



**Special Session Recap
Election Results / Analysis
Cultivating Justice
11.18.25**

Election Outcomes & Party Shifts

On **November 4, 2025**, Connecticut held hundreds of local races, including mayors, first selectmen, and city councils. Democrats experienced a **“blue wave,”** flipping control of **27 towns and cities**, including New Britain, Norwich, Branford, and Westport, and defeating incumbents in Ansonia, Stratford, Milford, Bristol, and Rocky Hill.

CT Election Results Overview

- **Major Party Shifts**
 - 27 towns flipped from Republican to Democratic control for mayor/first selectman positions.
 - 3 towns saw Town Council power shifts.
 - Easton’s close race for first selectman is headed for a recount.
 - Petitioning candidates won in Middlebury, Wolcott, and Lyme.
- **Key Democratic Gains**
 - Significant wins in Ansonia, Milford, Stratford, and New Britain.
- **Republican Holds**
 - Retained control in towns like Greenwich, Shelton, and Torrington.

Voter Engagement

- Turnout was **36%**, about **10% higher** than typical municipal elections.

Implications for Reform Organizations

- Increased turnout suggests growing civic engagement—opportunity for advocacy on local governance and equity issues.
- Gender-neutral language proposals indicate momentum for inclusive policy, though resistance persists.
- Infrastructure and emergency services funding decisions highlight disparities in resource allocation—potential areas for justice-focused campaigns.

Summary: Connecticut’s 2025 local elections saw a **Democratic surge** in suburban and small-town government, facilitated by **expanded early-voting access** and **community issues** such as taxes and safety. Still, **participation remained uneven**, especially in the largest cities, underscoring persistent challenges in engaging voters in off-year local races. These outcomes demonstrate both the power and fragility of local civic engagement – and may offer signs for upcoming state and federal campaigns.

Special Session Four Bills

Context:

Connecticut’s legislature held a marathon special session to address urgent housing, healthcare, funding, and civil rights issues. Four major bills passed, each with implications for equity, vulnerable populations, and systemic reform.

1. Housing Growth Act (HB 8002)

- **Goal:** Expand affordable housing and reduce homelessness.
- **Key Changes:**
 - Replaces controversial “fair share” quotas with **regional needs assessments** led by councils of government.
 - Provides **state grants for water/sewer infrastructure** to support housing development.
 - Reduces parking requirements to encourage smaller-scale, “middle housing.”
- **Impact:** Empowers public housing authorities and targets families spending over 30% of income on housing or facing homelessness.
- **Opposition:** Critics argue added bureaucracy won’t solve affordability issues.

2. Budget Reserve Fund Allocation

- **Action:** Transfers **\$500 million** to the rainy-day fund to offset federal funding cuts after the recent shutdown. SNAP, WIC, LIHEAP, ACA subsidies, School Meals
 - **Concern:** Critics warn of insufficient guardrails on gubernatorial spending authority.
 - **Governor Lamont** controls fund usage; limited by a **six-member legislative panel** (4D, 2R)
 - **Unspent funds return** to reserves when Legislature reconvenes in February 2026.
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3. UConn Health Center Expansion

- **Action:** Authorizes UConn Health Center's takeover of Waterbury Hospital and raises its bond cap by \$390 million.
- **Equity Angle:** Could improve access to healthcare in underserved areas.

4. Catch-All Bill (HB 8004)

This omnibus bill addresses multiple social justice priorities:

- **Privacy & Immigration:**
 - Restricts state agencies from sharing personal data (e.g., addresses, work schedules) with non-public entities, limiting federal immigration enforcement access.
 - Codifies rules restricting **ICE arrests in courthouses**, reinforcing Connecticut's Trust Act protections.
 - **Children's Behavioral Health:**
 - Expands funding and mandates studies on service demand.
 - Raises insurance coverage age for autism treatments to 26.
 - Creates advisory committees and grant programs for mental health and substance abuse services.
 - **Economic Justice:**
 - Adjusts **Temporary Family Assistance** calculations to reduce SNAP/TANF error rates and protect funding for low-income families.
 - **Voting Rights:**
 - Requires transparency in redistricting data to ensure accurate voter registration updates.
 - **Other:** Delays implementation of a phone tax funding firefighter cancer relief.
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Why It Matters for Social Justice Nonprofits

- **Housing Equity:** HB 8002 could reduce barriers for low-income families and prevent homelessness.
- **Immigrant Rights:** HB 8004 strengthens privacy protections and limits ICE operations, safeguarding vulnerable communities.
- **Child Welfare:** Expanded behavioral health services address systemic gaps in mental health care for children.
- **Economic Stability:** TANF/SNAP changes aim to protect benefits for families living in poverty.
- **Democratic Access:** Redistricting transparency supports fair representation.