

# Office of the State Treasurer

## *At a Glance*

**ERICK RUSSELL, State Treasurer**

**Sarah K. Sanders, Deputy State Treasurer**

**Established – 1638**

**Statutory authority – State Constitution**

**Central office – 165 Capitol Avenue – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Hartford, CT 06106**

**Number of full-time employees as of June 30, 2024 – 130**

### **Assets managed as of June 30, 2024**

**Pension Plans and Trust Funds: \$ 56,775,033,671**

**Short-Term Investment Fund: \$ 17,993,873,544**

### **Fiduciary assets as of June 30, 2024**

**Connecticut Higher Education Trust: \$ 5,984,674,018**

**ABLE CT: \$ 6,035,836**

### **Recurring operating expenses**

**General Fund: \$ 3,425,166**

**Bond Funds: \$ 89,239,624**

**Pension Plans and Trust Funds: \$ 174,747,634**

**Second Injury Fund: \$ 8,011,394**

**Unclaimed Property Fund: \$ 7,346,929**

**Short-Term Investment Fund: \$ 1,690,626**

**Total abandoned property receipts: \$ 242,560,612**

**Amount returned to owners: \$ 81,936,530**

***Organizational structure – Executive Office; Cash Management Division; Debt Management Division; Management Services Division; Pension Funds Management Division; Second Injury Fund Division; and Unclaimed Property Division.***

## **Mission**

***To serve as the premier Treasurer’s Office in the nation through effective financial management of public resources, high standards of professionalism and integrity, and expansion of opportunity for the residents and businesses of Connecticut.***

## **Statutory Authority**

The Office of the Treasurer was established following the adoption of the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut in 1638. As described in Article Four, Section 22 of the Connecticut State Constitution, the Treasurer shall receive all funds belonging to the State and disburse the same

only as may be directed by law. Chapter 32 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires the Treasurer to manage the State's cash transactions, issue and manage the State's debt, act as principal fiduciary for six State pension and twelve State trust funds, administer the Second Injury Fund, and safeguard assets escheated to the State and return such assets to the rightful owners.

Connecticut General Statutes outline that the State Treasurer serves as a member, ex-officio member, or can designate a representative, on several State boards and commissions. The Treasurer serves on the following boards, commissions and legislatively-mandated committees: Banking Commission, State Bond Commission, Connecticut Airport Authority, Connecticut Data Analysis Technology Advisory Board, Early Childhood Care and Education Fund Advisory Commission, Connecticut Green Bank, Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority, Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority, Connecticut Higher Education Trust Advisory Committee, Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, Connecticut Innovations, Community Investment Fund 2030 Board, Connecticut Lottery Corporation, Connecticut Port Authority, Connecticut Retirement Security Authority, Family and Medical Leave Insurance Authority, Finance Advisory Committee, Investment Advisory Council, Municipal Accountability Review Board, Nitrogen Credit Advisory Board, Social Equity Council, Standardization Committee, State Employees' Retirement Commission, Connecticut Student Loan Foundation and Teachers' Retirement Board, Governor's Council on Women and Girls.

### **Treasurer Russell - Brief Biography**

Treasurer Erick Russell was sworn in as Connecticut's 84th State Treasurer on January 4, 2023. He is currently serving his first term. Born and raised in New Haven, he was the first in his family to graduate college, earning a bachelor's degree from the University of New Haven and a law degree from the University of Connecticut School of Law. After law school, Russell joined the prestigious Connecticut law firm of Pullman & Comley where he was a partner in the firm's Public and Private Finance Group. Russell represented towns, cities, and the state in financing infrastructure projects, managing debt and restructuring pension obligations. As Treasurer, Russell administers Connecticut's pension funds holding more than \$56 billion in assets, oversees the state's debt and cash management, collects and returns unclaimed property, and manages the Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET), a 529 plan that helps students and families save for higher education. In July 2023, Russell launched CT Baby Bonds, a first-of-its-kind program that invests \$3,200 on behalf of each Connecticut child born into poverty. In addition to his professional responsibilities, Russell has embraced the role of mentor, particularly for young Black and LGBTQ+ people. In 2022, he became the first Black out LGBTQ+ person in American history to be elected to statewide office. Russell continues to live in New Haven with his husband, Christopher Lyddy.

### **Public Service**

The Treasurer is the chief elected financial officer of the State. The Office of the Treasurer includes an Executive Office and six divisions, each with specific responsibilities: Cash Management, Debt Management, Management Services, Pension Funds Management, the Second Injury Fund, and Unclaimed Property. The Treasurer is responsible for the safe custody of the property and money belonging to the State by receiving all money, making disbursements as

directed by statute, and managing, borrowing, and investing funds. The Treasurer is the principal fiduciary of each of the Connecticut Retirement Plans and Trust Funds (CRPTF) and, as such, is responsible for prudently investing the State's pension and trust fund assets. The Cash Management Division also manages the Short-Term Investment Fund, which serves as an investment vehicle for the operating cash of the State Treasury, state agencies and authorities, municipalities, and other political subdivisions of the State. As the public finance arm of state government, the Treasury is responsible for issuing and managing the State's debt in a vigilant and cost-effective manner.

The Executive Office is responsible for overall policy, planning, and general administration to enhance the financial integrity and soundness of Treasury operations within each division, providing direction and leadership in carrying out Treasury functions and fostering the economic well-being of the State and its residents and businesses within the confines of fiduciary standards. The Executive Office also administers the Treasury's corporate governance program, which was developed in accordance with its fiduciary duty to protect and grow the value of the State's pension and trust fund investments; promotes, in accordance with state law, environmental, social, and governance best practices among the companies in which it invests and with its financial service providers; and serves as a catalyst and advocate for the financial fitness of residents across the State. Other specific activities include legislative affairs, public information and community outreach, legal services, compliance, and financial reporting. The Treasurer is Trustee of the Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET), the state's 529 college savings program and the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) savings program. The Executive Office provides overall supervision of these savings programs as managed by financial service providers.

## **Notable Achievements**

Since entering office in January of 2023, Treasurer Russell has focused on supporting the strong financial position of the state, including expanding economic opportunity for residents, and maximizing the performance of investments overseen by the agency.

Budgetary reforms in recent years have stabilized Connecticut's finances and resulted in record surpluses, the Budget Reserve Fund (BRF) being filled to capacity, and billions in additional contributions to the State's pension funds. The Office of the Treasurer supported the extension of those reforms, known as the fiscal guardrails, which were approved by the legislature in February. At the end of FY2024, for a historic fourth year in a row, the BRF grew and exceeded the new statutory limit of 18%. In September and December of 2023, following the release of the State's financial statements for FY2023, the Treasurer continued to responsibly pay down long-term unfunded pension liabilities by directing the excess combined BRF amount of \$1.9 billion for that purpose, allocating \$828.1 million to Teachers' Retirement Fund and \$1.05 billion to the State Employees' Retirement Fund.

Reforms put in place in recent years to maximize investment performance in the State's pension funds continued to produce positive results. The CRPTF generated net investment results of 11.52% for FY2024. Paired with the additional contributions made into the funds, \$6.7 billion in assets were added during FY2024.

In May of 2024, Treasurer Russell hosted the 2024 Public Finance Outlook Conference in New Haven. The event brought together municipal leaders and financial experts from across the state to discuss broad economic trends and specific programs designed to help towns and cities manage local budgets.

A \$450 million General Obligation (GO) Bond sale held several weeks later achieved the lowest interest rate spread in 13 years on the 20-year tax-exempt bonds, demonstrating sustained high interest among investors. In advance of the sale, Moody's Investors Service and Fitch Ratings, two of the four major bond rating agencies, elevated their outlook of Connecticut's Bonds from "Stable" to "Positive."

The state's outstanding General Obligation GAAP Bonds were retired early in FY2024. The move, which was proposed by Governor Ned Lamont and included in that year's bipartisan state budget, will avoid debt service costs of \$238 million over the next five fiscal years. In addition, refinancing of existing bonds during FY2024 resulted in \$61.6 million savings for taxpayers over the life of the bonds.

The Office of the Treasurer worked for the successful passage of two key pieces of legislation during the year. The first lowered debt and created savings in the Special Transportation Fund by utilizing surplus dollars in the Fund to retire outstanding debt early, eliminating years of interest costs without jeopardizing ongoing operational readiness. The second implemented additional improvements to the agency's Unclaimed Property program. The new law allows for expanded data sharing, sets rules for abandoned or lost virtual currency, and gives the agency new tools to communicate with rightful owners when they have funds waiting to be returned.

Also, within the agency, technological and process improvements have streamlined the process of returning unclaimed property to its rightful owners. Many claims can now be processed automatically, eliminating the need for some physical documentation, and freeing up staff resources to focus on more complex claims.

The beginning of FY2024 was marked by the historic launch of CT Baby Bonds, a first-of-its-kind initiative to combat generational poverty and expand economic opportunity. After securing a funding solution for the program in May 2023, the program saw its first participants born beginning July 1, 2023. An estimated 15,000-16,000 Connecticut children will be automatically enrolled each year.

In August of 2023, Treasurer Russell signed the documents officially creating the Connecticut Baby Bond Trust, depositing \$398 million in funds that will provide \$3,200 initial investments for each Connecticut baby whose birth is covered by HUSKY, the State's Medicaid program. Those funds have been invested and have grown to \$440.9 million as of June 30, 2024. The funds will continue to generate earnings that participants can use later in life for purposes designed to build personal wealth, including purchasing a home, starting or investing in a local business, paying for education or job training, or saving for retirement.

Implementation and outreach for the program have been ongoing. A partnership was announced with the Community Health Center Association of Connecticut to help families learn

about the program and understand its potential impact. Across the state, community events, media appearances, and informational sessions have been raising awareness for CT Baby Bonds among the public as strategic, long-term program design continued in collaboration with families, local leaders, state government, community organizations, nonprofits, health care facilities, philanthropy, and other stakeholders.

The Office of the Treasurer is committed to supporting a strong and inclusive economic future for Connecticut.

## **Highlights Fiscal Year 2024**

During FY2024, achievements at the Office of the Treasurer that will benefit state residents and businesses included:

**CT Baby Bonds**— Connecticut’s landmark CT Baby Bonds program launched on July 1, 2023. The innovative funding solution achieved in the months prior allowed for 12 years of the program to be funded upfront following the legal creation of the Connecticut Baby Bonds Trust. An estimated 15,000-16,000 Connecticut children will be enrolled in the program each year and have \$3,200 invested on their behalf to support wealth-building activities when they are between 18-30 years old.

**Connecticut’s Pension Funds**—The CRPTF generated net investment results of 11.52% for FY2024 and posted an unaudited net asset value of \$56.8 billion as of June 30, 2024, an increase of approximately \$6.7 billion during the fiscal year. Connecticut’s three largest pension plans; the Teachers’ Retirement System, State Employees’ Retirement System, and Municipal Employees’ Retirement System had assets of \$26.0 billion, \$23.3 billion, and \$3.5 billion, respectively.

**Municipal Investment Trust Fund (MUNI Trust)**— The Office developed the new Municipal Investment Trust Fund (MUNI Trust) program, which provides Connecticut municipalities the option to invest municipal retirement funds through the Office of the Treasurer while keeping their own benefit administration. The program provides access to professional investment management with reduced investment fees due to economies of scale, as well as access to several types of investments that may not otherwise be feasible. The program became effective July 1, 2024.

**Short-Term Investment Fund Outperforms Benchmark**—The Short-Term Investment Fund (STIF) had a total annual return of 5.54% in FY2024, while its benchmark returned 5.34%. Consequently, STIF investors earned an additional \$37 million in interest income. The STIF’s superior performance has earned State and local governments and their taxpayers an additional \$147 million over the last ten years.

**Credit Rating Outlook Upgrades**— Moody’s Investors Service and Fitch Ratings, two of the four major bond rating agencies, elevated their outlook of Connecticut’s Bonds from “Stable” to “Positive.” These improved outlooks are not credit rating upgrades but are a signal to investors that both rating agencies see positive trends and will be reviewing the State’s credit ratings for possible upgrades within the next 18-24 months.

**Public Finance Outlook Conference**— In May, the agency convened the 2024 Connecticut Public Finance Outlook Conference, bringing together municipal leaders and financial professionals to discuss local and global economic trends, and learn about programs administered by the Office of the Treasurer intended to save money, or ease operating challenges, for cities and towns.

**Unclaimed Property Division Returned \$82 Million to Rightful Owners, Added \$139 Million to the General Fund**—Unclaimed property receipts totaled \$242.5 million during FY2024. Of the total, the Office deposited \$139 million into the State’s General Fund and transferred \$14.4 million to the Citizens’ Election Fund. The Office returned \$82 million to 44,065 rightful owners, which is \$10 million more than the previous year in unclaimed assets.

**Second Injury Fund Assessment Rates Remain Unchanged**—The Second Injury Fund continues to maintain the assessment rates for Connecticut businesses at their lowest levels.

**Unfunded Liabilities for Injured Workers Continue to Decline**—Unfunded liabilities in the Second Injury Fund for injured workers during FY2024 decreased 9.2% from \$185 million to \$168 million. The Second Injury Fund’s open claim inventory increased from 2,788 to 2,882 as of June 30, 2024.

**Assets Recovered from Claims and Litigation**— During FY2024, the Office of the Treasurer recovered \$1.4 million in class action lawsuits. The Office has regained approximately \$68.5 million since 2000 by closely monitoring and participating in class action settlements.

**Connecticut Higher Education Trust ("CHET") 529 Program Experiences Steady Growth** — The CHET program continued its steady growth, surpassing \$5.9 billion in assets under management and more than 225,534 accounts. Since CHET's transition to Fidelity in February 2021, more than \$748.6 million in qualified withdrawals in CHET Direct have been redeemed to cover higher education costs for students attending nearly every public and private college in Connecticut and several out-of-state schools.

**CHET Baby Scholars** — CHET Baby Scholars continued as a flagship program supporting opening college savings accounts for newborns in Connecticut. The program was initially funded in 2014 with \$4.4 million from the Connecticut Student Loan Foundation. By June of 2021, all \$4.4 million had been distributed to accounts for Connecticut's newborns, and starting July 1, 2021, the program rules were amended to provide for \$100 funding for any CHET account opened prior to child's first birthday or within the first year of adoption. The financing of the amended program is supported from fees generated from the 529 program management. As of June 30, 2023, \$1,699,350 has been paid out to eligible new CHET 529 accounts.

**CHET College Scholarships Awarded**—CHET also continued the annual Dream Big! Competition for in-state K-12 students, running for thirteen consecutive years. The Dream Big! competition received a total of 31,712 entries and has awarded a total of \$1,457,724 since inception. In 2021, Fidelity merged the CHET Advance Scholarship and CHET Dream Big! Competition to one larger program. The most recent 2023 campaign of the CHET Dream Big! Competition selected 363 winners from 2,973 entries, with a total of \$372,000 awarded to students and an additional \$75,000 in technology packages awarded to schools.

**ABLE CT 529 Program Experiences Steady Growth**—The ABLE program continued its steady growth, surpassing \$6.0 million in assets under management and 671 accounts.

**Financial Reports Receive Excellence Awards**—The Government Finance Officers Association (“GFOA”) of the United States and Canada awarded the Treasury *Certificates of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting* for the annual comprehensive financial reports for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2023. The Treasury received the GFOA’s annual award for its financial reports for STIF. The FY2023 certificate marks the 24<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of this distinction.

## **Cash Management Division**

**Short-Term Investment Fund**—For FY2024, the STIF achieved a total annual return of 5.54%, exceeding its primary benchmark by 20 basis points (0.20%), earning an additional \$37.0 million in interest income for Connecticut’s agencies, authorities, municipalities and their taxpayers during the fiscal year.

At the end of FY2024, the STIF had \$18.0 billion in assets under management. Municipalities had 624 active accounts, an increase of 38 accounts from the prior fiscal year. S&P Global Ratings reaffirmed the STIF’s AAAM rating, the highest rating available.

**Community Bank and Credit Union Initiative**—Pursuant to Conn. General Statute Section 3-24k, the Treasury continued the Community Bank and Credit Union Initiative to support Connecticut-based banks and credit unions—with assets not exceeding \$2 billion—through investments in their certificates of deposit. During FY2024, a monthly competitive bidding process was held through which \$40.5 million was invested at an average interest rate of 5.41%. Since inception, 13 banks and one credit union have signed up for the initiative with \$731.1 million invested at an average yield of 2.30% through June 30, 2024.

**Cash Management Operations**—The Division works with State agencies to improve the efficiency of the State’s cash management program by accelerating receipts via electronic payments and the internet, streamlining the flow of funds between concentration accounts and individual disbursement accounts to reduce manual processes, increase invested funds, and speed the flow of banking information to State agencies.

## **Debt Management Division**

During FY2024, the Division administered the State’s \$25.7 billion debt portfolio and managed the issuance of \$2.9 billion, which included \$2.2 billion of new money bonds to fund the State’s capital programs, including local school construction, economic development initiatives, municipal aid, transportation infrastructure, and continued improvements at the University of Connecticut. These projects help to bolster local economies throughout the State.

The remaining bonds issued in FY2024 were to refinance higher interest rate bonds totaling \$658.7 million. These refinancings were:

- \$176.1 million for the General Obligation program, achieving aggregate debt service savings of \$24.4 million over the remaining life of the bonds;
- \$349.0 million for the Special Tax Obligation (Transportation) program, achieving aggregate debt service savings of \$26.4 million over the remaining life of the bonds; and
- \$133.5 million for the UCONN 2000 program, achieving aggregate debt service savings of \$10.8 million over the remaining life of the bonds.

In addition to the refundings noted above, the Division continued its prudent management of the State’s debt portfolio through two initiatives receiving bipartisan legislative approval. First, the State’s outstanding General Obligation GAAP Bonds were retired early with \$211.7 million in 2023 surplus funds. These bonds were fully redeemed on their October 15, 2023, call date and are now removed from Connecticut’s balance sheet. As a result, \$27.1 million in interest costs will be avoided. Second, the legislature approved a proposal to reduce outstanding debt in the Special Transportation Fund expected to result in debt service reductions of over \$22 million in Fiscal Year 2025 and over \$60 million a year for the subsequent nine years. Certain outstanding STO bonds will be paid off early from a portion of the surplus in the Special Transportation Fund. The result will be annual cost savings from outstanding bonds maturing over the next ten years being removed from the State’s balance sheet, freeing up hundreds of millions of dollars that can be used to finance future transportation projects.

Alongside prudent debt management, Connecticut continued to bolster its fiscal health including budget surpluses, deposits to the Budget Reserve Fund, and additional contributions to the State’s two major pension systems. Building on the credit rating upgrades that were achieved in FY2023, (S&P Global Ratings raised its credit rating on the State’s general obligation from “A+” to “AA-” and Kroll Bond Ratings raised its credit rating from “AA” to “AA+”), in May 2024, Moody’s Investors Service and Fitch Ratings affirmed their credit ratings of the State’s General Obligation Bonds (Aa3 and AA- respectively), but changed their outlooks from “stable” to “positive.” This outlook change sends a signal to investors that both rating agencies see positive trends and will be reviewing the State’s credit ratings for possible upgrades within the next 18-24 months.

Finally, the Debt Management Division implemented succession planning initiatives by hiring a Debt Management Specialist who is shadowing all four of the State’s major debt programs, and an Assistant Treasurer who would be taking over for the retiring Assistant Treasurer for Debt Management.

## **Pension Funds Management Division**

The two largest pension plans in the CRPTF, the Teachers' Retirement Fund ("TERF") and the State Employees' Retirement Fund ("SERF"), generated net investment results of 11.50% and 11.52% respectively for FY2024. For the longer-term period of 10-years, ending June 30, 2024, both the TERF and the SERF plans generated net investment results of 6.55% and 6.65%, respectively, slightly below the plans' composite benchmark return.

The Investment Advisory Council (IAC) and CRPTF continued to make progress towards the long-term asset allocation policy adopted in September 2022 through a disciplined and

consistent deployment of capital to private markets asset classes. During FY2024, 23 managers were added to the private market asset classes approximating nearly \$4.0 billion in commitments.

The Connecticut Inclusive Investment Initiative (Ci<sup>3</sup>) (formerly The Connecticut Horizon Program) is comprised of Ci<sup>3</sup> Manager-of-Managers partners who oversee sub-managers approximating \$2.3 billion as of June 30, 2024. The invested capital with the emerging and diverse investment managers totaled \$1.0 billion across the various public asset classes, and \$1.3 billion for the private asset classes.

**Corporate Governance**—The Treasury’s corporate governance activities are guided by the core principle that the exercise of shareholder rights — either through the voting of proxies or the filing of shareholder resolutions — is central to the fiduciary obligation to enhance shareholder value. The CRPTF’s proxy voting guidelines, as set forth in its Investment Policy Statement, detail the standards governing the way proxies are to be voted on an array of issues — including election of directors, executive compensation, governance best practices, labor standards and other environmental, social, and governance issues. These issues have financial implications for the long-term shareholder value of the CRPTF’s investments, which is why the voting of proxies is considered a plan asset.

During FY2024, the Treasury was involved in the following shareholder activities:

- The CRPTF filed five shareholder resolutions for the 2024 proxy season with a focus on just transition planning, greenhouse gas emissions targets, and diversity. Agreements were reached at all five companies where resolutions were filed, leading to withdrawal of these resolutions filed with CSX, Norfolk Southern, Carnival, Texas Instruments, and Bentley Systems.
- In addition, the Investment Advisory Council approved recommended updates to the Proxy Voting Guidelines that included changes to provisions on diversity, climate, human capital, health, and disability.

**Investment Restrictions**— The Treasurer establishes policies restricting investment based on considerations of foreign policy, environmental, social and other factors, and their implications for the CRPTF. Since December 3, 2019, the Office of the Treasurer has restricted investments in certain civilian firearms manufacturers and, since March 1, 2022, the office has restricted investments in Russian-domiciled companies and Russian sovereign debt.

In addition, the Treasurer adheres to the requirements of two laws specific to companies doing business in Sudan and Iran. Connecticut’s Iran law, set forth in Connecticut General Statutes Section 3-13g, authorizes the Treasurer to restrict investment in companies doing business in Iran. As of June 30, 2024, the Treasury prohibited direct investment in fifty-five companies. Connecticut’s Sudan law, adopted in 2006 and set forth in Connecticut General Statutes Section 3-21e, which authorizes the Treasurer to restrict investment in companies doing business in Sudan. As of June 30, 2024, the Treasury prohibited direct investment in 41 companies. The Treasury publishes the investment restrictions annually on the Treasury website.

## **Second Injury Fund Division**

The Second Injury Fund provided \$17 million in indemnity, medical, and settlement payments to injured workers during FY2024. The number of injured workers receiving bi-weekly benefits (indemnity payments only) decreased from 173 to 162 during the fiscal year.

The Second Injury Fund continues to maintain the assessment rates for insured employers and self-insured employers at their lowest levels. The rate for insured employers is at 2.25% and the rate for self-insured employers at 2.75%.

As of June 30, 2024, the Second Injury Fund's open claim inventory was 2,882. The unfunded liabilities of the Second Injury Fund for all open claims as of June 30, 2024, have decreased by 9.2% for the fiscal year from \$185 million to \$168 million.

## **Unclaimed Property Division**

The Division returned \$82 million in unclaimed property to 44,065 rightful owners during FY2024. In addition, the division received \$242.5 million in unclaimed property—\$174.8 million in receipts from holders, \$8.4 million from examination of holder records, and \$59.3 million from securities sold in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 3-68a(d). Connecticut General Statutes Section 3-69a(2) required the Division to deposit \$14.4 million into the Citizens' Election Fund and the balance into the General Fund.

During FY2024, 1.8 million searches for abandoned property were performed through the unclaimed property website, 172,049 claims were initiated, and the division responded to 42,014 inquires via the telephone. As of June 30, 2024, the Unclaimed Property database contains \$1.6 billion in escheated property for approximately 10.6 million identified owners.

## **Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET) 529 Program**

The Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET) transitioned to a new program manager, Fidelity Investments, for both the CHET Direct-sold and CHET Advisor-sold programs in the first quarter of calendar year 2021. Fidelity continues to improve the investment lineup, product choices, and user experience for CHET participants. CHET surpassed \$5.9 billion in assets under management and more than 225,534 accounts in two trust plans: CHET Direct (marketed directly to individuals) and CHET Advisor (available through financial advisors).

The CHET Direct plan managed by Fidelity increased the number of accounts over the previous year from 174,632 on June 30, 2023, to 191,280, and total assets reached \$4.99 billion on June 30, 2024. The CHET Advisor plan, also managed by Fidelity, increased the number of accounts from 33,518 to 34,254 with total assets of \$998.3 million in the previous year.

## **Achieving A Better Life Experience Savings Program ("ABLE CT")**

The Office of the Treasurer launched Connecticut's Achieving a Better Life Experience Savings Program ("ABLE CT") on October 15, 2020. ABLE CT is implemented through the National ABLE Alliance, a consortium of 18 states working together to offer individual ABLE

programs to persons with disabilities in their respective states. The ABLE CT plan manager is Ascensus College Savings Recordkeeping Services, LLC. ABLE CT allows individuals living with a disability or their legal guardian the opportunity to save for qualified disability expenses using a federally tax-advantaged savings plan.

As of June 30, 2024, the ABLE CT program increased the number of accounts over the previous year from 446 to 671 accounts with total assets of \$3.3 million in the previous year to \$6 million at the end of current fiscal year.

## **Information Reported as Required by State Statute**

**Affirmative Action**—The Office of the Treasurer’s bi-annual affirmative action program, submitted in compliance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 46a-78 to the State Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, was disapproved by the Commission. However, the Treasury pledges to continue making every good-faith effort to achieve all objectives, goals, and timetables in its Affirmative Action Plan. Contracts, leases, and purchase orders of the Treasury contain clauses requiring non-discrimination, and vendors are required to certify the same. The Office of the Treasurer, under the leadership of Treasurer Russell, met and overachieved its annual Set-Aside Program goals.