



# Governor Ned Lamont

## Fact Sheet: 2025 Legislative Proposal

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### SENATE BILL 1245

#### AN ACT ESTABLISHING A RESILIENT CONNECTICUT STRATEGY

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### The Current Situation

Climate change is real. It's happening and we can act. Heat and flooding records are breaking year after year in big swings that we aren't prepared for:

- July 2023 to June 2024 was the wettest year on record for Connecticut. Last year was the hottest year and hottest summer on record for Hartford.
- In 2022, all Connecticut counties were designated as primary natural disaster areas due to the drought<sup>i</sup>.
- In 2023, 27 farms lost about \$21 million of sales revenue due to flooding<sup>ii</sup>.
- In January 2024, rain almost drove the Fitchville Pond Dam to failure, prompting evacuations.
- In August 2024 flash floods brought 10–14 inches of rain in less than 6 hours in Fairfield, Litchfield, and New Haven counties, resulting in 3 deaths and nearly \$300 million in damage to local and state infrastructure.

Mitigation and adaptation continue to be critical actions we must take to protect Connecticut's residents, businesses, infrastructure, and environment.

### Governor Lamont's Solution

Building from last year, we must make changes to the way we prepare and respond to the impacts of climate change by directing development to less risky areas, accounting for these intense events in our plans, educating consumers on their flood risks and insurance options, modernizing our capital infrastructure data, and adding tools to the municipal toolbox. Combined, these efforts increase local, regional, and state coordination.



Require formal acknowledgement of availability of flood insurance and if the customer declined to purchase a flood policy. It also creates notice on mortgage availability of flood insurance.

Add a flood disclosure provision on the existing residential condition report. Sellers and landlords will be required to provide prospective buyers and renters with information about the property's previous flood history, including whether previous occupants sought flood insurance payouts, federal disaster assistance, or experienced known of flooding. These requirements are already in effect in other flood-prone states: New York, New Jersey, Texas, and Louisiana.

Expand the existing requirement in the Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CCMA) for towns to submit a copy of a coastal site plan for any activity proposed within the highest risk FEMA-mapped flood zones or on sites that contain tidal wetlands, beaches, or dunes to the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The referral timeline remains the same. The existing exemption for the referral of coastal site plans for the construction of new single-family homes will be removed.

Prevent intensification of residential use in the highest-risk FEMA-mapped flood zone by prohibiting the use of state funds to build new or expanded residential structures or when such structures are or would be located in the highest risk mapped flood zones.

Clarify how municipal evacuation and hazard mitigation plans should consider sea level rise and require that the analysis be available in GIS. Actions listed in these plans support grants for federal funding.

Require municipalities to geolocate their culverts and bridges and share with the relevant state agencies. This complete dataset will allow comparison to flood and stormwater modeling.

Clarify how climate change or resiliency projects relate to local capital funding streams, the municipal reserve funds, and town aid road.

Amend the local POCD statutes to require a climate change vulnerability assessment to specify land use strategies that reduce or avoid risks. The POCD would also provide specific strategies to reduce or avoid risk; and coordination with other local and regional plans. Identifying specific areas supports use of local zoning options such as overlay zones, floating zones, transfer of development rights, or other tools. Actions listed in these plans support grants for state and federal funding. Other states in the region also require climate change to be in local comprehensive plans: New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Maine.

Amend the regional POCD statute to incorporate changes from local POCDs, as amended by integrating long-range transportation, hazard mitigation, evacuation, and land use planning. It will also require the creation of geospatial information for critical infrastructure to bridge the gap between land use and critical infrastructure planning.

Update the state POCD statute to include integrated planning as it relates to the impacts of climate change on our infrastructure, natural resources, and land use.

Require our future State Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) to continue considering the impacts of climate change. Connecticut's current HMP, like all other New England states, incorporates the risks from climate change, and support funding applications.

Increase the authority of local zoning regulations to mitigate and avoid negative impacts from climate change and provide for a transfer of development rights (TDR) program. TDR will now be available to municipalities, permitting a multi-town, or regional entity like a Council of Governments, land trust, or other institution to create and hold a 'land bank' to increase the program's flexibility and address conservation and development for a greater area.

Require that if and upon the update to the state water plan, such plan will consider past conditions and predictions of future temperature and precipitation in its consideration for water quality and water supply planning.

Require the Department of Public Health (DPH), DEEP, and the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to review and, if necessary, update water supply regulations to account for climate change. DPH and DEEP must review and update regulations or permitting processes for sewage disposal to account for climate change.

Create an infrastructure financing tool, like a tax increment financing district, adding 'Resiliency Improvement Districts' as an option for municipalities to construct or improve infrastructure to reduce or avoid the impacts from climate change.

Remove the joint application requirement for TDR.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2022/10-2022/Governor-Lamont-Announces-Farmers-in-All-Eight-Connecticut-Counties-Now-Eligible-for-Disaster>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/News/2023/20230724-agricultural-disaster-declaration-request.pdf>