



WHO WE ARE

She Leads Justice (formally named Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund, or CWEALF) is a statewide, nonprofit organization that uses a justice and equity lens to advocate for under-resourced, marginalized women in Connecticut. We work to close the civil legal justice gap and to create policy that advances women's economic security.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

Decades of systemic racism, sexism and economic injustice have burdened Connecticut women and prevented our economy from operating at its fullest potential. We must work with urgency to center the lived experiences, needs, and wisdom of Black women, women of color and women living with poverty in all policy decisions. We need policy change that is explicitly anti-racist and anti-sexist, with a justice and reparations lens.

SLJ'S PRIMARY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY IN 2024

Improve Access to Paid Sick Days

She Leads Justice leads the Paid Sick Days Coalition. Connecticut was first in the nation to require paid sick days. However, we have been surpassed by other states with more comprehensive policies. We ask the legislature to improve the existing paid sick days law to:

- **Cover all workers** by requiring all employers to provide paid sick time to all employees, regardless of employer size or industry.
- **Bring our eligibility and accrual rate in line with what businesses in our neighboring states provide their workers** so workers will become eligible to use their paid sick time 100 days after they start working and can accrue a minimum of 40 hours per year.
- **Expand the definition of family** to reflect modern-day family structures allowing, workers to care for their loved ones.
- **Extend access to Safe Days** so workers can take care of a family member who experiences family violence, intimate partner violence, or sexual assault.

If you want to join the Paid Sick Days Coalition, please email info@sheleadsjustice.org.

BUILD AN EQUITABLE ECONOMY

Close the Gender Wage and Wealth Gap

Lost wages due to the gender wage gap have long-lasting impacts on women's housing, childcare, education, retirement and health care decisions, especially for women of color. We support legislation to continue to increase pay transparency and prohibit gendered pricing.

Gender and racial wage gaps exacerbate student loan debt and make it more difficult for women, especially women of color, to repay their loans. As a result, women carry nearly 2/3 of student loan debt in the U.S. We support the leadership of [The Student Loan Fund](#) to support borrowers and end student loan debt.

Create an Equitable State Budget and Tax System

We support the [Connecticut For All](#) coalition's efforts to create greater transparency and build equity into our state's current tax structure.

We must ensure that state and federal dollars are dedicated to eliminating inequities by increasing investments in pre-K through 12 public education, affordable housing, public higher education, job training programs, and access to affordable health care.

We also urge policymakers to support a permanent, refundable [CT Child Tax Credit](#) for our state's families.

SUPPORT WOMEN, WORKERS, AND FAMILIES**Establish a System of Universal Child Care**

We support policies that increase investments in the child care industry to make care universally available for every family in the setting of their choice, regardless of a child’s age or household income, and increases the wages of child care providers. We support the leadership of Child Care for Connecticut’s Future on these initiatives.

ENSURE BASIC NEEDS ARE MET FOR ALL**Strengthen Access to Health Care and Reproductive Freedom**

We support policies that advance health equity and justice and ensure all Connecticut residents have access to quality and affordable health care regardless of gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, immigration status, race, ethnicity, income, disability, or zip code. This includes measures that remove barriers to accessing abortion and reproductive health care. We support the leadership of the Coalition for Choice led by Planned Parenthood of Southern New England and Reproductive Equity Now.

Ensure Healthy Futures for All Children

We support policy initiatives that will provide access to high quality nutritious meals for all school children, free of cost, led by the leadership of End Hunger for All CT.

We support the HUSKY Medicaid expansion to all children, including undocumented children and young adults, led by the leadership of the HUSKY for All Coalition.

Protect Tenant Rights

We support the leadership of the CT Tenants Union in urging our policymakers to pass a Just Cause law. Just Cause Eviction Protections means renters cannot be forced out of their homes for no reason. We believe that all people in Connecticut deserve stable and dignified housing, and ensuring tenants cannot be evicted for no reason is a step towards that vision.

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