DTC Report June – July 2017

 Attached below is the DTC political briefing for the month of June and early July. Major issues in contention on the federal level include the passage of the GOP healthcare plan through the US Senate, which Blumenthal and Murphy have vigorously opposed. On the state level, William Tong has spearheaded reform into the state’s bail system, while Duff has worked with Republican colleagues to push through a bill reforming the state’s occupational license laws.

Carlo Leone, State Senator

* June 28, 2017: Leone joined with Governor Daniel P. Malloy in celebrating the signing of new legislation to test fully autonomous vehicles in Connecticut. Public Act 17-69 establishes strict standards for their testing and requires participating municipalities to enter into agreements with autonomous vehicle testers.

William Tong, State Representative

* June 3, 2017: William Tong led the House in approving legislation that reforms the state’s bail system, making it fairer and prohibiting the cash-only bond for most people accused of nonviolent misdemeanor crimes. It would limit the number of defendants who are jailed while awaiting trial because of their inability to afford a relatively modest bail or the services of a bail agent.
* June 6, 2017: Tong approved a bill that aims to address “libel bullies,” or individuals who file frivolous lawsuits against news outlets.

Bob Duff, State Senator

* June 8, 2017: Duff applauded the Senate’s approval of a constitutional amendment that would prevent lawmakers from siphoning off money from the state’s Special Transportation Fund to pay for other general budget expenditures.
* June 8, 2017: Duff applauded the State Senate’s passage of a bill that would create a manufacturer’s permit for farm breweries and allow them to advertise their product as “Connecticut Craft Beer.”
* June 16, 2017: Duff applauded the expansion of GKN Aerospace into Wallingford. GKN Aerospace is an international company that produces aerospace components for public and private sectors.
* July 7, 2017: Duff and Republican Senator Kevin Witkos pushed through a bill removing barriers to employment by phasing out occupational licenses for jobs that do not have educational or professional prerequisites.

Chris Murphy, US Senator

* July 3, 2017: Murphy introduced a bill with Representative Elizabeth Etsy to create a National Green Bank to provide financing support to regional, state, and municipal green banks. These green banks fund clean energy and energy efficient projects across the US.
* July 7, 2017: Murphy applauded Connecticut Attorney General Jepsen’s suing of Betsy DeVos for her decision to suspend rules that were meant to protect students from abuse by for-profit colleges.
* July 8, 2017: Murphy denounced Trumpcare, stating that it would cause the US to have “1.45 million fewer jobs by 2027, [cause] every state except one [to] have fewer jobs and a weaker economy [and cause Connecticut to] lose nearly 30,000 jobs alone.”

Richard Blumenthal, US Senator

* June 28, 2017: Blumenthal partnered with Senator Cory Booker to push forth the Reverse Mass Incarceration Act, which would create new incentives for states that decrease incarceration while keeping down crime.
* July 5, 2017: Blumenthal stated that there was a dire need to use economic sanctions, diplomacy, and credible military capability to deter North Korea from continuing ICBM development in light of its recent missile tests.

Jim Himes, US Representative

* June 9, 2017: Himes denounced the passage of the Financial CHOICE Act through the House of Representatives, a GOP bill that will dismantle the most important aspects of the Dodd-Frank Act.
* June 14, 2017: In the wake of the shooting of Representative Scalise, Himes stood with Republican representative Martha McSally to talk about how to tone down aggressive and hateful rhetoric that contributes to a culture of violence.
* June 19, 2017: Himes stated that there was a need to resist calls to draw conclusions about the outcome of the Russia investigations while they are still ongoing.
* July 8, 2017: Himes stated that there was not enough forcefulness when dealing with Russia’s interference in the US presidential elections.