



NOTES OF INTEREST

- The Connecticut State Legislature Adjourned for the 2022 Session on May 4th.
- Access Health CT Board of Directors will meet next May 19, 2022. Meeting materials can be found [here](#)



Legislative Highlights May 9, 2022

End of Session Update

LEGISLATION

The legislature adjourned Sine Die on Wednesday, May 4th 2022. The General Assembly is not expected to reconvene for any significant business until January 2023. The 2022 session was still partially impacted by Covid-19 protocols that included virtual public hearings and committee meetings. Legislators were also allowed to vote for bills from the floor of the House and Senate or their offices in the Capitol. Below is a break down on final outcomes for CT Benefit Broker's bills and policies of interest this year.

[HB 5042](#) An Act Concerning Health Care Cost Growth, which directs the state's Office of Health Strategy to set yearly health care cost growth benchmarks, cleared the House and was later adopted by both chambers via incorporation into the [state budget](#). Legislation is effective upon passage.

The language from **[SB 357](#) An Act Concerning Copay Accumulator Programs And High Deductible Health Plans**, was also adopted into law via incorporation into the budget implementer, [SB 9](#). CT Benefit Brokers supported this exact language via public testimony in front of the Insurance committee earlier this year.

Although Insurance Chair Kerry Wood and Ranking Member Rep. Cara Pavalock-D'Amato did attempt to file amendments reviving the legislation from **[HB 5383](#), An Act Concerning Association Health Plans**, ultimately, no language was ultimately passed this session.



Covered Connecticut: Sections 53 and 254 of [the budget bill](#) transfers the administration of the Covered Connecticut program from OHS to DSS, expands coverage to include disabled adult children and certain other dependents and replaces a biannual reporting requirement with an annual one beginning in 2024.

Other legislation and amendments pertaining to [long term care insurance](#), [High Deductible Health Plans](#), and the governor's bills on [prescription drug prices](#) and [primary and preventative care](#) were not adopted this session.

Finally, we saw no legislative proposals or amendments that established a public option, and therefore nothing of that nature was adopted in the 2022 Legislative Session.

As a reminder, Representative Kerry Wood, House Chair of the Insurance and Real Estate committee, will attend the CT AHU Annual Meeting as the Key Note Speaker on May 24th.

ADMINISTRATION

Details on Governor Lamont's 2022 legislative proposals are included above. The Democratic and Republican State Parties will hold their conventions for Governor and Constitutional offices on Saturday May 7th.

Governor Ned Lamont is expected to once again receive the nomination from the Democratic delegates, and Bob Stefanowski is the likely Republican nominee. House Chair of the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee, and former Insurance chair, Sean Scanlon will seek the Democratic nomination for State Comptroller, while Mary Fay, a West Hartford financial executive, will have a last-minute challenger, Patrick Rowland, of East Haven for the Republican nod for the position.

Finally, Senate Chair of the Insurance and Real Estate committee, Matt Lesser is competing in a five way race for the Democratic nomination for Secretary of State. If Lesser wins the nomination, he cannot seek reelection for his Senate seat.

OTHER LEGISLATION OF INTEREST IN 2022:

State Budget Adjustment

As this year was a budget adjustment year, the state legislature adopted budget changes for the 2023 Fiscal Year. [HB 5506](#), as well as budget implementer [SB 9](#), features more than \$600 million in tax relief for CT residents. The legislation also invests in CT communities, by expanding funding for health care, social services and early childhood development. In addition, the budget provides raises and bonuses for unionized state employees and allocates approximately a 5% increase in funding for private nonprofit community agencies that provide the bulk of state-sponsored social services. Additionally, legislators utilized one-quarter of this fiscal year's historic \$4.8 billions surplus to ensure state finances stay in balance in future years when emergency federal pandemic relief has been exhausted. The rest of the surplus, nearly \$3.6 billion, will be used to make a record-setting supplemental payment against Connecticut's \$41 billion in long-term pension debt.

Consumer Data Privacy

Last week, Connecticut became the fifth state in the country to pass a comprehensive consumer privacy law, [SB 6/Public Act No. 22-15](#). The bill's consumer data privacy requirements generally apply to individuals conducting business in Connecticut or producing products or services targeted to Connecticut residents and controlling or processing personal data above specified consumer thresholds. The bill's effective date is July 1, 2023.

Children's Mental Health

The Legislature approved three bills aimed at addressing the national behavioral health crisis affecting Connecticut's kids. Legislation passed includes [House Bill 5001](#), a proposal that focuses on services in the medical sector and in the community, [Senate Bill 1](#), which includes resources for mental health services in schools as well as additional funding for early childhood care programs, and [Senate Bill 2](#), which concentrates on early childhood behavioral health interventions.

Public Health

Vapor Flavor Ban

[SB 367](#), legislation that would have originally banned flavored vapor products, faced another legislative session of contentious debate but ultimately was not called for a vote in either chamber. With a week left in session, the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee amended the bill to limit sales of vapor products to 21+ tobacco shops. The amendment was not well received by advocates for the original bill, and a lack of consensus around effective legislation ultimately killed the policy.

Reproductive Rights

Just days before the historic leak of a Supreme Court draft opinion reversing *Roe v. Wade*, the CT state legislature adopted [HB 5414](#) a first-in-the-nation law that will protect medical providers and patients seeking abortion care in Connecticut who may be traveling from other states that have outlawed abortion. Additionally, the law expands abortion access in Connecticut by expanding the type of practitioners eligible to perform certain abortion-related care. Governor Lamont signed the legislation on Thursday, May 5th. The bill goes into effect July 1, 2022.

Miscellaneous

- **Legislator Pay Raises:** For the first time in two decades, the legislature, along largely partisan lines, approved an [amended bill](#) that would raise the pay of Connecticut House members from a base of \$28,000 a year to over \$44,000 and increase the pay of senators from \$28,000 to more than \$45,000, beginning in January 2023. Governor Lamont has indicated he will sign the legislation.
- **Juneteenth holiday** By a largely bipartisan vote, the legislature passed a bill making Juneteenth, a day commemorating the end of slavery, a state holiday. Governor Lamont has indicated he will sign the legislation.
- **Expansion of Absentee Voting:** Earlier this session, Governor Lamont signed a bill to allow wider mail-in voting. While the bill did not allow no-excuse absentee voting, which would require an amendment to the state constitution, it loosened the language in the law, making it possible for commuters and people with a range of disabilities or illnesses to vote by mail.

KEY INFORMATION RESOURCES:

- **FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT ON COVID-19, INCLUDING GUIDANCE AND OTHER RESOURCES, ALL RESIDENTS IN THE STATE ARE ENCOURAGED TO VISIT [CT.GOV/CORONAVIRUS](https://portal.ct.gov/CID/Bulletins/Current-List-of-Bulletins)**
- **CT Insurance Department Bulletins:** <https://portal.ct.gov/CID/Bulletins/Current-List-of-Bulletins>
- **Connecticut Paid Leave Authority website:** CTPaidLeave.org

RECENT ARTICLES AND OP-EDS OF NOTE:

CT Mirror: [Rising health care costs weigh on CT small businesses and nonprofits](#)

CT Mirror: [Cost growth benchmarks in CT budget; prescription drug price cap fails](#)

CT News Junkie Op-Ed: [Policymakers Did Little To Lower Healthcare Costs This Session](#)

CT Mirror: [Insurance exchange launches enrollment period for low-income families](#)



Contact Us

Capitol Strategies Group, LLC

36 Trumbull Street

Hartford, CT 06103

Tel. 203-213-2602

<http://www.csgct.com/>