

# CT CAN END HOMELESSNESS

## 2026 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

### MID-SESSION ADJUSTMENT



#### More people are living outside across every ZIP code in our state.

Homelessness in Connecticut has increased by 44% since 2021. Unsheltered homelessness has risen 45% in the past year.

#### This is both an acute crisis and a structural challenge.

Our goal is to reduce entries into homelessness, meet demand with humane capacity, and accelerate exits to housing so homelessness declines.

## PREVENT Stop Homelessness Before It Begins.

Connecticut must stop entries into homelessness, and prevention and diversion are the most cost-effective ways to do so.

- **Housing Crisis Response Fund — \$10 million annually.** Provide rapid problem-solving assistance and mediation that prevents shelter entry and covers rental assistance, security deposits, needed utilities, tenant legal services, credit repair, transportation, and additional housing supports.

## RESPOND Bring People Inside. Stabilize Core Services. Expand Capacity.

A 45% increase in unsheltered homelessness in one year is a public health emergency. To preserve life, reduce preventable harm, and restore flow from unhoused to housed, Connecticut should adopt a single, integrated annual investment package totaling **\$18.3 million**.

- **Bring people inside during extreme weather — \$12.3 million annually.** Expand and annualize extreme weather funding so communities can rapidly open temporary capacity when demand spikes.
- **Expand staffing capacity to meet increased need — \$6 million annually.** Scale the roles that reduce inflow and shorten homelessness to strengthen engagement, increase diversions and placements, and improve housing stability.

## HOUSE Move People Home. Keep People Housed.

We must also continue advancing the **broader investments needed to move people from homelessness into permanent housing and keep them housed**. Connecticut needs both immediate stabilization and long-term housing solutions:

- We support [The CT Alliance for Nonprofits request for a Cost of Living Adjustment \(COLA\)](#) to match the increase provided to DDS residential programs in FY27.
- We also support the [Partnership for Strong Communities' request for \\$50 million in RAP rental assistance](#).

<sup>1</sup> [Point in Time Count](#), Prepared by Nutmeg Consulting, August 2025

## PREVENT. RESPOND. HOUSE.

*Meeting demand now - so we can prevent and solve homelessness, not just manage it.*

### POLICY INITIATIVES

#### **Codify McKinney-Vento Into State Law.**

- Codify McKinney-Vento educational protections into state law so students in families experiencing homelessness can enroll and remain in their school of origin, and access transportation and school-based support—regardless of federal changes.

**Relevant bill:** [H.B. 5259, An Act Concerning Homeless Children and Youth](#)

#### **Establish Year-Round Extreme Weather Protocols (Cold, Heat, Severe Weather).**

- Establish statewide, year-round, extreme weather protocols that activate life-saving operations to better respond to cold, heat, and severe weather.

**Relevant bill:** [S.B. 364, An Act Concerning Extreme Weather Protocols](#)

#### **Don't Criminalize Homelessness.**

- Prioritize humane, service-based response over arrests by emphasizing intervention and help, rather than criminal penalties for people experiencing homelessness.

**Relevant bill:** [H.B. 5260, An Act Prohibiting a Municipality from Imposing a Penalty for the Performance of Certain Activities of Daily Living](#)

### FEDERAL BUDGET CUTS

#### **Protect Connecticut's Social Safety Net from Federal Cuts**

Recent developments have demonstrated how tenuous the availability of federal investments can be. Connecticut must be prepared to sustain state funds to offset any federal reductions in homeless services, emergency shelter, permanent housing, rental assistance, and services that promote housing stability for our neighbors.



*The CT CAN End Homelessness Legislative Agenda reflects a statewide, consensus-based, decision-making process alongside the Connecticut Interagency Council on Homelessness and the End Homelessness Caucus.*

*The CT CAN End Homelessness Campaign relies on partnerships with adjacent systems, such as health care, criminal justice, education, and child welfare, to accomplish shared objectives.*

