DTC Political Briefing August–September

 The following document is the DTC political briefing for the month of August and early September. Issues in contention at the federal level include the President’s recent decision to end the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program as well as the pardoning of Sheriff Joe Arpaio. Senator Murphy has pushed forth new legislation protecting the Long Island Sound and renewing the HUSKY B health plan, which provides health care to 17,000 children in Connecticut under 19. State politicians Tong and Leone have taken time to visit newly opened businesses in Connecticut that promise to expand the state’s expertise in technology and engineering.

Jim Himes, US Representative

* August 15: Himes denounced Trump’s statement that there is “blame on both sides” during the protests in Charlottesville over the removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee.
* August 25: Himes denounced Trump’s pardoning of Joe Arpaio, a former Arizona sheriff who built a national reputation for his efforts to detain undocumented immigrants.
* August 28: Himes denounced the recent vandalism of the Stamford Academy of Information Technology and Engineering. A swastika was spray-painted onto a wall at the school.
* September 5: Himes commented on Trump’s decision to end the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program, stating that it will “do the most damage to hundreds of thousands of young lives and to our economy.”

Richard Blumenthal, US Senator

* August 3: Blumenthal applauded the unanimous passage of the ‘Forever GI Bill,’ which ensures the protection and expansion of critical veterans’ education benefits to reservists, surviving family members, and Purple Heart recipients.
* August 3: Blumenthal introduced the Special Counsel Independence Protection Act, which seeks to prevent the President from firing Special Counsel Robert Mueller.
* August 16: Blumenthal urged Attorney General Sessions to expand the Justice Department’s investigation to include the extremist groups involved in the recent violence at Charlottesville.
* August 21: Blumenthal met with Maturity Works, a program that equips older Americans with skills training. Funding for such programs would disappear in the proposed Trump budget.

Chris Murphy, US Senator

* August 12: Chris Murphy began a 5-day trek across the state of Connecticut, meeting with citizens and holding town halls along the way.
* August 22: Murphy and US Representative Elizabeth Etsy introduced legislation that would create a federal green bank based on the Connecticut model. The Connecticut Green Bank has leveraged more than 1 billion dollars through public-private partnerships to make clean energy more affordable and accessible.
* August 24: Murphy met with advocates for protection of the Long Island Sound in Greenwich. Murphy has introduced the Long Island Sound Restoration and Stewardship Act. It is designed to provide additional oversight of federal projects relating to the Sound.
* August 28: Murphy introduced the BuyAmerican.gov act, which will establish a centralized online hub to help ensure that federal agencies prioritize the purchase of American-made goods.
* August 28: Murphy visited a Veterans of Foreign Wars post in Danbury to tell veterans of the Honor Our Commitment Act, which would provide mental health care to those with other-than-honorable discharges.
* September 1: Murphy promised to defend DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), an American immigration policy that allows illegal immigrants to receive a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation, from being ended by President Trump.
* September 2: Murphy promised to work towards the renewal of HUSKY B in Connecticut, a health care program that covers 17,000 Connecticut children under 19.

Carlo Leone, State Senator

* July 25: Leone applauded the opening of a number of technology companies in Stamford. These include Arccos Golf, which makes GPS tracking sensors and systems for golf, Sponsorcraft Ltd., which provides fundraising solutions for the education and nonprofit sectors, and StreamdataIO, a French software company.
* August 25: Leone applauded the moving of Henkel’s North American consumer goods headquarters to Elm Street in Stamford. Henkel is a laundry, home care, and beauty care company.

Bob Duff, State Senate Majority Leader

* August 18: Duff applauded the groundbreaking of an upper school for the Side by Side Community school in Norwalk. He helped to secure a 2.5 million dollar state grant for the school’s infrastructure, which was quickly becoming unsafe.
* August 18: Duff applauded the opening of University of Connecticut–Stamford Campus residents’ hall in downtown Stamford.
* August 28: Duff applauded the sending of a contingent of the Connecticut Air National Guard to provide assistance in Texas as Hurricane Harvey made landfall.
* August 31: Duff applauded the enacting of a law that made Connecticut the first state to allow judges to appoint lawyers and law students as advocates for dogs and cats in cases of cruelty and abuse.

William Tong, State Representative

* August 21: Tong and Joe McGee, co-chairs of the Commission on Economic Competitiveness, visited Sonics & Materials, a company that specializes in liquid processing and ultrasonic wielding.
* September 1: William Tong published an editorial in the Stamford Advocate describing how hate crimes endangers the unity of the United States.