



Connecticut Association for Community Action 2018 Policy Agenda

Connecticut's Community Action Agency (CAA) network provides limited income individuals, families, and communities in every city and town across the state with critical, basic needs services like food, shelter, heating assistance, housing, and child care. To strengthen our network's commitment to empower people in need and improve the communities in which they live, the Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA) will pursue the following priorities in the 2018 legislative session:

- ✓ **Protect and preserve the Human Services Infrastructure (HSI)-Community Action Program (CAP).** Community-driven and locally controlled, Connecticut's CAA Network is the state's safety net. HSI-CAP is a comprehensive, customer-focused, integrated service delivery system that effectively equips CAA customers with the tools, skills, and resources they need to achieve short and long-term financial stability and self-reliance. *This funding is vital to the CAA network, and is an effective, smart investment in Connecticut's future. HSI-CAP solves problems, avoids crises and saves money by providing multigenerational services with proven outcomes. And, these funds are used as state match funds for federally funded programs.*
- ✓ **Support Community Action's role in early childhood education programs.** Community Action Agencies prepare children for future success by investing in early care and learning that utilizes a multigenerational, holistic approach. This method is central in effectively addressing the mental, social, emotional, educational, and developmental needs of Connecticut's limited income children and their families, and in reducing the achievement gap. *Nearly 13% of children live in poverty in Connecticut. Access to high-quality, early childhood education programs is essential in helping to break the cycle of poverty. Adults who participate in early childhood education programs are more likely to enjoy higher median incomes, graduate high school, and continue on to higher education.*
- ✓ **Invest in weatherization energy conservation and healthy homes measures, and inform and protect Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) customers around utility collection practices and shutoffs.** The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is Connecticut's most important resource to assist limited income families with improving the energy efficiency of their home. The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) provides heating assistance to over 97,500 limited income households. Connecticut has the highest overall energy costs in the country. We are committed to helping our customers avoid energy crisis including utility shutoffs and bad credit due to utility debt collection and credit reporting practices.