

## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - MAR. 1, 2024**

### **SENATE DEMOCRATS PRIORITY BILLS RECEIVE PUBLIC**

**HEARING:** On Thursday, a public hearing was held on two Senate Democrats priority bills:

- [SB 2 - An Act Concerning Artificial Intelligence](#) - In what will be one of the most prominent bills of the legislative session, the General Law Committee held a public hearing on the AI bill. The bill, which is in large part reflective of the recommendations of the AI Working Group, would: (1) make it illegal to share nonconsensual images generated by AI; (2) regulate the use of AI in political ads; (3) address algorithm discrimination; (4) require testing on generative AI; and (5) create a CT Citizens AI academy which will train the workforce on how to use AI. The Committee will review testimony and continue to hear from interested parties on what will likely be one of the most lobbied bills of the session.
- [SB 3 - An Act Concerning Consumer Protection](#) - The General Law Committee also heard the Senate Democrats large consumer protection bill. The proposed bill looks to: (1) eliminate "junk fees" on consumer invoices; (2) ensure access to digital equity for all residents; (3) contains net neutrality provisions; (4) requires disclosures around all "connected devices" with built in microphones to prevent eavesdropping; (5) adopts proration billing practices for digital streaming services; and (6) addresses right to repair.

**COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARINGS THIS WEEK:** Other notable public hearings:

- **PUBLIC HEALTH** - Testimony was heard on bills including: (1) prohibiting STEP therapy practices in certain circumstances; (2) emergency room crowding; and (3) extending telehealth provisions adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic until June 30, 2027.
- **EDUCATION** - On Wednesday, the Education Committee held a public hearing on two bills: (1) [HB 5212 - An Act Concerning Education Funding](#); and (2) [HB 5213 - An Act Concerning Disconnected Youth](#). Over 100 people testified at the hearing and education funding is one of the most contested parts of the Governor's budget.
- **INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE** - Bills heard before the committee include: (1) requiring the Insurance Department to conduct a study on property and casualty insurance issues within the state; (2) requiring pharmacies/pharmacists to provide personal opioid drug deactivation and disposal systems to patients with costs covered by the Opioid

Settlement Fund; and (3) addressing health care affordability - Cost Growth Benchmarks and Prescription Drug Affordability Boards.

- **ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY** - Heard testimony concerning two solar bills that would: (1) provide a uniform capacity tax on solar panels, require the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to study/develop a strategic plan for solar canopies, study the promotion of solar projects within municipalities; and (2) looks at feasibility of solar energy in school systems.
- **LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES** - Heard testimony on bills that would: (1) limit the use of noncompete/exclusivity agreements unless certain criteria are met; and (2) amend paid family and medical leave statutes relating to employer requirements/implement other minor technical changes.
- **CHILDREN** - Heard testimony on bills that would: (1) prohibit the sale of energy drinks to youth under 16 years old; (2) adjusts the Department of Children and Families responsibilities regarding wrap around services for substance abuse/mental illness.

**COMMITTEES BEGIN JF/JFS PROCESS:** Various committees held meetings this week to JF or JFS bills, a process in which a committee issues a joint favorable ("JF") report on a bill. Any bill reported out with amended or new language is referred to as a Joint Favorable Substitute ("JFS"). The bill may then move to another committee for consideration or directly to the appropriate House/Senate chamber to await further action.