



CAHS 2011 Policy Agenda

The **Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS)** works to end poverty and to engage, equip, and empower all families in Connecticut to build a secure future.

CAHS supports policies that move families from poverty to prosperity. By investing in basic needs, early care and education, financial education, asset building, work supports, job skills and training, universal health care, and equitable tax policy, Connecticut can build a vibrant workforce, a thriving economy, and strong families.

Connecticut must invest in human capital – our greatest resource. Over the next decade, Connecticut’s workplaces will change and innovate. We must prepare young and older working adults for the jobs that will make our state competitive. This requires us to prepare our youngest to be ready for school to learn, succeed, and enter the workforce.

Connecticut faces unprecedented fiscal challenges. We must respond to this financial crisis boldly and creatively. While efficiencies can be made through budget reductions, cutting our way out of the deficit is not only unrealistic, it will jeopardize the future of the state. Connecticut must make structural changes to our revenue stream so that it is adequate, sustainable, fair, and transparent.

Now is our time to commit to long-term investments in our economy and families. Immediate and longer-term investments are needed to strengthen our working families. Immediate and longer-term investments are needed to strengthen our working families.

Create a Stable Revenue System to Sustain Investments

Strategies:

- Restructure the revenue stream so that it is adequate, sustainable, fair, and transparent.
- Make the income tax structure more progressive.
- Evaluate and eliminate unproductive tax expenditures; restructure business taxes.
- Broaden the sales tax to cover more services.

Increase Family Income and Improve Access to Work Supports

Strategies:

- Establish a State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for low-wage workers.
- Enhance the quality and increase access to the Care 4 Kids child care program.
- Allow workers paid sick leave.
- Implement the Sustinet health care plan.
- Streamline access to and delivery of public benefits.

Prepare Children for School and Adults for Good Jobs

Strategies:

- Build a comprehensive, quality early care and education system, age 0 to 8.
- Enact policies and best practices to ensure all children read at grade level by grade 3.
- Invest in adult education and skills development.
- Adopt models that improve access, retention, and completion in community colleges.