

## Meeting on Working Together this Legislative Session

February 10, 2017 at Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS)

**Attendees:** Beth Hogan and Betsy Cronin (The Connection), Merrill Gay and Jessica Ciparelli (Early Childhood Alliance), Liz Brown (CCAG), Paola Serrecchia (CABHN), Rafie Podolsky (CT Legal Services), Jen Chapman (CRT), Tanya Smith (UConn School of Social Work and CAHS Board), Rick Porth and Annie Scully (United Way of CT), Roger Senserrich (CT Voices for Children), Lucy Potter (Greater Hartford Legal Aid), Erin Boggs (Open Communities Alliance), Emily Wood (CT Money School volunteer), Lucy Nolan (End Hunger CT!), Maddie Granato (CWEALF, by phone), Emmanuel Adero, Liz Fraser, Jim Horan, Gwen Pastor (CAHS)

### Notes:

- Gwen Pastor of CAHS presented on Gov. Malloy's proposed budget. [2017 Budget Power Point](#)
- Roger Senserrich and others discussed the critical importance of addition revenue to avoid deep cuts. CT Voices for Children released a [brief](#), focusing on expanding the sales tax to services, eliminating most exemptions, and reducing the rate; eliminating business tax exemptions; and creating a statewide property tax to support education. [CT Voices for Children Webinar](#).
  - Also discussed potential for a sugar-sweetened beverages tax, which is regressive but boosts public health. And for a tax on big box employers. [Increased cigarette tax](#).
- Attendees discussed their top priorities (in addition to Revenue, above), which include:
  - **Housing:** eviction prevention funding; protecting the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure: hearing 2/16 (CGS Sec. 8-30g, CRT) (Legal Services, Connection, CRT), Rapid Rehousing funding, supportive housing (Connection, CRT, UWCT) Storage fees for evicted tenants (CABHN, Legal Services) Comprehensive [bill](#) to promote affordable housing choices in opportunity areas. Hearing 2/23.
  - **Human Services Programs:** Cuts to HUSKY A parents, Safety Net cuts, Medicare savings, potential federal block granting of Medicaid (EHC!) Department of Children & Families consent decree; juvenile justice. (Voices) Attacks on SNAP; increase funding for Meals on Wheels and child nutrition
  - **Early Care and Education:** stopping Care4Kids's continued closure, which will hurt all early childhood programs. [The CT Early Childhood Alliance is hosting a briefing for legislators and staff on Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 am.](#) Oppose move of C4K to DSS. (Early Childhood Alliance, Connection) Restore two-generation initiative funding, helping young children and their parents. (CAHS, Connection)
  - **K-12 Education:** seek additional funding, especially for poor schools. (Voices)
  - **Jobs/Workforce:** Bail reform; sustain and expand re-entry programs. (Connection) Expand affirmative action for state contractors, linking to workforce boards and CHRO. (CCAG) Address middle skills gap, DOL and SDE budget concerns for workforce development training and adult ed. (CWEALF Campaign for Working CT) [Campaign for Paid Family Leave](#) hearing on S.B. 1 and H.B. 6212 2/16 at 2:00, along with minimum wage increase. (CWEALF, Connection) Allow businesses to use stranded research tax credits going forward to boost investment and grow the economy; support new brownfields tax credits. (CAHS) Click [here](#) to see the Campaign for Paid Family Leave's talking points.
- [CAHS's legislative agenda](#) is called "Opportunity Connecticut," reflects interviews with diverse stakeholders over the past eight months to grow the state's economy and jobs while promoting economic and racial equity. We sought to create something positive for diverse groups—business, labor, cities, nonprofit service providers. This focus on systems-building and positive

messaging about “opportunity for all” resonates with others, including Voices’ focus on tax modernization and stability, United Way’s ALICE focus ([ALICE Report](#), [United Way ALICE Agenda](#)) and overall legislative agenda, etc.

- Actions moving forward:
  - Attendees like the “Opportunity Connecticut” banner and positive messaging. We may all take a hit with the large budget deficit, but there are positive steps we can take to grow the economy, create jobs, and build opportunity for lower-income people and cities.
  - We will help put together a press conference with attendees to get our agenda out, with help from Liz Brown, Paola, Erin, and Roger.
  - We could also organize a lobby day, and meetings with individual legislators.
  - CAHS will add housing-related issues to the Opportunity Connecticut agenda and look at other issues and bills discussed at the meeting.
  - CAHS and others will also send out regular alerts with information on legislative hearings, links to websites with information on bills and issues, etc. CABHN, EHC!, Voices, and others can do the same with alerts, blogs, etc., reinforcing the message. CAHS will create a Dropbox to post resources, including public hearings, testimony, policy briefs/backgrounders, legislative agendas, etc.
  - Alerts can also promote other activities, including TalkPoverty Day 2/16 at 8:30 am, a Care4Kids event the same day, DUE Justice action 2/14, Paid Family Leave Week of Action 2/15, 12:00 in LOB 2C.
  - We can support each other by testifying on each other’s bills, and including statements in testimony like “Support for a sugar-sweetened beverage tax could generate \$130 million, enough to pay for . . . [not everything, but related issues, like child nutrition programs or even Care4Kids].
  - We need to recruit potential allies, such as CCM, CAFCA (planned to attend this meeting), town social service officers.
  - To stay informed and on track, CAHS will organize 30-minute weekly calls, perhaps on Friday mornings. The first call will take place this Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup> from 9:30-10:30. The call in number is: 712-432-1500, 971999# We may convene some meetings, and Lucy offered EHC! as a convenient location.