2020 Public Policy Agenda

Increase Funding by $461 Million for Community Nonprofits
If Not Now, When?

Community nonprofits improve our quality of life, making Connecticut a better place to live and work. Nonprofits support people with intellectual/developmental disabilities, treat people with mental health and substance abuse needs, feed the hungry, house the homeless, and provide arts and culture that make our communities vibrant. Nonprofits employ tens of thousands of people across the state.

Nonprofits and the people they serve have made substantial sacrifices during the past decade of State budget deficits. Connecticut’s projected surplus continues to grow and it’s time to restore previous funding cuts and invest in people served by community nonprofits.

If not now, when?

1. Increase funding by $461 million for essential services.
   - Since 2007 state funding shortfalls mean community nonprofits have fallen $461 million behind the cost of services. Establish a five-year program to restore that funding, beginning with $128 million (net cost of $67 million after federal reimbursements) for FY 2021.
     i. Increase Medicaid rates to cover the true cost of care.
     ii. Restore and increase grant funding to serve the uninsured and underinsured and pay for other programs and services not covered by Medicaid.

2. Protect nonprofit tax exemptions to ensure their funds are used for services.
   - Clarify statutes to protect charitable property tax exemptions. Nonprofits reduce costs by providing services and programs so that government doesn’t have to.

3. Design a modern, efficient and sustainable human service delivery system.
   - Re-invest savings achieved through conversion of state-operated Behavioral Health and Intellectual/Developmental Disability services into the community service delivery system. A significant number of state employees are expected to retire by 2022, providing an opportunity to move many more State-operated services into the nonprofit sector.
   - Implement and expand the Innovation Incentive Program, allowing nonprofits that innovate to retain savings.
   - Protect $25 million in bond funding each year of the biennium for the Nonprofit Grant Program that supports capital improvements to enhance service delivery.
   - Support collaborative efforts between nonprofits and the State, inviting nonprofits to the table to reform the State’s inefficient contracting and licensure policies and practices.
Guiding Principles

State policy must promote the respect, dignity and worth of all Connecticut residents, ensuring equal opportunity and inclusivity.

Nonprofits are Community
Nonprofits are recognized, valued, and essential contributors to thriving communities.

Basic Human Needs
Programs such as heating assistance, food donations, housing, and job training reduce poverty and promote self-sufficiency for children, families, & seniors.

Children & Youth
Comprehensive community-based services, such as early intervention services, child welfare, juvenile justice, education, and behavioral health promote well-being of children and families.

People with Disabilities
Expand the array of services available to people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, including employment, housing and access to health care providers trained to meet their needs.

Arts & Culture
Nonprofit arts and culture organizations preserve and strengthen the cultural heritage of Connecticut, creating jobs, generating revenue, and adding value and vibrancy.

Behavioral Health
Mental health and addiction services should be available in every community to anyone in need regardless of their ability to pay.

Criminal Justice
Community services reduce recidivism, including pre/post-incarceration services such as early diversion and prevention, career opportunities, family counseling and housing.

Census 2020 Success
Provide one-time State mini grants to nonprofits working toward an accurate count.

Healthcare Access & Coverage
Every resident should have equal access to quality, affordable health care, including behavioral health care and long-term supports.

Safe and Affordable Housing
Access to affordable housing and necessary services to end homelessness and strengthen communities.

Nonprofit Workforce
Nonprofits employ 14% of Connecticut’s workforce, and must have resources to provide competitive pay and benefits to reduce turnover and increase continuity of care.

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