A Legislative Change Toolkit for Women

Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund
CWEALF 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 and to create policy that advances women’s economic security.

Connecticut Women’s Education & Legal Fund (CWEALF)

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

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

Call our information and referral line: (860) 524-0601
Email us: bit.ly/cwealfcontact

Open Monday-Thursday: 9AM-2PM
Friday: 9AM-1PM
Hey you! Get loud & sign our pledge!

Use your phone's camera or app to scan! or visit

@cweful
facebook.com/cweful
@cweful

The legislative process is yours to shape.

Advocate and organize your community!

About This Toolkit:

- We designed this toolkit 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 important women across time in CT to inspire your work.
- Key terms you'll see throughout this guide are defined on page 5.

CWEALF is committed to our leadership in advancing economic security for all women. Join us!

How to use this toolkit:

CWEALF's Legislative Change Toolkit is designed to get you thinking about how to advocate and organize in your community this legislative session to get loud and ensure Connecticut women are one step closer to economic security.

Tips and Ideas Included in This Toolkit:

Advocacy suggestions are in this blue. Community organizing suggestions are in green.

These are just a start. Fill us in on your actions and share your events, stories, and your work with us at stories@cweful.org!

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>About CWEALF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>About This Toolkit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Message from CWEALF's Executive Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>Key Terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Legislative Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>Sharing Your Story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Formalizing Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Breakdown of the Legislature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The CGA Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Connecting with Your Legislator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Public Hearings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>CWEALF's Policy Priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Paid Sick Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Fair Work Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Connect with CWEALF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hot Tip: Hot tips are insider knowledge that help you advocate and organize better!
CWEALF DEFINES: WOMEN’S ECONOMIC SECURITY

CWEALF advocates for legislation that supports 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?

Her employment is not conditional on her hair, skin color, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, body, sexual preferences, makeup, language, name, or citizenship.

Manages her own body and pregnancy timeline.

Knows her work schedule in advance and can manage school, childcare, transportation, etc.

Has paid sick days to care for herself and family.

Is paid a living wage at her job.

Is heard and supported when victimized.

Can access legal and financial information.

Can take time off to care for her family and still earn pay.

Has no barriers to healthcare.

Can access citizenship and feels empowered in her cultural identities.

Can afford fresh food.

Has safe, quality, and affordable childcare and education for her family.

Has safe, well-kept, and consistent housing.

Can access disposable income to explore hobbies and interests.

Can take time off.

Defined:

Women’s economic security is the condition of having a stable income or other financial resources to support themselves and/or their families that allows for survival, rest, creativity, and thriving.

What does your economic security picture look like?

Use your phone’s camera or app to scan!
Dear Connecticut Women,

While CWEALF does not endorse specific candidates, we proudly
live by the words of Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley: "policy is
our love language."

We designed this guide for all the women who lead, advocate,
organize, or wish to do so for policy change. The guide and our
accompanying workbook share wisdom collected by our staff and
colleagues with the hope that they give you the confidence and
tools you need to own your power.

Connecticut woman, if no one has extended an invitation yet,
consider this your formal invitation into your movement. Your
participation is important and necessary.

When we voted in November, we took one step in the long
process to advocate and organize for the changes we need to see
in our communities. Making our voices heard at the legislature and
State Capitol is one more step in that process. Each year when our
elected officials go into legislative session, they pass policies that
impact ourselves, our families, our workplaces and communities.

Your voice and your story are powerful tools to influence
legislative change. Together, we can help create the world that
all women and girls deserve.

Truly,
Janée Woods Weber
Executive Director, CWEALF

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

We have a lot of know-how at CWEALF 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 an iPhone:
• Using an iPhone? 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.

To 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.
• On Bitly.com: QR codes can be generated with the QR generator on the dashboard.
COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

The practice of using our community’s assets to create systems that help your community stand in their power.

ADVOCATE to publicly recommend or support

ADVOCATE influences policy decisions on behalf of individuals and organizations

ORGANIZER brings together community power by operationalizing theory and turning it into a community practice

ACTIVIST works to bring about political or social change

CONSTITUENT a person who is represented politically by an elected official

The term "intersectional feminism" was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw & is key to all of our organizing & advocacy.

HOT TIP: Find your State Legislator and how to contact them at cga.ct.gov.
At CWEALF, 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:

**DISTRICT**
A region or area of the state where you live

**COMMITTEE**
The first step for a bill: group where legislation is crafted and public hearings are held

**PUBLIC HEARING**
Meeting held by CGA to receive testimony from the public on a proposed bill

**AMENDMENT**
A change or addition to a proposed bill

**VOTE**
A formal expression of opinion used to stop or advance bills

**LEGISLATIVE SESSION**
Time when the government meets to create laws

**BILL**
A draft of a proposed law

**BULLETIN**
A document on the CGA website that provides info on upcoming meetings, public hearings, etc.

**FISCAL NOTE**
A bill's "price tag" or estimate of how much it will cost the state

**CAUCUS**
Informal group meeting of legislators, often based on political party

**VETO**
To reject a bill by refusing to sign it into law

**TESTIMONY**
The written statement that explains where your story meets the proposed bill. This gets filed and becomes history! This is the main line of communication from the community about bills.

There are 26 legislative committees, including: Housing, Public Health, Appropriations, and more. CWEALF’s policy priorities like paid sick days and fair work week begin in the Labor & Public Employees Committee.
CWEALF EXPLAINS: LEGISLATIVE CHANGE AKA POLICY CHANGE

WHAT IS LEGISLATIVE CHANGE?
Legislative change is a process of advocating and organizing to influence policy decisions at the State Legislature.

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?
Formally? At the LOB or the Legislative Office Building. For advocates and organizers, it starts at home.

HOW DOES IT HAPPEN?
While there is no set schedule, it helps to break it down into 3 phases.

1. PRE-CAMPAIGN PRE-SESSION
Identify problems and talk to your community and organize them to find a potential solution. Connect with organizations, leaders and issue experts to ask for their support. Begin to form relationships with elected officials that can be your champions!

2. ACTIVE CAMPAIGN/LEGISLATIVE SESSION
Time to execute your organizing and advocacy strategies throughout the legislative session! Meet with legislators and get buy in from your community.

3. POST SESSION
Didn't win? Regroup, strategize, and prepare for the next session!
Did you win? It's time to inform your community and hold your elected officials accountable!

CT WOMEN IN ORGANIZING: EDNA NEGRON ROSARIO
Edna Negron Rosario is an educator, consultant and community organizer. Negron began her teaching career in 1974 and as principal of the Ramon E. Betances School in Hartford, she founded the Family Resource Center, which became a national model for family-based, multi-generational social services housed in public schools.
Here is an overview of how a bill becomes a law in CT and tips to advocate and organize along the way.

### ADVOCATE!

**PRE:**
- Meet with coalition partners to measure their support
- Educate legislators on your problems and the bills that solve them to find your champions

**DURING:**
- Meet with legislators in the House and Senate and ask for their support
- Keep track of legislators’ support or opposition to know if you have enough votes for the bill to pass
- Monitor potential amendments
- Lobby the Governor and staff

### HOW LEGISLATIVE POWER MOVES: AKA "THE SYSTEM"

1. Bills are introduced in committees
2. Bills are drafted and available on the CGA site
3. Public hearing is scheduled and we get 5 days notice
4. Committee debates & votes on bill
5. Bill receives a fiscal note, or an estimated cost, and a summary
6. Bill is sent to House or Senate & waits for a vote
7. Legislators in the House and Senate caucus, or discuss, the bill & take a vote count of who supports or opposes
8. First chamber debates and votes on the bill
9. While bill is debated, legislators file amendments
10. Second chamber debates and votes on the bill
11. Legislators caucus the bill again to determine if they have the votes to pass
12. After passing the House and the Senate, bill heads to the Governor’s desk
13. Bill is signed into law by the Governor

### ORGANIZE!

**PRE:**
- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

**DURING:**
- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### POST SESSION:

- Help your community understand the new law or program!

### PRE SESSION:

- Legislators make plans with their colleagues and advocates on what bills to raise

### HOT TIPS:

- Notice the problems.
- Map out all the current efforts and learn how to join; help others
- Gather other advocates in your community and co-create a strategy.
- Develop relationship with potential allies; Consider creating a coalition.
- Identify, contact, meet with, & educate legislators to champion your bill!

- Create systems to communicate real time with your community
- Coordinate lobby days at the Capitol and create fact sheets for advocates
- Prepare your community to share their story and stand in their power
- Help create systems that help your community access important meetings.

- Help your community understand the new law or program!
CWEALF SUPPORTS: SPEAKING UP FOR YOURSELF AKA SHARING YOUR STORY

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO SHARE YOUR STORY?

DEEPER UNDERSTANDING:
Legislators are people with families and communities too. Sharing your story helps them understand an issue.

INVITE OTHERS TO JOIN:
There are many reasons your community can hesitate to share. When you share your story, you help others be brave.

HOW TO BUILD YOUR STORY SO OTHERS WILL LISTEN

If the bill is drafted:
- Make a list of what leading advocates, organizers and trusted leaders are saying about the bill you support.
- Share experiences that help support what those leading are proposing as a solution.

If there is no bill drafted:
- Write down a brief description of the problem in your own words.
- Make a list of how the problem impacts your life; think work, income, health, etc.
- Make a list of how the problem impacts your community.
- Answer: What do you wish was different when you were interacting with the problem? What went well?

ADVOCATES
- Have a goal in mind of how advocates can support you to share your story publicly.

ORGANIZERS
- Figure out how your story connects to a bigger strategy and movement.

COMMUNITY
- Share your story and solution and hear theirs.
- Who do they know that is working on this issue?

FAMILY/ FRIENDS
- Tell trusted friends and family your story and your ideas for a solution.

YOURSELF
- You are the first person you have to convince.
- Write your story down.
- Collect all your research and map out leaders.

LEGISLATOR
- Connect your story to a specific current bill.

MEDIA
- Answer questions related to your bill and issue.

HEART TIP
- You don’t have to share painful memories in an attempt to make a difference.
- Instead, focus on impact and solutions!

“BE SOFTER WITH YOU. YOU ARE A BREATHING THING. A MEMORY TO SOMEONE. A HOME TO A LIFE.”

NAYYIRAH WAHEED

Hey Girl, Hey! We have a workshop for this!

Stand in Your Power and Make a Plan to Be Heard. We Believe in You!
CWEALF SUPPORTS: FINDING YOUR PLACE IN THE MOVEMENT

YOU NOTICED A PROBLEM. YOU HAVE YOUR STORY, AND NOW YOU ARE ANGRY. WHERE DO YOU GO NEXT?

The best way to find your place is to map out where you are and where you are going.

Ask yourself:
What is the vision I am working on? What skills do I have that can help achieve this? Who is working on these things locally? Who do I know? Who do I need to know? Who has the power to make our vision a reality? What skills do I want to use?

HOT TIP
Power mapping is a term that is used to describe the process of figuring out who has the power to make the difference you need.

FAMILY/FRIENDS
- Use conversations with them to learn what others in your community may think.
- Ask them what they know or how this has played out in the past.
- Become a trusted information source for them.

YOURSELF
- Practice telling your story in the mirror or by recording yourself.
- Talk about your issue on your social media.
- Make sure you are keeping track of what you are learning.

ADVOCATES
- Carry your story and help you connect to a bigger network of people.
- Provide resources to make your story heard.
- Found at organizations, working in coalitions, etc.

ORGANIZERS
- Figure out how to use your talents to serve the strategy and movement.
- Help you build a strategy.
- Train you to handle mobilizing safely.
- Found at organizations, online, and at events.

COMMUNITY
- Lift up your story.
- Speak at community meetings + invite others.
- Consider online communities.
- Make a list of possible places to tell your story.

LEGISLATOR
- Ask your legislator to support a specific bill or issue.
- Testify at a public hearing.

MEDIA
- Write an op-ed or letter in your local paper.
- Write for a local blog.
- Ask an organizer or advocate for direction if this is your first time.
- Cultivate a list of media contacts.

Figure out how to use your talents to serve the strategy and movement.
- Help you build a strategy.
- Train you to handle mobilizing safely.
- Found at organizations, online, and at events.
CWEALF EXPLAINS:
FORMALIZING RELATIONSHIPS

BUILDING A COMMUNITY GROUP:
1. Tap into friends and community members who are affected by the issue and make a plan to meet.
2. Discuss skills, resources, connections and set a schedule of times to meet.
3. Make an online account for the group to post information and invite others to join.

HOW WE PARTNER TO MAKE LEGISLATIVE CHANGE: BUILDING AND WORKING IN COALITIONS

BUILD:
1. Bring together community members, organizations, etc. to address a problem
2. Establish your values as a group and develop a solution to the problem
3. Set clear roles and expectations
4. Create a strategy to pass legislation
5. Re-work the strategy whenever necessary

WORK IN:
1. Make sure the Coalition aligns with your values and priorities
2. Be clear about what you can contribute
3. Activate your own network
4. Share updates and actions on social media
5. Lift up and support the leadership of others in the Coalition doing the work

COALITIONS:

Abortion Rights & Reproductive Health Care
We are a member of the Coalition for Choice and support PPSNE and Pro Choice CT in advocating for policies to increase access to reproductive freedom and abortion care.

Child Care
We support the Child Care for CT's Future Coalition and advocate for a system of universal child care.

HUSKY for Immigrants
We are a member of the HUSKY 4 Immigrants Coalition fighting for the expansion of eligibility to Medicaid regardless of age or immigration status.

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

ADVOCACY SUPPORT:

Student Loan Debt
We support policies that curb or cancel student debt and the leadership of the Student Loan Fund.

Housing
We support more inclusive housing opportunities for families where they want to live, led by groups like the CT Fair Housing Center.

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex Rights
We support policies to advance and protect the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community and follow the leadership of advocates & organizers including Equality CT.

Child Tax Credit
We support CT Voices for Children and others to create a permanent child tax credit.

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

Transformative policy change happens when we work together. CWEALF is a member of coalitions and supports the leadership of our partners.
**HOT TIP**
- Park for free at the LOB or Capitol parking lots and garages.
- Parking outside of the Lob/Capitol is NOT free. Follow street signs.

**ADVOCATE!**
- Make sure to center the needs of people in your group who have been kept out of power in the legislative process by making educational materials like this toolkit accessible to all!

**ORGANIZE!**
- Make sure everyone knows the location, why, and the strategy of your meeting.
- Alert your members and participants of how to maneuver police presence.
- Have you taken a marshal training?
- Make sure your coalition, group, or organization knows our hot tips!

**CT WOMEN IN ACTIVISM:**
**MARY TOWNSEND SEYMOUR**

Mary Townsend Seymour co-founded and served as the Vice President of the Hartford NAACP. In 1920, she became the first African American woman in the U.S. to run for state office. Throughout her career, Townsend Seymour was a vocal activist, organizer and leader for labor rights, voting rights and more.
CWEALF SUPPORTS: HOW TO MANEUVER THE CGA WEBSITE

The CGA website is your connection to the CT legislature, whether we are in person or virtual. Use the key below to know how to navigate the website’s most important tools.

1. Use this menu to find your legislator, explore different Committees and more

2. The CGA website tells you what parts of the Capitol and LOB are open to the public

3. Read the daily Bulletin for information on upcoming public hearings, committee meetings, etc.

4. Select "Session Items" for a page with resources about the current legislative session

5. Use "Quick Bill Search" to search a bill by its number, including bills from years past

6. Watch what's going on the Capitol on CT-N and YouTube

ADVOCATE!

Use the CGA website to learn more about bills being debated. Who supports the bill? Who opposes? How did your legislator vote?

ORGANIZE!

How will you help your community navigate this website? Or will you create an information pipeline for your community?

CT WOMEN IN POLITICS: ELLA T. GRASSO

Ella Grasso was the first female Governor of Connecticut (1975-1980) and the first woman to be elected governor in the United States in her own right. Grasso’s career in politics started in 1952 when she was elected to the State Legislature. She served as Secretary of State from 1958-1970 and in Congress from 1970-1974.
CWEALF WANTS YOU TO:
CONNECT WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR

Your legislators work for you. They are important people to include in your strategy if you have a bill you are working on and a resource for getting your voice heard. Keep reading for tips on connecting with your legislators.

The email and phone number of your legislator can be found on CGA website. Expect to schedule a meeting 2-4 weeks out.

HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR:

- Help everyone practice their script and know the points.
- Coordinate rides and activities for your group.
- Help others schedule their own meetings.

ORGANIZE!

MEETING YOUR LEGISLATOR

- Share your name, town and why you are calling.
- Share your position on a bill. Ask theirs.
- Follow up as soon as possible with more information.
- Say thank you!

TIPS FOR CALLING YOUR LEGISLATOR

1. Share your name, town and why you are calling.
3. Follow up as soon as possible with more information.
4. Say thank you!

TIPS FOR EMAILING YOUR LEGISLATOR

1. Share name, town/address, bill or cause.
2. Share your position and add resources.
3. Ask for support.

CT WOMEN IN CIVIL RIGHTS:
RACHEL TAYLOR MILTON

Rachel Taylor Milton was a distinguished educator and civil rights crusader who co-founded the Urban League of Hartford in 1964, which today provides a variety of important services to the community. Milton was the first African-American woman to graduate from the Hartford Seminary School of Religious Education.

Since COVID-19, most meetings are virtual. You can sometimes talk with them if you see them at the LOB or Capitol when they are free and not in the bathroom.
CWEALF EXPLAINS: PUBLIC HEARINGS

WHY PUBLIC HEARINGS ARE IMPORTANT TO YOUR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE STRATEGY

Public hearings are opportunities to weigh in on a specific issue in support or opposition. They are ways to show its strength in numbers in support of an issue and for experts to state why a bill is important or harmful to a community.

WAYS TO TESTIFY:

2

• Submit written testimony if you can’t attend in person
• Provide verbal testimony in person or remotely

3

BASICS OF PUBLIC HEARINGS:

• They are scheduled 5 days in advance
• All information related to the hearing is available in the Bulletin on cga.ct.gov
• The first hour is reserved for state officials

HOT TIP

• Each member of the public is given 3 minutes to testify.
• When called to testify introduce yourself with your name, town, bill number and title, and your position

How to Testify Remotely via Zoom

• Use the link on the Bulletin to sign up. After signing up, you’ll receive an email with the Zoom link
• A lottery process determines the speaking order which is found on the Committee’s page
• You’ll be placed in a waiting room until your name is called
• Using your computer? Make sure you have a microphone on your computer if you need to talk. If not, use the call-in feature on a cell phone or a landline

How to Testify In Person

• Read the Bulletin for where to sign up in person at the LOB to testify
• When you sign up, note where you are in the order of speakers
• Legislators will call out your name when it’s your turn
• Walk to the table in front and make sure the microphone is on to begin your testimony
• Committee members may ask you questions. Answer what you can follow up with what you can’t.

Submitting Written Testimony:

• Information on where to submit is in the Bulletin
• Write your name, town, bill number and title
• State your position on the bill and why.

ORGANIZE

• Distribute testimony guides
• Make sure your community has working computers, internet, and/or phone for virtual testimony
• Provide interpretation if necessary and notify the clerk of the Committee
• Have someone follow the order of speakers to alert members when their turn is coming up
• Organize care for the group like food, water and other support

ADVOCATE

• Collect testimony
• Create a one pager about the bill and your position
• Coordinate expert testimony from other advocates
• Talk to legislative allies before the hearing - how can they help?
• Take notes on questions asked and what the opposition says
• Send follow up information to members of the Committee if necessary
CWEALF advocates for legislation at the State Capitol that advances women's economic security. Our top policy priorities include paid sick days and fair work week. We also work collaboratively in coalitions to support the leadership of our organizational partners.

Below are actions you can take to advocate and organize in your community on each issue. We've provided a script to help you advocate. Scan the QR code to join us this session and receive updates on public hearings and other ways to support.

Bills will be filed on fair work week and paid sick days within the first few weeks of session. Once a bill is filed, it will receive a number that you can track on the CGA website.

**PAID SICK DAYS**

Our current paid sick days law only covers 11% of workers. Everyone experiences illness and we all need time to care and recover.

**Script:** We don't choose when we get sick! Stop making us choose between losing wages while healing or going to work and spreading germs when we are sick. We need Paid Sick Days now!

Share why you need paid sick days with your community and encourage others to share their stories about why paid sick days are so important.

**FAIR WORK WEEK**

Fair work week gives workers advance notice of their schedules so they can plan other aspects of their lives.

**Script:** Women want to work! But we also need to care for children and family members, coordinate rides, and much more. We, and all those that depend on us, deserve to know our work schedules.

Ask your coworkers how their schedule affects their lives and if they'd like to work towards a solution. Set up a meeting and start to write testimony.

**HOT TIP**

Hey you! Read & Share our 2023 Legislative Agenda!

Use your phone’s camera or app to scan!

**AN OVERVIEW OF CWEALF’S TOP POLICY PRIORITIES**

**WHAT’S THE PROBLEM?**

**PAID SICK DAYS**

Our current paid sick days law only covers 11% of workers. Everyone experiences illness and we all need time to care and recover.

**Script:** We don’t choose when we get sick! Stop making us choose between losing wages while healing or going to work and spreading germs when we are sick. We need Paid Sick Days now!

Share why you need paid sick days with your community and encourage others to share their stories about why paid sick days are so important.

**FAIR WORK WEEK**

Fair work week gives workers advance notice of their schedules so they can plan other aspects of their lives.

**Script:** Women want to work! But we also need to care for children and family members, coordinate rides, and much more. We, and all those that depend on us, deserve to know our work schedules.

Ask your coworkers how their schedule affects their lives and if they’d like to work towards a solution. Set up a meeting and start to write testimony.

**CT WOMEN IN POLICY:**

**DENISE NAPPIER**

Denise Nappier of Hartford was the first African American woman elected to statewide office and the first African American woman elected as State Treasurer in the nation. As Treasurer, Nappier advocated for better corporate governance and saved taxpayers billions of dollars. Prior to her election to statewide office Nappier served as Hartford City Treasurer from 1989-1998.
CWEALF POLICY PRIORITY
PAID SICK DAYS

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
Life happens! But Connecticut workers are facing hard choices when taking care of basic life circumstances like recovering from a cold or the flu, caring for a sick loved one or attending doctor's appointments. Right now, just 11% of workers are covered under Connecticut's existing paid sick days law. This affects us all.

WHY PAID SICK DAYS?
When workers have to choose between their pay and caring for themselves or their family:

- People are more likely to go to work sick. This spreads illnesses to coworkers and customers.
- Workers can't be there for a loved one who is sick with an illness like the flu.
- Women, who still shoulder the majority of care, are at highest risk of losing income.

THE SOLUTION
Connecticut was the first state to require certain employers to provide paid sick time in 2011. However, more than 10 years later, the law needs improvements!

We support legislation that strengthens our law by:
- Including all workers, no matter where they work
- Expanding the definition of who a worker can use paid sick days to care for to include all types of families
- Eliminating the waiting period to use paid sick days so that workers can take their time as they need it

HOST A TESTIMONY WORKSHOP & ORGANIZE FOR THE BILL'S PUBLIC HEARING
Organize a group at your church, school, or community to write testimony to submit to the Labor Committee when the bill has a public hearing in February or March 2023.

GET LOUD! ASK YOUR LEGISLATORS:
- Do you support all workers having access to paid sick days?
- What will you do this session to ensure that all workers in our state have access to paid sick days?
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

In Connecticut, hourly workers - many earning poverty wages - struggle to earn a stable and reliable income needed to support their families because of unpredictable work schedules. Workers are often forced to go to work with little notice, maintain open availability for “on-call” shifts without any guarantee of work and have their shifts canceled at the last minute.

WHY FAIR WORK WEEK?

When workers don't know their schedules, they can't:
- Secure quality and affordable child care
- Attend doctor's appointments for themselves or their family
- Go to school to earn a degree or certificate

THE SOLUTION

We are members of the Fair Work Week Coalition, led by CT Working Families, fighting to pass legislation to support hourly workers in our state.

We support legislation that provides hourly workers:
- Predictable and stable work schedules
- Resting periods in between long shifts
- Predictability pay for canceled shifts
- Access to additional hours as they are available

GET LOUD! ASK YOUR LEGISLATORS:

- Do you support fair work week legislation?
- What additional actions will you take this session to end unfair treatment of workers throughout the state?

HOT TIP

Fair work week legislation has been introduced the last 5+ years but has yet to pass. Now is the time to get involved!

HELP FAIR WORK WEEK CROSS THE FINISH LINE!

Talk to your network about why fair work week is important to you and your family. Then organize a meeting with your local legislators!
CONNECT WITH US!
FOLLOW & SUBSCRIBE:

@CWEALF
facebook.com/CWEALF

@CWEALF
cwealf.org

Subscribe: bit.ly/CWEALFAction

HOT TIP
Have a story you want to tell? Tell us your stories, visions, solutions, and needs by emailing us at stories@cwealf.org.

REACH OUT FOR LEGAL INFO:
If you need legal information:

Contact CWEALF’s Information & Referral (I&R) line: (860) 524-0601 or Toll Free: 1-800-479-2949

Monday through Thursday: 9 am – 2 pm
Friday: 9 am – 1 pm