

SHE LEADS
JUSTICE

LET'S GET LOUD!

A VOTER GUIDE TO THE 2026 CONNECTICUT ELECTION



THIS VOTER GUIDE:

is designed to get you thinking about how to advocate and organize in your community this election cycle: to get loud and ensure Connecticut women are one step closer to economic security.

ADVOCATE AND ORGANIZE YOUR COMMUNITY!



ABOUT THIS VOTER GUIDE:

- We designed this guide with inclusivity in mind and pulled from practices cultivated and led by marginalized groups.
- To counteract the erasure of women from history, this guide highlights the work and stories of Connecticut women.
- To go to a specific page from the Table of Contents below, click on the page or topic.



LOOK OUT FOR :



Hot tips are insider knowledge that helps you advocate and organize better!

&



Stories Matter sections share important stories from CT residents. These excerpts highlight the importance of storytelling in advocacy, and community voices to shape policy.

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A MESSAGE & CALL TO ACTION FROM JANÉE WOODS WEBER

SHE LEADS JUSTICE



Dear Community Member,

Election Day is November 3rd. Our democracy works best when we all participate. I'll be voting and I hope you will too. Each time we go to the polls we have the opportunity to cast our votes for the candidates who will shape policies impacting ourselves, our families and our neighbors. I hope this Voter Guide informs and inspires you to organize the people around you to advocate and vote for your shared priorities. Always remember that you hold power in your vote because elected officials are supposed to work for us, the people. Together, our votes can help create the country that all women and girls deserve.

Truly,

Janée Woods Weber

Executive Director, She Leads Justice

A COMMUNITY OFFERING: HOW TO USE A QR CODE & HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN!

We have a lot of know-how at She Leads Justice and we are fans of sharing our wealth. Here is an easy tool that can help facilitate your change work. QR codes are pictures that hold a link. Have fun and keep us in the loop!

To access with a phone:

- Open your camera app and aim it at the QR code.
- A box will pop up with the link. Click on it.

To access with another device:

- Download a QR reader application.



MAKE YOUR OWN:

- Create an account on Canva.com or Bitly.com
- On Canva: QR Code can be generated once you begin a new project via the "apps" option in the toolbar.
- On Bitly.com: QR codes can be generated with the QR generator on the dashboard.



Register to vote!



Check your voter registration status!

SHE LEADS JUSTICE (SLJ)

WHO WE ARE

SLJ is a statewide nonprofit that uses a justice and equity lens to advocate for under-resourced, marginalized women and girls in Connecticut. We work to close the civil legal justice gap, to organize communities for change, and to create policy that advances women's economic security.

WHAT WE DO



WHO DO WE DO IT FOR?

WOMEN + WORKERS + FAMILIES



SCAN HERE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

Are you a woman living in Connecticut who needs help with employment discrimination or family law?

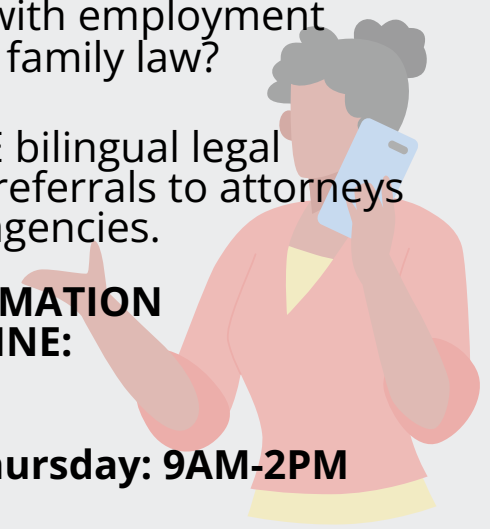
SLJ provides FREE bilingual legal information and referrals to attorneys and community agencies.

CALL OUR INFORMATION AND REFERRAL LINE:

(860) 524-0601

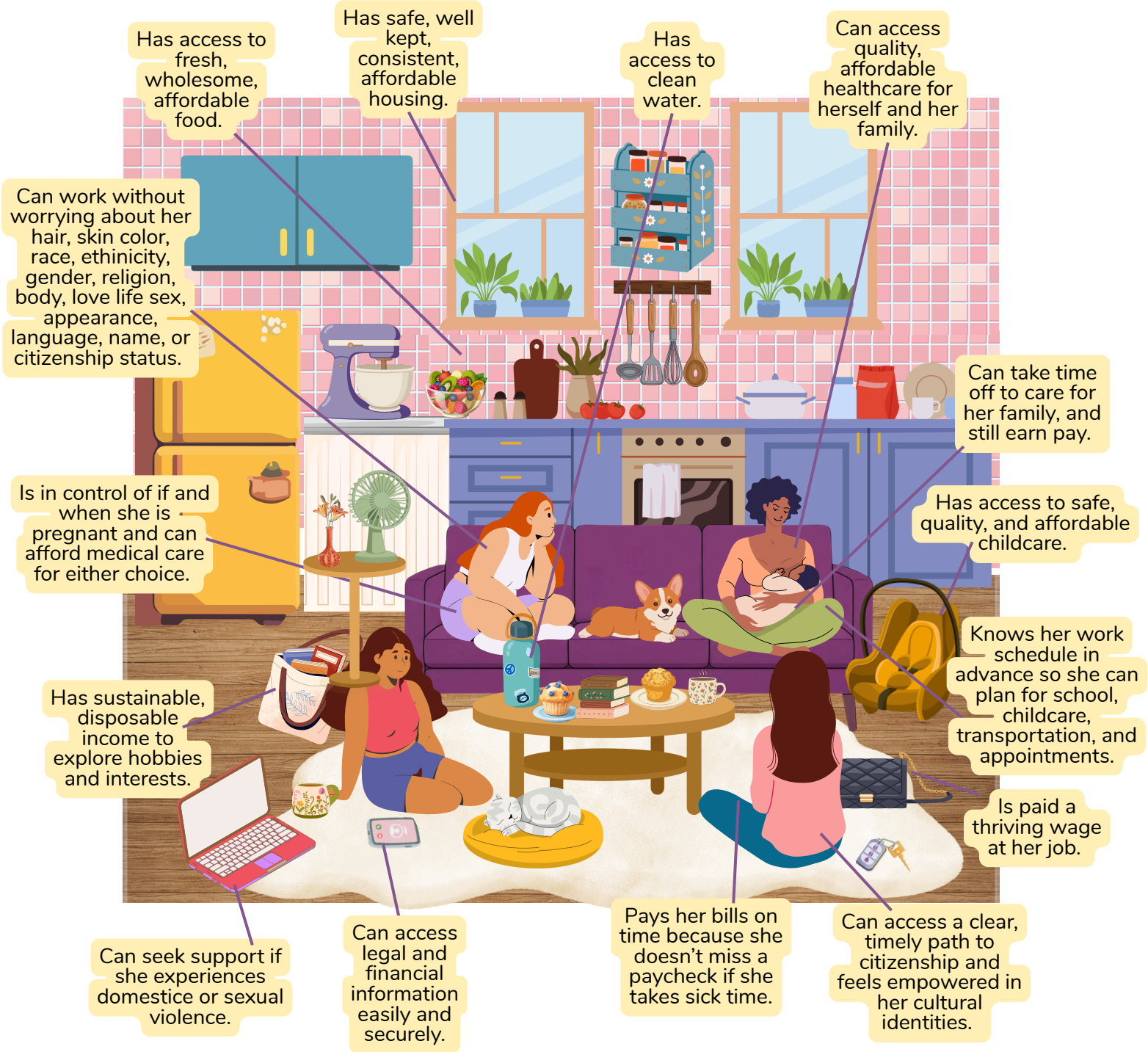
**Open Monday-Thursday: 9AM-2PM
Friday: 9AM-1PM**

EMAIL US: [INFO@SHELEADSJUSTICE.ORG](mailto:info@sheleadsjustice.org)



WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY

SLJ advocates for policies that support women's economic security. Here is a vision of what that could look like. What becomes possible for you when you can meet your needs?



DEFINED:

Women's economic security is the condition of having a stable income or other financial resources to support themselves and/or their families.

LIKE WHAT YOU SEE?
SIGN UP FOR OUR
NEWSLETTER



SCAN HERE
TO JOIN OUR
NEWSLETTER

SHE LEADS JUSTICE DEFINES: COMMON LANGUAGE IN SOCIAL MOVEMENT WORK

SHE LEADS JUSTICE



@sheleadsjusticect



facebook.com/sheleadsjusticect

At SLJ, we know that language is often used to exclude people from political spaces and to discourage them from participating. Here is a list of words we commonly use and their definitions:



WAYS TO VOTE IN CT!

BALLOT

a sheet of paper used to cast a vote



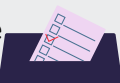
ABSENTEE BALLOT

a ballot completed and typically mailed in advance of an election by a voter who is unable to be present at the polls



AFFIDAVIT BALLOT

aka provisional ballots- used when you believe you are eligible to vote but cannot submit a regular ballot



ADVOCATE

publicly support or recommend a particular cause or policy



ACTIVIST

a person who campaigns to bring about political or social change



ORGANIZE

activating community members to strategize and execute social movement work



CAMPAIGN

a connected series of strategies designed to bring about a particular result



MOVEMENT

a group of people working to advance their shared political, social, or artistic ideas



RALLY

a larger meeting making a political protest or showing support for a cause



DISTRICT

a region or area of the state where you live



CONSTITUENT

a voter who elects a person to represent them and their community or neighborhood



LEGISLATIVE SESSION

time when the government meets to debate and pass laws



LEGISLATURE

a body of government that passes laws in the state where you live



LEGISLATOR

a person who is elected to represent an area of the state in order to make laws



BILL

a draft of a proposed law



CT WOMEN LEAD: Carrie Saxon Perry

Carrie Saxon Perry was the **first African-American woman to lead a major New England city as the mayor of Hartford**. She is credited for helping reduce racial tension in the city. Notably, she visited Black neighborhoods after the Rodney King verdict in 1992.

Saxon Perry championed LGBTQ+ rights in Hartford, such as introducing legislation to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in Hartford schools, 5 years before the policy was adopted statewide.



VOTE LIKE YOU KNOW!

An SLJ guide to help you prep yourself and others to vote!

IMPORTANT VOTER DATES

SEPTEMBER

September 15 2026

- List of candidates for state and district offices is sent to municipal clerks.

September 15, 2026

- National Voter Registration Day!

OCTOBER

October 2, 2026

- Absentee ballots aka mail-in ballots are available. Download your application online or pick it up at your Town Clerk's office.

October 19-November 1

EARLY VOTING!

- Vote early in person at your early voting location.

NOVEMBER

November 3rd, 2026

ELECTION DAY!

CONNECTICUT ALLOWS SAME DAY REGISTRATION HOWEVER, SLJ RECOMMENDS REGISTERING AHEAD OF TIME TO AVOID POTENTIAL ISSUES

5 THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU VOTE:

- 1 CREATE A LIST OF NEEDS**
Think of:
 - What do you, your family, your communities and your cities need?
- 2 RESEARCH**
 - Candidates
 - Needs and solutions
 - Your polling place
- 3 REGISTER**
Check your registration or register online at voterregistration.ct.gov or at your town hall!
- 4 ADVOCATE**
GET LOUD:
 - On Social Media
 - At Social Events
 - At Campaign Events
- 5 ORGANIZE**
 - Create a plan to vote with members of your community!
 - Figure out transportation!**



GET LOUD!

Share on your social media pages about the election and remind folks to vote!

ORGANIZE!

- Set up a table with our information in your community.
- Talk to your community about women's economic security.
- Help your community register to vote!



Find out more about voting in CT!



Melissa from Woodbury CT is a mother and nurse who spent 18 years caring for patients before chronic illness and domestic violence left her disabled. Medicaid and Connecticut's Community First Choice program now provides the home care that helps her live independently. When budget cuts threatened those services, she was compelled to join other disabled and non-disabled people in meeting with state leaders to re-evaluate how cutting these programs would cost lives and increase expenses to taxpayers. Guided by faith, and a devotion to compassion, Melissa advocates for healthcare as a fundamental human right and for the dignity of caring for one another, chiefly for those with special needs and the vulnerable.

VOTE LIKE YOU KNOW!

An SLJ guide to help you prep yourself and others to vote!



Register to vote!

WHO'S ON YOUR BALLOT?

1 CONGRESS (U.S. SENATE & HOUSE)

- **U.S. Senators:** 2 elected six-year positions that represent the state at the federal government.
- **U.S. Representatives:** represent the 5 CT congressional districts, elected to the House of Representatives for a two-year term

2 STATE LEGISLATURE (SENATE & HOUSE)

- **State Senator:** Elected to serve in the State Senate for a two-year term
- **State Representative:** Elected to serve in the House of Representatives for a two-year term

3 STATEWIDE OFFICE (AKA CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICE)

- **Governor:** the highest state office
- **Lieutenant Governor:** the first in line to succeed the Governor and tie breaker in the state senate
- **Attorney General:** CT's top legal officer
- **Secretary of the State:** keeps official records, provides services to businesses, administers all state and federal election law
- **State Treasurer:** responsible for the state's cash, debt and pension funds management
- **State Comptroller:** provides accounting and financial services to the state



Check your voter registration status!

ORGANIZE!

Hey! Coordinate rides to your local polling station and provide childcare to help women vote!



- Check your registration status and polling place online before heading to vote on voterregistration.ct.gov
- CT asks for identification, but you can sign an affidavit if you don't have one on election day.
- Use an absentee ballot if there is a chance you will be unable to cast your vote in person on election day.
- You can still vote on Election Day if you make it into the line by 8:00 pm regardless of your position in line.

GET LOUD!

Report intimidation to the Election Protection Hotline at 1-866-OUR-VOTE or 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA (en Español).



Anna Maria from New Britain CT is a retiree living on a fixed income. When her Social Security benefits received a small cost-of-living increase, she expected it to help with rising costs. Instead, the increase pushed her over Connecticut's Medicaid eligibility limit, and she lost her coverage. Now Anna Maria faces new health insurance costs on top of rent, food, transportation, and other necessities. "Medicaid should not be taken away because of a Social Security cost-of-living increase," Anna Maria says. "As the cost of food and fuel rises, so do medical expenses. The increase in Social Security should help us—not make us lose our healthcare." Anna Maria urges lawmakers to make Medicaid eligibility rules reflect the real cost of living, so that older adults on fixed incomes can afford the healthcare they need — without skipping medications or medical appointments to make ends meet.

VOTE LIKE YOU KNOW!

An SLJ guide to help you prep yourself and others to vote!

EARLY VOTING

EARLY VOTING

In Connecticut **any voter** can choose to vote early in-person at their designated early voting location. The votes are held securely and counted when the polls close on Election Day at 8pm.

**CONNECTICUT
EARLY VOTING
DATES:
OCT. 19- NOV. 1,
2026**

WHERE TO VOTE EARLY

Early voting locations are announced on a rolling basis as they become available. Scan the QR Code to view the list. Or access the list by going to myvote.ct.org and clicking **"Find Your Early Voting Location"**.



Scan the QR Code for a helpful brochure about Early and Absentee Voting from the Secretary of the State's website!



You can change the language on any ct.gov webpage by going to the top right corner and clicking "Language + Settings".



During the 2026 Legislative Session, Connecticut passed no-excuse absentee voting! All eligible voters in CT can now vote by absentee ballot/aka mail-in ballot without providing a reason. This is an important step to ensuring voting is easy and accessible for as many people as possible.



Check your voter registration status!



CT EARLY VOTING!

Click [HERE](#) or scan the QR code to see an informational video about early voting!





VOTE LIKE YOU KNOW!

An SLJ guide to help you prep yourself and others to vote!

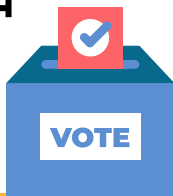
ABSENTEE VOTING

ABSENTEE VOTING (AKA MAIL-IN VOTING)

Beginning July 1st, 2026 in Connecticut, no-excuse absentee voting (aka no-excuse mail-in voting) is the law of the land! This means all eligible voters may vote via absentee ballot, without needing to provide a reason or excuse.



Check your voter registration status!



Absentee ballots must be received **by or before Election Day** (November 3rd, 2026) at 8:00PM. We recommend handing in your ballot in person at your town clerk's office or at a secure ballot dropbox in your town.

HOW TO VOTE ABSENTEE:

- 1** Request your absentee ballot at the portal linked above.
- 2** Receive your absentee ballot in the mail.
- 3** Read through the directions thoroughly and fill out the ballot according to the directions.
- 4** Submit your ballot via USPS, in-person at your town clerk's office, or at a secure ballot dropbox in your town.

Scan the QR code below to access the CT's absentee ballot request portal. The portal opens on September 19th, 2026 for the November 3, 2026 General Election.

**SCAN
HERE**



There are active attacks on mail-in voting currently being challenged in the court system. If it is safe and possible, **voting in person is the best way** to make sure your vote is counted on time. If you need to vote by mail, please send your ballot in as early as possible!

9



WHO CAN SUBMIT YOUR ABSENTEE BALLOT (BESIDES YOU)?...

An immediate family member living with the voter (spouse, child, parent, or sibling).

OR

A designee caring for a voter with an illness or a disability, such as a nurse or doctor.

AN OVERVIEW OF SLJ'S POLICY PRIORITIES

SLJ advocates for legislation at the State Capitol that advances women's economic security. Our key priorities for 202 include, a Connecticut Child Tax Credit, School Meals for All, HUSKY 4 Immigrants, and Reproductive Freedom.



**SESSION BEGINS
JANUARY 6TH, 2027**

CT's next legislative session begins January 6, 2027.

1

CHILD TAX CREDIT

A permanent and refundable child tax credit in CT would provide flexible and dependable income to approximately 250,000 households and 550,000 children. This would give families much needed help to cover basic necessities which many of them struggle to afford.

2

SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL

When children are hungry, it affects every part of their day. Last year we secured universal school breakfast for our students, this year it is time to pass universal lunches as well. All children deserve to be fed without a feeling of shame or stigma.

3

HUSKY 4 IMMIGRANTS

All Connecticut residents, regardless of immigration status or age, deserve access to healthcare.

4

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

SLJ will never stop supporting the work of partners like Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE) and Reproductive Equity Now (REN) as they dedicate themselves to making sure all people in CT have access to the full spectrum of reproductive and gender-affirming healthcare.

Interested in these issues?
Keep reading for more information!

Need to check your voter registration, help engaging voters, or other voting resources? Check out the Voting is Social Work website!



CT WOMEN IN THE LAW: Constance Baker Motley

Constance Baker Motley was a civil rights advocate and the first African American woman to not only argue a case before the Supreme Court, but to become a federal judge. From 1945 to 1964, Judge Motley worked on all of the major school segregation cases supported by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. She wrote the legal brief for the landmark **Brown vs. Board of Education** case and also played a prominent role in desegregation cases involving universities of Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Oklahoma, and Georgia. Judge Motley won **nine out of the ten** cases she argued before the Supreme Court.



SLJ POLICY PRIORITY CT CHILD TAX CREDIT



SCAN HERE TO
VISIT OUR
WEBSITE!

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Connecticut is the only state with a broad personal income tax that does not adjust for the costs of raising a child or the number of children. Data shows that almost 40% of CT households are living below the ALICE threshold, generally meaning they are struggling to make ends meet or within poverty levels. A permanent and refundable child tax credit would provide flexible and dependable income to over 550,000 children in CT.

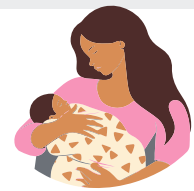
WHY A CHILD TAX CREDIT?



Raising a family costs money! CT is an expensive state to live in. Almost 40% of families need help making ends meet to provide their family with necessities!



CT is the **ONLY** state with a broad personal income tax, that does **NOT** adjust for costs of raising children OR the number of children in a household. This does not make sense for CT families!



Single women and women of color with children in CT are especially impacted by the costs of raising a family and providing basic necessities! No child should go without what they need to thrive!

THE SOLUTION



A permanent and fully refundable CT child tax credit of \$600 per child would provide flexible and dependable income for over 550,000 children in our state!



GET TOGETHER TO DEMAND A CT CHILD TAX CREDIT!

Tackling an issue alone can feel overwhelming! Organize family members, friends, co-workers, or people from church or school. Scan the QR code to find your legislators and write them a letter explaining why a child tax credit matters to you!



GET LOUD! ASK YOUR CANDIDATES:

- ? Do you support a CT child tax credit?
- ? If you're elected, what will you do to help get a child tax credit passed?



Statewide child tax credits are not only beneficial for families! New data tells us that fevery \$1 spent on a child tax credit, generates \$5 in social and economic gains!

SLJ POLICY PRIORITY SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL



**SCAN HERE
TO VISIT
OUR
WEBSITE!**

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

1 in 5 children in Connecticut are food insecure and with recent federal cuts to programs like SNAP, that number is bound to continue increasing. Connecticut leaders have already acknowledged this reality by passing a budget with universal school breakfast in 2026. The next step is to ensure all children in our public schools have access to lunch as well. Children deserve to be fed and able to face the day at school without worrying about their household's income level or food security status.

WHY SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL?



Providing meals to all our students helps remove the stigma tied to identifying students from low income households.



Universal school meals improve attendance, academic performance, and children's ability to focus in school.



When students have access to free school meals it means less financial stress on families, better health outcomes for students, and is even tied to reductions in obesity and anxiety rates.

THE SOLUTION



A fully funded universal school breakfast AND LUNCH program, which prioritizes our children and allows them to be focused and engaged during their school days.

GET LOUD! ASK YOUR CANDIDATES:

- ? Do you support policies that provide universal school lunch?
- ? If you're elected, what will you do to make sure universal school meals gets passed?



Scan the QR code in this box to read more about the University of Washington's study which highlights the incredible benefits of universal school meals!



Amy from Cheshire CT, whose children are grown, sees families with young children who are struggling every day, in her role as a public school ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher. Amy submitted powerful testimony in support of a Connecticut Child Tax Credit and Universal Free School Meals for all students in our state. Amy's testimony highlighted the high cost of living in her town, the unique experiences of refugees struggling to make ends meet, and how some families are unable to afford basic needs for their kids, such as glasses. She also explained the mental and emotional effects that financial uncertainty could have on a child's ability to learn and thrive. Amy believes wealthier residents in Connecticut should pay their fair share, especially after benefiting from massive tax breaks at the federal level. She demands that the burden of these important programs and services should not be placed on the residents who can least afford it.

SLJ POLICY PRIORITY HUSKY 4 IMMIGRANTS



**SCAN HERE
TO VISIT OUR
WEBSITE**

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Almost 60% of the roughly 113,000 undocumented individuals in Connecticut do not have access to health insurance coverage. After our world's experience with a global pandemic, we know that everyone having access to healthcare and health insurance is essential. Although the CT legislature has made progress in the last few years, too many people are still being left behind.

WHY?



Everyone needs access to critical preventative healthcare!



When residents don't have access to preventative care, it ends up costing our state's economy, hospitals, and our providers, significant amounts of money



The recent changes to HUSKY have shown us the impacts of these expansions are positive ones! There is no reason for anyone to get left behind!

THE SOLUTION

Over the last few years Connecticut has expanded HUSKY coverage to children age 0-15, as well as to undocumented pregnant people for prenatal and postpartum care. BUT She Leads Justice knows that we have not gone far enough. We need to pass a policy for everyone in Connecticut to have access to HUSKY regardless of their immigration status or their age!



Scan the QR code to be a part of the HUSKY 4 Immigrants movement!

THE TIME TO ORGANIZE IS ALWAYS NOW!

Start conversations to get you friends, family, colleagues, and fellow parents involved in this important issue! Call your legislators or write them a letter to tell them why it's important for all people to have access to health insurance in our state!

GET LOUD & ASK YOUR CANDIDATES:



? Do you support HUSKY 4 Immigrants?

? How will you work to ensure this policy is passed in 2027?



Maribel from Waterbury CT is a retired healthcare worker, a mother of 3, and a grandmother of 6. She adopted her youngest granddaughter, who is now 6 years old. Maribel explains how the cost of living in Connecticut is simply too high, and how difficult it is to provide her granddaughter with diverse experiences and opportunities so she can thrive. Her granddaughter loves dance and gymnastics lessons, and she makes sacrifices for that to happen. A \$600 Child Tax Credit would be dependable money that Maribel could count on to budget for childhood enrichment activities. Maribel gave compelling public hearing testimony at the state legislature, where she also advocated for Universal Free School Meals!

SLJ POLICY PRIORITY REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM



SCAN HERE
TO VISIT OUR
WEBSITE

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Across the country reproductive healthcare is under attack. It is critical for Connecticut protect the reproductive rights we have won and to continue expanding them until all people have access to the full spectrum of reproductive care, including fertility and gender-affirming care. This fight includes advocating for the full funding our community health centers and ensuring clinicians are being adequately compensated for the important care they provide.



WHY?

Family planning providers, such as Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE) have experienced massive cuts on the federal level and need to acquire full funding to keep providing essential care to our communities.



Since the Dobbs decision providers have been under attack. CT must do everything we can to protect our providers and patients from out of state litigation and attacks on care.



All people deserve access to the full spectrum of care, regardless of zip code or income level.

THE SOLUTION(S)



Connecticut is a national leader when it comes to reproductive rights. We must protect our past wins and build on them by:

- **Bolstering** CT's existing Shield Law to help protect our providers.
- **Guaranteeing** equitable access to fertility care.
- **Fully funding** PPSNE, Hartford GYN Center, and other community health centers.
- **Safeguarding** bodily autonomy for all and expanding patient access to medically accurate information and referrals.



Andrea from Hartford CT experienced a dramatic shift in her life when she was laid off by her employer of five years. Andrea suffers from Crohn's Disease and her daughter had just been diagnosed with a serious blood clot. Loss of health insurance coverage meant uncertainty when it came to accessing medications that were essential to their livelihoods and quality of life. Andrea considers herself lucky, because she knew about certain pharmacy discount programs, thanks to her prior experience working in the healthcare industry. Although these programs can help, not everyone knows about them, and they are not a long-term solution. Andrea believes health insurance should be treated as a necessity and not something that is only attached to someone through their employment status. She hopes that in the future, our systems of health coverage are centered around human reality, because healthcare is something all of us need, no matter our circumstances.

WHERE WE SUPPORT

Transformative policy change happens when we work together. SLJ is a member of coalitions and supports the leadership of our partners. Learn more below:

Connecticut for All

We support the Connecticut For All Coalition's efforts to create greater transparency and build equity into our state's current tax structure.

Child Care

We support the Child Care for CT's and their work to advocate for a system of universal child care.

Abortion Rights & Reproductive Health Care

We are a member of the Coalition for Choice and support the leadership of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE), and Reproductive Equity Now to advocate for policies to increase access to reproductive health, gender affirming and abortion care.

LGBTQIA+ Rights

We support policies to advance and protect the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community and follow the leadership of their advocates & organizers.

Gender Wage, Race & Wealth Gap

We support legislation that addresses gendered pricing, as well as other policies that lead to pay equity and more transparency. We also support policies that curb or cancel student debt.

Protections from Sexual & Domestic Violence

We support the leadership of the CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) and the CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence to advocate for increased protection for victims and survivors.

Housing

We support policies that provide more inclusive housing opportunities for families in the communities where they want to live. We support groups like the CT Fair Housing Center.

Gun Control

We support the leadership of the CT Against Gun Violence and policies that keep our communities safe from gun violence.

CONNECT WITH US!

1. FOLLOW & SUBSCRIBE



@sheleadsjusticect



facebook.com/sheleadsjusticect

2. SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER!

3. REACH OUT FOR LEGAL INFORMATION

- If you need legal information, contact us at the Information & Referral (I&R) phone line:
- (860) 524-0601 or Toll Free: 1-800-479-2949
- Monday through Thursday: 9 am – 2 pm and Friday: 9 am – 1 pm



SCAN HERE TO JOIN OUR NEWSLETTER



Carol from Hartford CT has been an educator and advocate for over 36 years. Now the President of the Hartford Federation of Teachers (HFT), Carol passionately advocated for a Connecticut Child Tax Credit during the 2026 legislative session. In her testimony, she told legislators about students she taught who were struggling to afford basic needs like clothing, housing, utilities, and food. She explained how these financial hardships had an effect on a child's ability to learn and excel in school and beyond. Carol points out that investing in a Child Tax Credit also boosts our state's economy, which has positive ripple effects for everyone in CT. She insists that in such a wealthy state, nearly 40% of families should not be struggling to afford basic needs.