

## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - APRIL 12, 2024**

**SENATE SESSION:** The Senate met Wednesday voting on various executive and legislative nominations and also passed numerous bills, some of which would: (1) adopt recommendations from the Department of Children and Families concerning wrap around services for substance abuse/mental illness; (2) create a working group to provide recommendations that would require providers of behavioral health services for children to utilize a universal patient intake form; (3) establish a task force to study the effects of hate speech on children's health and achievement; and (4) adopt the Attorney General's recommendations relating to "junk fees" which would require clear/conspicuous disclosed total pricing to include all mandatory fees/charges other than any applicable tax imposed by a government entity.

**COMMITTEE REFERRALS:** The Transportation, Housing, Public Safety and Security, Higher Education and Employment Advancement, Planning and Development and Judiciary Committees all met this week to consider bills referred from the House and Senate including those that would: (1) improve school district data systems and practices to identify/support at-risk students and to establish coalitions/partnerships focused on supporting at-risk/disconnected youth; and (2) require the Department of Social Services to develop a strategic plan around the Connecticut Housing Engagement and Support Services to reduce housing instability state-wide.

**ATTORNEY GENERAL/LEGISLATIVE LEADERS SEEK GROCERY REVENUES:** On Thursday, Senate President Pro Tempore Looney, Senate Majority Leader Duff, and Attorney General Tong held a press conference on grocery store prices and profits. Senator Duff spoke to the understandable rise in grocery prices during the pandemic as the supply of necessary goods was significantly decreased due to supply chain shortages. Duff noted the Federal Trade Commission ("FTC") recently released a report stating the increase in prices is due to retailers increasing revenue, not inflation. The report also indicated only four companies control over 80% of the processing of beef/70% of pork/60% of chicken, and with "light touch regulation" of these companies, consumers pay more. The report further noted corporate profits are at a 70-year high and price gouging is responsible for more than 50% of inflation. The FTC remarked further study must be conducted to understand the rising prices of groceries and protect consumers from price gouging. Based on the information within the FTC's report and to reduce the cost burden to consumers in Connecticut, Attorney General Tong has issued letters of inquiry to major retailers to disclose their profits/costs to learn whether price increases are due to inflation or corporate profit. "We will not stand by while corporate greed manipulates a public emergency for their own profit," said Senator Duff. A copy of the press release which includes a link to the FTC report can be found [here](#).

**GOVERNOR LAMONT ANNOUNCES UCONN RALLY/PARADE:** Governor Lamont announced Tuesday a Victory Parade/Rally will take place tomorrow morning in celebration of the UConn Men's Basketball team's win of the 2024 NCAA National Championship. Event details, including the parade route can be found [here](#).

**NEXT WEEK:** The House of Representatives and Senate intend to meet Wednesday and Thursday next week.