



NASW

National Association of Social Workers / Connecticut Chapter

2139 Silas Deane Highway
Suite 205
Rocky Hill, CT 06067
(860) 257-8066

Kurt Fuchs, LCSW, President
Stephen A Karp, LMSW, Executive Director
naswct@naswct.net

2017 Legislative Agenda

These priorities are designed to make progress toward the NASW 2016 Grand Challenges “championing social progress powered by science to work together to tackle our nation’s toughest social problems.” These are : Ensuring healthy development of all youth; Close the health gap; Stop family violence; Advance long and productive lives; Eradicate social isolation, end homelessness, create social responses to a changing environment, harness technology for social good, promote smart decarceration, build financial capability for all, reduce extreme economic inequality, and achieve equal opportunity and justice

All Encompassing Goal and Priority for this Legislative Session

A - Protecting the Safety Net for Connecticut’s Most Vulnerable Citizens: NASW/CT holds the position that every Connecticut resident and family should be able to meet their basic human needs. NASW/CT oppose cuts to safety net programs that serve Connecticut’s most vulnerable populations and supports proposals that prevent individuals from falling into poverty i.e. Medicaid/Husky, Care4Kids, EITC, TANF.

B – Supporting New Revenue Sources to Maintain Safety Net Services: NASW/CT supports developing new revenue sources to maintain safety net services. NASW/CT recommends a voluntary contribution on state income taxes be offered with revenues dedicated to safety net programs. That a tax on sugary drinks be used for support of school based health and mental health services. That tax expenditures (tax breaks) be “sunsetting” to assure that such tax expenditures remain necessary and are meeting their intended purpose. We support creation of a vanity plate i.e. ”Connecticut Cares” to support mental health and substance abuse services in the state. We support a more progressive income tax structure that increases the rate on high income households.

Legislative Categories

NASW/CT will be working on specific bills that we determine fit into the following issues categories.

Social Justice

NASW CT supports legislation that promotes: respect for adoption rights for adoptees, LBGT rights, maintaining women’s right to birth control and all reproductive health services in CT. We support access to prevention and early treatment options for teenagers and young adults struggling with substance abuse, particularly opioid addiction, mental health parity, police training on mental health and crisis intervention such as the Mental Health First Aid and suicide prevention. We support legislation that ensures all residents

are treated equally and with respect in all areas of their lives. NASW/CT supports a ban on conversion therapy for minors.

Economic Justice

NASW/CT supports legislation that promotes: Accelerating increasing minimum wage, equalizing educational cost sharing formula, TANF funding for basic education and jobs programs to all citizens with particular emphasis on residents receiving TANF and/ or DSS services, maintaining a balance between public and private services, maintaining the earned income tax credit, continued access to affordable comprehensive health care with a higher income threshold for working parents to access Medicaid/Husky, increase in Care4Kids and affordable day care efforts. increasing public access to Wi-Fi internet resources and computers/tablets to low income residents, use of TANF funds to provide support for residents in seeking future employment.

Criminal Justice Reform

NASW/CT supports legislation that promotes: Prevention of suicide gun violence, bail reform, support of family court support services programs. NASW/CT supports integration of services of crisis team, police, courts, shelters, hospitals and community based mental health & substance abuse services for domestic violence, gun violence, and/ or addiction/overdoses. NASW/CT supports, increase in use of risk assessments in sentencing, increase in jail diversion and protective reentry services for resident who are at risk of incarceration or have been incarcerated.

Family Sustainability

NASW/CT supports legislation that promotes: Increased access to emergency housing and efforts to provide long term affordable housing for all youth, families and individuals with particular emphasis on those with mental health challenges, support of Rapid RE-housing initiative and housing coordinated access networks. NASW/CT supports the right to proper nutrition and food, increase in school based comprehensive health clinics, access to mental health preventative services in the community, access to social work services to elders in their homes and in nursing homes, home based mental health services for all ages, Paid Family Leave, and holistic approach to service provision to older adults to be able to remain or return to their communities of choice.

Professional Guild Issues

NASW/CT supports expansion of licensure for mental health professions so that all new master level graduates have an appropriate level of licensure to assure that licensed mental health practitioners are providing clinical services.

Federal Legislation

NASW supports Increased Medicare reimbursement for clinical social work services, Affordable Care Act integration, student loan forgiveness, Social Work Reinvestment Act, Older American Act, improvements to child welfare, and mental health reform.

For more information on the legislative agenda of NASW/CT contact Stephen Karp, LMSW at skarp@naswct.net or 860-257-8066. You may also visit www.naswct.org.