



# 2019 LEGISLATIVE GOALS



CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE  
EASTERN CONNECTICUT



## TO OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your dedication and service to your constituents and our region. I also want to thank the Chamber's Legislative Affairs Committee for sharing their talent, time, and support of this effort.

The 2019 legislative session is going to be a critically important event for the State's business community. Recognizing the current fiscal climate, the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT is eager to support legislation designed to enhance and promote the business community in eastern Connecticut and the state as a whole.

On behalf of our committee and the entire Chamber, we look forward to working with you on the following issues that affect our membership. To this end, the following is provided as a brief summary of some of the important matters of interest to the business community.

Please feel free to call the Chamber office at (860) 701-9113 if further clarification is needed.

Again, thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

**Stanley Mickus**

Chair, Legislative Affairs Committee  
Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT AND SHARED SERVICES

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**Support** incentive legislation that motivates municipal governments and businesses to form partnerships that provide programs and services in the most cost-effective manner.

**Support** legislation that promotes the development of diversified and affordable housing aimed at supporting the burgeoning growth in the advanced manufacturing industry in eastern CT.

**Support** legislation that requires the state to divest itself of all surplus state-owned property or to maintain said property in full compliance with all applicable state and local codes.

**Support** the government's initiatives to promote job creation and attract new businesses.

**Support** the implementation of policies and recommendations outlined in the Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economics' Growth Report 2.0 November 2018.

**Support** full funding by the State to the current PILOT program at established target reimbursement rates for hospitals, colleges/universities, and other state-owned property.

**Support** initiatives that encourage municipalities and non-profit organizations to work together on solutions regarding property tax exemptions.

## STATE FISCAL IMPROVEMENT

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**Support** Performance-Based Budgeting to be used as a tool for allocating public resources to encourage efficiencies in state government.

**Support** full-accrual GAAP basis accounting for the annual budget.

**Support** the full funding of the actuarially determined Annual Pension and OPEB contributions using reasonable assumptions for investment returns and actuarial items.

## EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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**Support** legislation that provides capital funding and operating expenses, in an amount equal to the rate of funding currently received by distressed communities, to communities that partner with a distressed community on new school construction projects.

**Support** workforce development funding to substantially grow the region's efforts to create a skilled workforce that matches growing industries in eastern CT.

**Support** legislation that encourages municipalities to share educational resources.

**Support** legislative and administrative efforts to increase the advanced, vocationally focused, educational content offered by Connecticut's public colleges and universities.

**Support** legislation to mandate schools to start after Labor Day.

## WORKPLACE COSTS

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**Support** initiatives that seek to balance business compliance costs with State regulations to benefit both citizens and businesses.

**Support** initiatives to examine all aspects of state government to reduce wasteful spending, with the goal of elimination or modification of underperforming or unnecessary programs.

**Support** tax policy that will retain current businesses and attract new businesses to Connecticut, thus creating more jobs in the state.

**Support** the implementation of effective state fiscal planning to reduce state and municipal unfunded liabilities and shortfalls in federal aid.

**Support** the development of legislation to increase portability of occupational licensing across states.

**Support** strategic carve-outs, strong communication and a delayed implementation schedule should legislation be passed for Paid Family and Medical Leave or an increased minimum wage.

## TRANSPORTATION/CONGESTION

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**Support** the Transportation Strategic Investment Action Plan for Connecticut (2003-2023); expansion of I-95 from Branford to Rhode Island.

**Support** funding to ensure full compliance of FAA Certificate 139 for Groton/New London Airport as well as economic development efforts.

**Support** legislation that requires the CT DOT to partner with the private sector for the design, construction and management of major transportation networks, with the provision that these networks be returned to the public sector after a return on investment is realized.

**Support** the Connecticut Port Authority to fully develop the New London State Pier to support the off-shore wind energy industry and other cargo.

**Support** funding to expand the railroad bed between Mystic and New Haven and look at other innovative ways to improve our rail transportation infrastructure.

**Support** implementation of state-of-the-art electronic tolling systems with carve-outs for Connecticut residents that increases the current funding for transportation infrastructure improvements.

## ENERGY

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**Support** legislation that allows Connecticut to conduct a competitive solicitation to procure low-cost, carbon-free, reliable power directly for consumers and promote the in-state production and transmission of energy from diverse fuel sources, as well as greater access to regional sources of low and zero emission electricity.

**Oppose** legislation that will adversely impact municipal electric energy cooperatives ability to continue to provide significant cost savings for their ratepayers.



## HEALTH CARE

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**Support** protection of the agreement regarding taxes paid by hospitals and Medicaid payments to hospitals, and settle past disputes.

**Support** Certificate of Need (CON) process that treats hospitals fairly and on an equal basis with other providers and entities.

**Support** funding for proven drug and alcohol abuse treatment programs, such as recovery coaches.

**Support** efforts to match facilities and available resources such as short-term, intermediate, and long-term beds with patient needs for behavioral health and substance abuse.

**Oppose** legislation that imposes additional regulatory burdens on hospitals.

## COMMERCE

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**Support** legislation that provides tax incentives and fiscal policies to support and grow the State's manufacturing base and related supply chain.

**Support** simplified interstate internet sales tax regulations for small businesses.



## TOURISM & GAMING

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**Support** development of the U.S. Coast Guard Museum in New London.

**Support** the recommendations of the ACT Transition Team as follows:

- Allocate 25% of existing Lodging Tax into the Tourism Fund
- Dedicate 60% of fund to Tourism and 40% to Arts + Culture
- Change names of “Tourism Fund” to “Arts, Culture, and Tourism Fund” and “Statewide Marketing” budget line to “Statewide Tourism Marketing” to clarify intention of fund.

**Support** public/private partnerships designed to bolster tourism.

**Support** the funding for the development of a strategic tourism development plan for eastern CT with the goal of further developing the region as a tourist attraction.

**Support** the efforts to establish a third casino through the MMCT Mohegan-Mashantucket Pequot tribal joint venture.

**Oppose** any action that negatively impacts the State’s compact with its two federally recognized Native American Tribes.

**Oppose** any increase in the hotel room occupancy tax rate, as well as any legislation that conveys authority to levy a tax to any entity other than to the State.



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