



CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE



Support. Advocate. Prevent.

2024 POLICY PRIORITIES

The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (The Alliance) works to prevent and eliminate sexual violence in our state through education, legislation, advocacy, trauma-informed care, and a state-wide network of support for victims and survivors. During this legislative session, The Alliance will focus on the following policy priorities to ensure that survivors have access to justice, healing and support.

IMPROVE THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE TO VICTIMS

H.B. 5399 An Act Concerning the Criminal Justice Response to Victims of Sexual Assault

The Alliance seeks the creation of a model sexual assault response policy that includes requiring law enforcement to provide victims with written information about services available to victims of sexual violence. Increasing access to comprehensive education for law enforcement, creating a standardized sexual assault policy that can be implemented statewide and increasing collaboration between the criminal justice system and community-based resources will cultivate survivors' access to healing, justice, and wellbeing.

Has been raised in concept by the Judiciary Committee.

The Alliance supports protecting victims from retaliation in the form of defamation suits when reporting sexual assault, harassment or misconduct. Policy that protects communications made with the intention of reporting sexual harassment, misconduct, or assault without malice will prevent retaliatory defamation actions by perpetrators of violence and ensure survivors have the ability to report sexual violence in the workplace, in education and in their homes.

H.B. 5298 An Act Clarifying the Meanings of Sexual Intercourse and Sexual Contact

The Alliance supports legislation which would add “continuous course of conduct” in the definition of “sexual intercourse” and “sexual contact.” Including this language would allow those who cause harm to be held accountable for the entirety of their actions even in cases when a victim cannot orient to date, time, location, etc. for every assault. This is especially critical in child sexual abuse cases. See also CT State Supreme Court ruled in *State v. Douglas C.* and *State v. Joseph V.*

IMPROVE THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

H.B. 5161 An Act Concerning Child Sexual Abuse Material

The Alliance supports changing “child pornography” to “child sexual abuse material.” Using “pornography” minimizes the harm experienced by children, diminishes the seriousness of the crime and contributes to sentiments that there are no victims when child sexual abuse material is viewed.



H.B. 5159 An Act Establishing a Task Force to Study the Responsiveness of State Agencies to Issues Concerning Child Sexual Abuse

The Alliance supports establishing a task force to examine how state agencies respond to, intervene in and prevent child sexual abuse. Child survivors and their families would greatly benefit from increased collaboration across state agencies, improved access to systems-based interventions, strengthened and transparent oversight, and identification of the capacity of programs and services available to children and their families.

H.B. 5262 An Act Concerning a Sexual Abuse and Assault Survey

The Alliance supports requiring schools to complete a survey about their implementation of PA 14-196, which established the requirement for all K-12 schools to develop and implement sexual abuse awareness and prevention programs for students and teachers, at regular intervals and making the data collected publicly available. The collection of public health data is imperative to inform not only future policy efforts, but to identify where and how to use the limited resources of school communities to effectively address and prevent sexual abuse.

INCREASE THE RIGHTS OF VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

S.B. 222 An Act Concerning Changes to the Paid Family and Medical Leave Statutes

The Alliance wants to broaden the coverage in CT FMLA and/or “Safe Leave” and CT PFMLA to include victims of sexual violence in eligibility criteria. Victims experience trauma and disruption to all facets of their lives. Allowing victims of sexual violence to take up to 12 days off per calendar year for certain issues related to the violence including the need to seek medical care or attend criminal justice proceedings will support survivors’ long-term wellbeing. *Currently victims of domestic violence or family violence are the only crime victims to have access to these rights.*

S.B. 7 An Act Concerning Connecticut Paid Sick Days

The Alliance support extending Safe Days to workers who need to care for a family member who is the victim of sexual assault or family violence. Sexual violence deeply impacts not only the survivor, but the entire family unit. This is especially true in cases of child sexual abuse where adults are responsible for transporting and accompanying children as the family navigates complex medical, mental health and criminal justice processes.

Will not be raised by the Judiciary Committee this session.

The Alliance seeks to add protections in employment, housing, public accommodations and credit transactions for victims of sexual violence. Survivors deserve protection from discrimination in the aftermath of sexual violence and extending protections will support survivors seeking justice, healing, and wellbeing. *Currently victims of domestic violence or family violence are the only crime victims to have access to these rights.*

