



## Connecticut Association for Community Action FY 2019 Federal Policy Agenda

Connecticut's Community Action Network provides critical services such as food, shelter, home heating assistance, housing support, and child care to help meet the needs of limited income people and their families in all 169 cities and towns. By leveraging **Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)** funding and through strong local, state, and federal partnerships, Connecticut's Community Action Agencies (CAAs) are able to effectively equip our state's most vulnerable residents with the tools, skills, and resources they need to achieve short and long-term positive outcomes toward financial stability. Last year, CT's CAAs provided assistance to over 313,500 individuals.

The Connecticut Association for Community Action, Inc. (CAFCA) will pursue the following federal legislative priorities in FY 2019 to continue our efforts to address and reduce the causes and conditions of poverty for Connecticut's limited income communities:

- ✓ **Fund the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) at \$750M.** Connecticut's CAAs are the state's safety net. They serve limited income people in every city and town, and help families and the state solve problems, avoid crises, and save money. Whether someone needs child care, job training and employment services, can't afford to eat, or is about to lose their home, CSBG funds are critical in leveraging support for programs that can help. *CAAs are a smart investment, and maximize taxpayer dollars by using CSBG to invest in the specific, local needs of their communities—creating opportunities for those they serve in the process. Supporting effective, efficient funding sources like CSBG that use a multigenerational, holistic approach to address poverty is essential in continuing to achieve positive outcomes for Connecticut's most disadvantaged individuals, children and families.*
- ✓ **Support the Head Start model of early childhood education.** Head Start promotes and supports school readiness by addressing the educational, social, health, and nutritional needs of our state's limited income children—and helps enable their families achieve goals for education, employment, and stability. This two-generational, comprehensive, proven approach encourages a learning environment that sets up families for success. *Nearly 13% of Connecticut's children live in poverty. Access to high-quality, early childhood education programs like Head Start is crucial to providing every child and their family with the support and resources they need to help them reach their full potential—helping to improve educational outcomes and break the cycle of poverty.*
- ✓ **Protect LIHEAP (energy assistance) appropriations at \$3.8B.** Ensure home heating fuel is affordable to every person in need by supporting and strengthening the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). *On average, Connecticut's poorest families—many with young children or elderly adults on a fixed income—owe approximately \$1,404 more in energy bills than they can afford to pay, an increase from last year. LIHEAP helps them cover high home energy bills and keep up with the cost of other critical, basic needs like food, medicine, child care, health care, or housing rather than having to choose between them.*
- ✓ **Invest in weatherization energy conservation and healthy homes measures at \$250M.** The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is Connecticut's primary resource to help limited income families reduce energy costs through increased energy efficiency—while at the same time ensuring their health and safety. *WAP is cost-effective, creates and supports jobs, saves energy, and enables families to afford other basic necessities like child care, groceries, and health care.*