

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

February 12, 2024

NOTES OF INTEREST

- The Connecticut State Legislature began the 2024 Session on February 7th. The session ends May 8th.
- Next House Session Date: February 14th at 11:30am.
- Next Senate Session Dates: February 14th at 10:00am
- Legislative Sessions can be watched live at CT-N.com
- The Insurance and Real Estate committee has not yet scheduled their next meeting. All meeting agendas can be found on the [Insurance Committee webpage](#). All meetings can be watched remotely on the Committee's [youtube page](#).
- Join Insurance Co-chair Rep. Kerry Wood for Legislative Networking with the Moderate Caucus on Thursday the 15th at The Officer's Club (360 Broad St #107, Hartford, CT 06105)

LEGISLATION

The Connecticut General Assembly convened for the 2024 Legislative Session on February 7th. This legislative session is a “short” session and will run until Wednesday, May 8th. During short session years, the legislature, working with the governor, makes various adjustments to Connecticut’s biennial budget. Individual legislators may only propose legislation that is fiscal in nature, but committees are permitted to introduce legislation on any topic.

The Insurance and Real Estate Committee held their first meeting on Thursday, February 8th to raise bill concepts for drafting. All items on the agenda were accepted by the committee. These concepts do not yet have a bill number or language but there were many topics of interest on the [agenda](#), including: Reinsurance, assessments on the Insurance Exchange, and affordable health plan options.

There was also a concept on the agenda that intends to establish Association Health Plans entitled “An Act Concerning Employee Health Benefit Consortiums.” While there is no language to this proposal as of yet, Insurance committee co-chair Rep. Kerry Wood confirmed that the language will be very similar to the Association Health Plans bill passed out of committee last year, [HB 6710](#).

Opposition to Association Health Plans legislation has already begun. In late January, [Progressive Democrats held a press conference to discuss their opposition to AHPs](#). Continued support from the Broker community will be critical in getting AHP legislation over the finish line this session. Please reach out to Julie Chubet if you’d like to help by participating in the legislative process.

Finally, Governor Lamont introduced his budget revisions and legislative proposals for the 2024 session on Wednesday Feb 7th. More details on his healthcare proposals are included below.

The deadline to refer Insurance bills out of committee is March 21, 2024. We will continue to monitor all legislation and amendments as they are published, and provide updates as necessary.





ADMINISTRATION

Governor Lamont addressed a joint session of the Connecticut General Assembly on Feb. 7th. He presented his [FY 2025 Recommended Budget Adjustments](#). A video and transcript of the address can be viewed [here](#).

Governor Lamont's proposed adjustments include health care affordability policies, which are incorporated into his legislative proposal HB 5054: [An Act Addressing Health Care Affordability](#).

Of note, this legislation directs the Office of Health Strategy to establish affordability standards, which will integrate into rate review the health insurance carriers' efforts to keep yearly increases in premiums at or below the benchmark.

It also directs OHS to explore best practices for prescription drug affordability, monitor policies in other states, and launch a prescription drug affordability board (PDAB) to work with similar panels across the country. a review of how well health insurers prioritize affordability.

The budget proposal also includes four new positions targeted at hospital oversight in the state's Office of Health Strategy. One would support "expanded" financial monitoring of hospitals, "to develop advanced warning of financial distress," and to strengthen Connecticut's certificate of need review process.

Finally, the bill also forms an oversight commission to advise the Office of Health Strategy on advancing health equity and supporting equitable access to affordable and high-quality health care for underserved populations. ([HB 5054 fact sheet](#))

The governor's proposal for health and human services, HB 5053: [An Act Concerning the Governor's Budget Recommendations for Health and Human Services](#), includes language that would decrease the eligibility threshold for the state's Medicaid HUSKY A program from 160% of the federal poverty level, or FPL, to 138%. Individuals who would no longer qualify for Medicaid would instead be able to receive coverage under the Covered Connecticut program, a zero-premium, no cost-share coverage plan through the state's health insurance exchange. Also pertaining to Medicaid, Governor Lamont recommended that the state hold on across-the-board Medicaid rate increases until the Department of Social Services finishes their rate review and report in 2025. DSS was directed to perform this review by legislation passed during the 2023 session. ([HB 5053 fact sheet](#))

KEY INFORMATION RESOURCES:

- **CT Insurance Department Bulletins:** <https://portal.ct.gov/cid/departments-resources/current-list-of-bulletins>
- **Connecticut Paid Leave Authority website:** CTPaidLeave.org
- **Access Health CT Meeting Agendas and Minutes:** <https://agency.accesshealthct.com/meetings> AND <https://agency.accesshealthct.com/meetings#two>

RECENT ARTICLES AND OP-EDS OF NOTE:

- Yale Daily News: [Why state healthcare saw record levels of enrollment this year](#)
- CT Mirror: [What Lamont's budget proposal would mean for health care in CT](#)
- CT Mirror: [CT legislators roll out proposals to help reduce health care costs](#)
- Fox Business: [Connecticut Gov Lamont says state will be 1st to cancel medical debt for all eligible residents](#)
- CBIA: [Transform Connecticut: CBIA's 2024 Policy Solutions](#)
- CT Insider: [Changes needed to stabilize small group health insurance market in CT, expert says](#)
- CT Mirror: [CT health care open enrollment draws record numbers, officials say](#)
- CT NewsJunkie: [Connecticut Democratic Lawmakers Challenge Association Health Plans with Alternative Proposals](#)
- CT NewsJunkie: [Connecticut's Upcoming Legislative Session: Affordable Housing, Health Insurance, and Voting Security in the Spotlight](#)
- CT Mirror: [A look at CT's health care priorities for the 2024 legislative session](#)



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