



A CONNECTICUT FOR ALL: Supporting families and building a state for all our residents

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Planned Parenthood Funding

To provide state funding for Planned Parenthood to counter the loss of federal Title X funding due to the Trump administration's gag order.

Preventing Youth Suicide

To increase awareness, education and services to our youth around suicide prevention.

Diaper Changing Stations

To improve the health and safety of children by requiring all new or substantially renovated buildings that have public restrooms to provide at least one diaper changing table to women and men on each building floor that is accessible to the public.

PROTECTING CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS

Non-Disclosure Agreements

To stop employers from using non-disclosure agreements to silence victims of sexual harassment.

Captive Audience Meetings

To prohibit an employer from coercing employees into attending or participating in meetings sponsored by the employer concerning the employer's views on religious or political matters.

Age Discrimination

To increase job protections for older workers in our state.

Narcan and Epi-Pens for Public Safety Officers

To increase the number of municipal and state police officers who carry life-saving Narcan and EpiPens.

Background on Legislation Proposed

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Planned Parenthood Funding

To provide state funding for Planned Parenthood to counter the loss of federal Title X funding due to the Trump administration gag order.

President Trump and Vice-President Pence recently forced a change to the decades-old Title X federal funding program that prohibits any health care provider participating in the program from telling patients how and where to access abortion.

The enforcement of this "gag rule" forced Planned Parenthood out of Title X to honor their commitment to providing honest, ethical health care that gives patients all their options.

Planned Parenthood of Southern New England—which operates 16 health centers across Connecticut—lost \$2.1 million, about 5% of its total budget, due to the Trump-Pence "gag rule" fundamentally corrupting the Title X program. Planned Parenthood served almost 42,000 people who rely on Title X—more than 88% of the state's Title X patients—who already struggle to afford the care they need. About a third are women under the age of 25, a third earn less than \$12,000, and more than half are people of color.

The Senate Democratic caucus will protect women's health care and provide state funding for Planned Parenthood in Connecticut by adjusting the Fiscal Year 2021 state budget to offset this loss of funding. Connecticut must defend women's health the organization from President Donald Trump's attack.

Preventing Youth Suicide

To increase education and services to our youth around suicide prevention.

According to recent government reports, death by suicide has become the second-most common cause of death among teens and young adults. Additionally, according to the Connecticut Violent Death Reporting System, 1,170 individuals died by suicide in the state between 2015 and 2017. These sobering numbers require swift action to save the lives of those suffering.

Although death by suicide impacts all groups, youth have specifically been affected in recent years. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the number of suicides among people ages 10 to 24 rose 56 percent from 2007-2017.

Senate Democrats will take action on youth suicide following the recommendations of a recently established task force which will report out its findings by the end of January.

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DPH/Injury-Prevention/LE_-newsletter2019_Final.pdf?la=en

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db352-h.pdf>

Diaper Changing Stations

To improve the health and safety of children by requiring all new or substantially renovated buildings that have public restrooms to provide at least one diaper changing table to women and men on each building floor that is accessible to the public.

Diaper changing stations are usually found solely in women's restrooms, even though images and ideals of parenting are changing. Same-sex male couples, single fathers and any father responsible for his child can struggle to find areas to change a diaper. Men are often forced to change their child on an unsanitary floor or counter. Some may delay a diaper change, which can negatively impact a child's health. This comes as traditional parenting roles are transforming and more men spend time caring for their children. In 2016, Pew Research data showed that fathers spent three times longer in a week caring for a child than in 1965. Federally, in 2016, the BABIES Act required all public federal buildings to install diaper changing stations in all bathrooms. California and New York have previously passed similar legislation.

Last year, the Senate Democratic Caucus supported Senate Bill 533, "An Act Concerning Access to Diaper Changing Stations in Public and Commercial Buildings," which would require all newly constructed buildings with public restrooms to contain at least one diaper changing station for men and one diaper changing station for women on each floor of the building open to the public. While this legislation passed the State Senate by a 34-2 vote, it was never taken up by the House. The Senate Democratic Caucus will fight for equal access to parenting resources again this year by supporting this legislation.

PROTECTING CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS

Non-Disclosure Agreements

To protect workers from discrimination and harassment by making non-disclosure agreements illegal in the state.

Employers often require their employees to enter certain non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) which contain language prohibiting the employee from discussing or disclosing matters of workplace discrimination, including sexual harassment. While these clauses cannot prohibit a person from reporting a crime to authorities, for a victim who wants to speak out to friends, family, or coworkers, he or she would find themselves contractually prohibited from doing so.

For example, the sexual assault victims of Larry Nasser and Harvey Weinstein signed NDAs as part of their legal settlements with those men, and now we know that additional victims followed those settlements.

California, Washington, Maryland, Vermont, and Tennessee have already adopted such legislation. Under our bill, these types of NDAs would be illegal, and the Department of Labor could issue a fine of up to \$500 per violation. Furthermore, the bill also provides employees with a private "right of action" against the employer – meaning, a legal basis to bring a lawsuit.

Under our bill, employers would still be able to require employees to sign an NDA to the extent the NDA addresses other matters, such as trade secrets, marketing strategies, client lists, and other non-public information that employees are commonly expected to keep confidential.

Senate Democrats passed this bill last year (Senate Bill 761) on a bipartisan and overwhelming vote of 33-2 but the bill was not taken up by the House. Supporters of the bill include the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF), and the National Women's Law Center.

Captive Audience Meetings

To prohibit an employer from coercing employees into attending or participating in meetings sponsored by the employer concerning the employer's views on religious or political matters.

The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees the rights of freedom of speech and freedom of assembly – not just in print or on the street, but also in the workplace. This also includes the right not to assemble and the right not to listen to coercive speeches. The United States Constitution protects American employees from any economic sanctions – such as the loss of a raise, benefits, or even their job -- if they choose not to sit and listen to an employer's particular political or religious views – including calls to support a particular candidate for public office, and whether or not to join a union.

The Senate Democratic caucus proposes prohibiting employers -- including the state and towns -- from requiring employees to attend an employer-sponsored meeting if the primary purpose of that meeting is to express an employer's views about political parties, proposed legislation or regulations, or their support for a particular politician or labor organization. Our bill would also prohibit employers from holding meetings with employees about religious practices.

Age Discrimination

To increase job protections for older workers.

With 436,000 workers in their mid-50's, Connecticut has the 6th-oldest workforce in the nation, with a median age of 41 (as of 2017.) Just 20% of Connecticut employees were over the age 54 in 2008; today that figure is 26.5%, with the health care, manufacturing, educational services and retail trade industries employing the most workers over age 54.

The problem is, a 2018 AARP survey found about 60% of older workers have personally seen or experienced age discrimination in the workplace, and 76% of them see age discrimination as a hurdle to finding a new job. Meanwhile, nearly a third of U.S. households headed by someone age 55 or older have no retirement savings or pension, meaning they'll have to continue working or rely on Social Security in order to survive financially.

This year, Senate Democrats plan to introduce bipartisan legislation that would prohibit employers from asking the age, date of birth, or graduation dates of job applicants -- unless a particular age is a bona fide occupational qualification, such as being a bartender or an interstate truck driver. No one should be vetted for a job based solely on their age. This bill will make our economy fairer and stronger.

Narcan and Epi-Pens for Public Safety Officers

To increase the number of municipal and state police officers who carry life-saving Narcan and EpiPens.

During the 2019 legislative session, the General Assembly passed a law to provide expanded access to life-saving epinephrine to treat anaphylactic allergic reactions. The legislation makes EpiPens available in public venues, camps, preschools, and entertainment businesses. According to the Food and Drug Administration, there are 30,000 emergency room visits, 2,000 hospitalizations, and 150 deaths due to anaphylaxis to food.

As of 2019, federal grant money allows all hospital emergency departments in Connecticut to have naloxone, otherwise known as Narcan, available for distribution to patients. Narcan is an opioid overdose-reversing medication. In 2015, legislation was passed in Connecticut allowing certified pharmacists to prescribe and dispense Narcan directly to customers requesting it. Accidental overdoses

have been on the rise across the United States as well as in Connecticut. In 2018, 1,017 people died in Connecticut and by the end of 2019, that number was projected to be at 1,088.

Connecticut has expanded access to Narcan and Epi Pens because allergic reactions and opioid overdoses require immediate action. In order to continue this process, the state of Connecticut should take necessary steps to make Narcan and Epi Pens available for municipal and state police forces.

<https://www.middletownpress.com/middletown/article/New-CT-law-makes-epinephrine-devices-EpiPens-14067120.php>

<https://www.ctpost.com/local/article/Grant-money-allows-all-hospital-ER-in-CT-to-13685687.php>

<https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-news-overdose-deaths-opioid-fentanyl-20190830-g7novfnktbd6nldk2cvcbnllu-story.html>