DTC Political Briefing July - August

Attached below is the political briefing for the month of July and early August. Major issues on the state level include the overriding of Malloy’s veto of legislation that changes affordable housing laws. On the national level, major issues include the blockage of the GOP Healthcare Plan in the US Senate, an event that both of Connecticut’s senators have celebrated.

William Tong, State Representative

* August 3: Tong applauded the signing of new laws reforming the state’s bail system. The laws prohibit the cash-only bond for most people accused of non-violent misdemeanor crimes.

Carlo Leone, State Senator

Bob Duff, State Senate Majority Leader

* July 13: Duff applauded Indeed’s investment of 26 million dollars in Stamford to expand its offices. It will grow its offices from 700 employees to more than 1,200 in the coming years.
* July 19: Duff applauded the moving of Remedy Partners’ headquarters to a new office building in Norwalk. Remedy Partners is a Darien-based technology and healthcare management company. They will be moving from 1120 Boston Post Road in Darien to their new location in Norwalk.
* July 24: Duff applauded the growth of Connecticut’s pension and retirement at an all time. The CT Retirement Plans and Trust Fund had assets of 32.4 billion dollars by the end of June 30. After fees and expenses, the overall portfolio grew by over 3 billion dollars in value.
* August 3: Duff applauded the succession of Bill Lucey as the newest Long Island Sound Keeper. The Sound Keeper is in charge of reporting and fixing water quality problems with the Long Island Sound. They are also in charge of managing the wildlife in the Sound. Lucey succeeds Terry Backer, who passed away in late 2015.

Jim Himes, US Representative

* July 13: Himes introduced the Free Press Act in the House of Representatives, which requires that the White House hold at least two on-camera press briefings each week.
* July 26: Himes denounced Trump’s statement that transgender people will not be allowed in the military. Trump stated that the military cannot be burdened with the “tremendous medical costs” of allowing transgender service members.
* July 27: Himes denounced Trump’s calling for Russia to “find the 30,000 emails that are missing.”
* July 28: Himes applauded the choice of three Republican senators to vote against the GOP Healthcare plan.

Richard Blumenthal, US Senator

* June 29: Blumenthal announced his support for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, a $640 billion budget that will now head to the full Senate for consideration next month. It calls for nearly $40 billion more in defense spending than Trump’s proposed budget.
* July 10: Blumenthal announced his plans to introduce a bill that requires all new cars to be equipped with an alert that directs the driver to check the back seat before leaving the vehicle. This bill is intended to stop the death of children in overheating cars.
* August 1: Blumenthal introduced the Used Car Safety Recall Repair Act, which requires used car dealers to repair any outstanding safety recalls in used automobiles prior to selling or leasing them.
* August 4: Blumenthal recently introduced the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act. The act passed the US Senate. The act expands data collection and information sharing to better prevent and respond to all forms of elder abuse and exploitation. It increases training for federal investigators and prosecutors and calls for the designation of at least one prosecutor in each judicial district to handle cases of elder abuse.

Chris Murphy, US Senator

* July 15: Murphy applauded the passage of the “Honor Our Commitment Act,” which requires the US Department of Veterans Affairs to provide mental health and behavioral health services to former combat veterans who received discharges for misconduct.
* July 26, 2017: Murphy applauded the initiation of the Hartford Line, a commuter rail that will connect Hartford to New Haven and Springfield.
* July 29, 2017: Murphy joined hundreds of health care advocates in Connecticut for a health care rally in light of the GOP’s failure to pass its healthcare plan.
* August 3, 2017: Murphy denounced Secretary of State Tillerson’s refusal to tap into 80 million dollars to counter ISIS and Russian propaganda.
* August 6, 2017: In light of the shooting of Representative Scalise, Murphy introduced the Wounded Officers Recovery Act. It will amend the US Capitol Police Memorial Fund to expand eligibility to include any US Capital Police employee injured in the line of duty.
* August 7, 2017: Murphy applauded the University of Connecticut’s partnership with the US Navy on a new program to train students in undersea engineering. He has helped to secure the grant that makes this program possible.

July 24th Override of Malloy’s veto of Legislation Changing of Affordable Housing Laws

* On July 24th, Connecticut’s State Legislature overrode Governor Malloy’s veto of legislation that repeals affordable housing laws. Current law states that if less than 10 percent of a town’s housing stock is guaranteed by a deed restriction, a developer can override local zoning to build mixed-income housing. At least 30 percent of the new units must be affordable for people making less than 80 percent of the median income. The state legislature attempted to change this law, an action that Malloy vetoed. The Senate and House overrode this veto.

The following table shows how Bob Duff, Carlo Leone, and William Tong voted on July 24th.

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| Bob Duff | Yea (Against Malloy’s Veto) |
| Carlo Leone | Nay (For Malloy’s veto) |
| Tong | Nay (For Malloy’s veto) |

The House overrode Malloy’s veto 101-47. The Senate overrode Malloy’s veto 24-12.