



State of Connecticut
Office of Governor Ned Lamont

BILL NOTIFICATION 2026-2

March 3, 2026

Governor Lamont signed the following legislation of the 2026 Regular Session, IN THE ORIGINAL, on March 3:

SB 299 AN ACT CONCERNING REDEMPTION OF OUT-OF-STATE BEVERAGE CONTAINERS.

Governor Lamont signed and line-item vetoed the following legislation of the 2026 Regular Session, IN THE ORIGINAL, on March 3:

SB 298 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REALLOCATION OF CERTAIN STATE FUNDS AND VARIOUS PROVISIONS RELATING TO EDUCATION, PUBLIC SAFETY, GENERAL GOVERNMENT, ELECTIONS, INTERMEDIATE CARE FACILITIES AND WAREHOUSE DISTRIBUTION CENTERS.

Sections 5(a), 6, 7, 11, 12, and 13 have been line-item vetoed. The line-item veto message for this bill can be found on page 2 of this document.

As of this date, the governor has signed 2 bills and signed and line-item vetoed 1 bill of the 2026 Regular Session.



Ned Lamont
GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

March 3, 2026

The Honorable Stephanie Thomas
Secretary of the State
State Capitol
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Madam Secretary:

Pursuant to Article Fourth, Section 16 of the Constitution of the State of Connecticut, which authorizes the Governor to disapprove distinct items of appropriation contained in any bill while approving the remainder, I hereby approve Senate Bill No. 298, *An Act Concerning the Reallocation of Certain State Funds and Various Provisions Relating to Education, Public Safety, General Government, Elections, Intermediate Care Facilities and Warehouse Distribution Centers*, except for the specific items of appropriation listed below, which I return without my approval.

Article Fourth, Section 16 permits the Governor to veto "items of appropriation" without rejecting an entire measure. The provisions identified below constitute distinct, severable appropriations of specified dollar amounts directed to particular entities or purposes. Accordingly, they are subject to line-item veto authority.

Let me be clear at the outset: my objection is not to the missions of the organizations named in these sections, nor to the goals the legislature seeks to advance. Many of these programs do meaningful work in communities across our state.

My objection is to the process.

Over the past year, Connecticut residents have rightly asked for greater transparency and accountability in how legislatively directed funds — commonly referred to as earmarks — are proposed, reviewed, and distributed. When taxpayer dollars are set aside for specific entities outside of a competitive or formula-based process, the public deserves to know exactly how and why those decisions are made, what standards apply, and what oversight mechanisms are in place.

That is why I introduced House Bill 5039, legislation that would establish clear guardrails for legislatively directed funds. That proposal would require detailed identification of recipients,

defined purposes for the use of funds, reimbursement-based disbursement except in limited circumstances, annual reporting by recipients and agencies, and publication of a public database so taxpayers can see where their money is going.

Those reforms are straightforward. They are reasonable. And they are necessary.

Until meaningful transparency and oversight standards are enacted into law, I will not approve new legislatively directed appropriations embedded in omnibus legislation.

Accordingly, I disapprove the following distinct items of appropriation:

- Section 5(a) – The transfer of \$174,000 from the Department of Education, Other Expenses, to the Department of Economic and Community Development for a grant-in-aid to the New London VFW.
- Section 6 – The direction that \$70,000 of Judicial Department, Other Expenses, be made available for a grant to the Village Initiative Project.
- Section 7 – The direction that not more than \$2,500,000 from the Office of Policy and Management, Other Expenses, be made available for outdoor recreation in the City of Hartford.
- Section 11 – The direction that \$330,000 from the Department of Economic and Community Development, Other Expenses, be made available for a grant to Our Piece of the Pie.
- Section 12 – The direction that \$750,000 in each of FY 2026 and FY 2027 from the Department of Education, Other Expenses, be made available for a teacher residency program operated by the Capitol Region Education Council.
- Section 13 – The direction that \$200,000 from the Department of Education, Other Expenses, be made available for a grant to Free Agent Now, together with the associated non-lapsing carryforward provision.

Each of the foregoing provisions sets aside a specific, identifiable sum for a designated entity or purpose. As such, they constitute distinct items of appropriation and are properly subject to line-item disapproval under the Constitution.

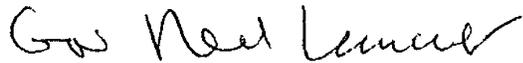
These provisions direct specific sums to particular entities outside of a competitive or formula-driven framework. Approving them without structural reform would perpetuate a system that lacks consistent transparency and enforceable standards.

I hope this action does not overshadow the many important provisions contained in this bill, including strengthening health and safety standards for warehouse workers, safeguarding

our elections from federal interference, and enhancing training for our police officers. I am proud of the work we have done together on these priorities, and I remain committed to continuing that partnership as we move Connecticut forward.

I remain ready to work with the General Assembly to pass meaningful earmark reform. Once we have a clear statutory framework that ensures accountability and protects public trust, I will welcome the opportunity to review future targeted appropriations within that structure. I approve the remainder of Senate Bill No. 298 and return the foregoing items without my approval.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gov Ned Lamont". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ned Lamont
Governor
State of Connecticut