit the use of any software to determine occupancy levels and rental rates.This language was ultimately folded into H.B.5002. Bill Language | Our Testimony
- **H.B. 6947**: “An Act Prohibiting Residential Rental Property Owners From Using Pricing Algorithms and Competitors Sensitive Data to Set Rental Prices” sought to limit the use of any software to determine occupancy levels and rental rates.This language was ultimately folded into H.B.5002. Bill Language | Our Testimony
- **H.B. 6944:** “An Act Requiring a Municipality to Include Certain Information in Its Affordable Housing Plan,” incentivizes towns to lead affordable housing initiatives by prioritizing them for discretionary funding and offering technical assistance. Bill Language | Our Testimony

Legislative Highlights - Affordable Child Care

- **S.B. 1:** “An Act Increasing Resources For Students, Schools And Special Education,” represents a major investment in Connecticut’s early care and education system, with a focus on long-term funding, expanded access, affordability for families, and workforce support. This bill establishes the Early Care and Education Endowment, new funding outside the state budget that is projected to increase available surplus by $750 million over two years ($309 million in FY26 and $557 million in FY27). Public Act 25-93 | Our Testimony
- **H.B. 5003**: “An Act Concerning The Early Childhood Care And Education Fund,” strengthens early childhood care in Connecticut by creating a centralized childcare portal, a pilot program to distribute information on early childhood education and assistance programs to expectant mothers during prenatal care. Public Act 25-82 | Our Testimony

Legislative Highlights - Safe, Healthy & Just Communities

- **H.B. 7259:** “An Act Concerning Revisions to Various Statutes Concerning Criminal Justice,” updates Connecticut’s criminal justice laws and strengthens the Trust Act by limiting law enforcements’ compliance with ICE as well as providing options for individuals to sue over alleged violations. While we had hoped for much stronger measures (especially those that would protect state data and protected areas), we strongly supported the bill that passed as it has the potential to better protect immigrant residents. Public Act 25-29
- **S.B. 1542:** “An Act Concerning the Use of Handcuffs on Young Children,” prohibits the use of handcuffs on preadjudicated children under age 14 from the point of initial police

contact, unless necessary for public safety, to prevent harm to an officer, or by court order under existing policy. Public Act 25-163 | Our Testimony

- **H.B. 1541:** “An Act Concerning the Office of the Correction Ombuds, Disclosure of Disciplinary Matters or Alleged Misconduct by a Department of Correction Employee and Use of Force and Body Cameras in Correctional Facilities,” expands the authority and oversight role of the Office of the Correctional Ombuds and enhances transparency measures and increases protection for staff reporting use of excessive force. Public Act 25-161

- **S.B. 10:** “An Act Concerning Health Insurance and Patient Protection,” requires health insurers to file annual mental health parity compliance certifications, and makes these filings public in addition to providing additional authority to the Insurance Commissioner to impose civil penalties reduce insurance rate hikes that exceed state cost benchmarks, and limit arbitrary restrictions on general anesthesia and facility fees. Public Act 25-94
- **S.B. 1295:** “An Act Concerning Broadband Internet, Gaming, Social Media, Online Services and Consumer Contracts” This bill mandates that social media platforms incorporate online safety centers and cyberbullying policies, redefines "heightened risk of harm to minors" to include foreseeable physical or mental health risks from data processing, and requires online services targeting minors to implement default settings preventing unsolicited adult communications, avoid addictive design features, and disclose risk mitigation plans to the Attorney General. Public Act 25-113 | Our Testimony