

## Senate Democratic Leaders Hold Press Conference Outlining Healthcare Affordability Priorities

Source: CT Hospital Association

This week, Connecticut Senate Democrats held a series of press conferences. On Wednesday, February 21 the caucus focused on healthcare priorities for the session. Caucus leaders, including Senate President Pro Tempore Martin M. Looney (D-New Haven) and Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff (D-Norwalk), highlighted proposals to address the safety of home care workers, increase prescription drug affordability, and expand the state's paid sick leave program.

Senator Saud Anwar (D-South Windsor) and Senator Martha Marx (D-New London) outlined [\*\*SB 1, An Act Concerning the Health and Safety of Connecticut Residents\*\*](#). The "aircraft carrier" bill will contain multiple legislative proposals, including policies addressing safety for home health workers. Sen. Anwar and Sen. Marx discussed the focus on increasing safety following the death of Joyce Grayson, a visiting nurse who was murdered last year during an at-home visit. Sen. Marx called for increased transparency to give workers information about whether a patient has a history of violence or arrests so that they know the circumstances before entering a home. She also called for more workforce training specific to home care settings, mandatory reporting, safety-focused technology, and grants to support investments in increasing safety measures. Sen. Anwar highlighted additional policies contained in SB 1, including a Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) step therapy project, efforts to increase resiliency to prevent cyberattacks targeting hospitals, the establishment of a task force to address the nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH) epidemic, and an insurance coverage requirement for coronary calcium scans.

Senator Matt Lesser (D-Middletown) unveiled details about [\*\*SB 8, An Act Concerning Drug Affordability\*\*](#). He discussed working to bring in more affordable prescription drugs from Canada, working with hospitals and drug manufacturers to address drug shortages and prevent deficiencies before they happen, establishing a prescription drug advisory board, and continuing to build on the state's efforts to increase access to affordable insulin.

Senator Looney also detailed [\*\*SB 7, An Act Concerning Connecticut Paid Sick Days\*\*](#), which would expand the state's paid leave law to cover all private sector employees in Connecticut. Currently, the law covers employers in the private sector with more than 50 employees. SB 7 would apply to all employers with one or more workers.

[Click here](#) to watch the press conference on Connecticut Network.