



Branches on the Vine

JUNE 21 - 27, 2025



PUBLIC POLICY OFFICE OF CATHOLIC CHURCH SCORES WINS IN STATE'S LEGISLATIVE SESSION

- Story by Joe Pisani

Deacon David Reynolds sits at his desk in Hartford. He serves as associate director for public policy for the Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference, which represents bishops in Connecticut.
PHOTO BY AARON JOSEPH

The Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference achieved “successes we were happy about” during the 2025 Connecticut Legislative Session, according to Deacon David Reynolds, the Conference’s associate director for public policy.

“Legislation dealing with abortion, transgender rights and immigration reflected the conflict between existing state law and the recently revised federal laws and regulations,” he says. “The good news is the Conference’s efforts to stop harmful legislation in the areas of abortion and gender-affirming care were successful, and we are satisfied.”

Here is a summary of some proposals and bills the Conference was involved in during the Connecticut Legislative Session that concluded on June 4. The Conference represents bishops in Connecticut.

House Bill 7213, Elimination of Abortion Regulations: The Conference was involved in stopping the attempt to remove existing regulations that currently prohibit abortion in the third trimester.

If approved, it also would have ended medical providers’ right to refusal to participate in an abortion and removed a state requirement “to provide emergency medical treatment for an infant born alive following a failed attempt at an abortion,” the deacon says.

Senate Bill 7, Religious Freedom for Catholic Hospitals: If approved, this bill could have prevented Catholic hospitals from ensuring their medical staff adhere to the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, promulgated by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. These directives define how a Catholic hospital must conduct itself in areas including abortion, gender-affirming care and assisted suicide.

“The Conference was involved in amending the bill to remove language that threatened religious directives that the Catholic hospitals operate under,” Deacon Reynolds says.

The Conference opposed **Senate Joint Resolution 35, Abortion/Gender Identity Constitutional Amendment**, that could have led to a constitutional amendment to eliminate the possibility of any limits on abortion and “made transgenderism a protected class under the State Constitution,” the deacon says, “thereby overriding protections that religious institutions currently have regarding gender and sexual ideology.”

House Bill 7212, Social Justice/Trust Act: Connecticut’s Trust Act limits the ways in which local and state law enforcement may interact with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents. The Conference supported the bill, which would make modifications to the Trust Act.

House Bill 7012, Education/Antisemitism:

The Conference supported a bill to create a group to study the rise of antisemitism in public schools. “The growing antisemitism in our state is a threat to people of all faiths,” Deacon Reynolds says. “And our children must be taught how truly harmful such actions and viewpoints are to a free society.”

House Bill 6894 Social Justice/Housing:

The Conference supported this bill to establish an Interagency Council on Homelessness. “This interagency council will try to come up with long-range plans to deal with homelessness and make sure the different state agencies work together,” Deacon Reynolds says.

The Conference opposed **House Bill 6804** that would have taxed private schools providing housing for their teachers. This bill would have impacted very few Catholic schools in the state.

Although it was approved, the Conference opposed **House Bill 7014** which would have created a process to handle complaints about inappropriate materials available in public school libraries.

“This was an effort to actually minimize parental input on objectionable material,” Deacon Reynolds says. “We will be monitoring this very closely in the future.”

To stay informed of issues the Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference is involved in, visit ctcatholic.org or call 860.524.7882.



Upcoming Events



06/27 FRIDAY 8AM - 4PM
CELEBRATE THE SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS
Sacred Heart Parish,
446 Mountain Rd, Suffield

Join the Sacred Heart Parish Family in cooperation with the "Traveling Icon Program" of the Knights of Columbus. Morning Mass at 8:00 AM followed by a presentation of the Icon of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Eucharistic Adoration throughout the day with quiet time before the Blessed Sacrament and the Icon along with devotional prayers of the Sacred Heart. Benediction and closing prayers at 4PM. All are welcome to attend all or some of the day's events. For more information visit our parish website: www.sacredheartct.com



08/1 FRIDAY 10AM
NEW DAY BEREAVEMENT PROGRAM
St. Thomas the Apostle Church,
733 Oxford Rd, Oxford

Those who are grieving the death of a loved one need to proactively work through their grief. One way that may be helpful is to participate in the bereavement support group called the New Day Program. This program consists of ten two-hour weekly meetings. During each meeting, participants work through one component of the grieving process, guided by the New Day Journal.

We will be offering an in-person session starting on Friday, August 1st from 10am-12pm. The program is free. Registration is required.

Must RSVP by July 28th If you would like to register, please contact Maryjane at 203-888-2382 ext 104 or pastoralcare@stthomasoxford.org

CONNECTICUT CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE
SAVE THE DATE
SEPTEMBER 27, 2025
HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC HS, WATERBURY, CT

Dr. Ray Guarendi Fr. Anthony Federico Michael O'Neill Fr. Jason Brooks



 WWW.CTCATHOLICMEN.ORG



06/27 FRIDAY 11:30AM - 2:30PM
STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE DAY
St. Mary Star of the Sea Church,
145 Main St, Unionville

Join us for a sweet celebration at Strawberry Shortcake Day on Sunday, June 29th from 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM! Bring your friends and family for a fun-filled afternoon featuring delicious strawberry shortcake for just \$5 per person—and kids under 3 eat free! Enjoy live music, fun games, and the warm community spirit that makes this event a summertime favorite. Take-out options are also available, so you can bring the joy home. Don't miss out on this berry delightful day!

2025 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

Scan the QR code
to learn how you
can make a
lasting impact!



Total Goal: \$10M

80.66% as of 6/10/25
\$8,065,833.25 pledges from
23,680 generous donors

www.archdioceseofhartford.org/appeal

