



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
SEC REINVESTMENT/ WORKFORCE COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 15, 2026 Meeting 2:00 P.M.
ZOOM

1) Call to Order, Welcome and Attendance

Chair Ojala Naeem opened the meeting and conducted roll call. The committee did not have a quorum. Members present were:

Ojala Naeem
Corrie Betts
Avery Gaddis
Andréa Hawkins
Kelli-Marie Vallieres

Brandon L. McGee, Jr. began by introducing new staff members, including Attorney Nichelle Mullins, who was introduced as the Council's Chief Legal Officer, and Karraine Moody, who was introduced as the Social Equity Impact Officer.

2) Approval of November 26, 2025 Meeting Minutes for Special Meeting

Because a quorum was not present, the committee did not vote on the prior meeting minutes listed on the agenda. The minutes item was tabled due to lack of quorum.

3) Update on Community Reinvestment and Workforce/Educational Opportunities

Mr. McGee then provided an update on the R2 Community Reinvestment Program, describing it as a \$36 million, three-year statewide investment strategy. He reported that the Council had held four community-based organization information sessions in Bridgeport, Stamford, New Britain, and the New London/Norwich/Windham region, engaging approximately 125 organizations. He also noted that grant managers were being onboarded in partnership with TOW and that work was underway to standardize fiscal compliance and impact measurement across the program.

The discussion also addressed broader workforce development and strategic partnerships. Mr. McGee described three major focus areas: supporting Social Equity Entrepreneurs, strengthening training pathways, and aligning workforce outcomes with the Council's

equity mission. Partners referenced in this work included CBIA and the Hartford Metro Alliance.

A special presentation was then delivered by Kelli-Marie Vallieres, representing the Office of Workforce Strategy. She presented on the Career ConneCT framework and reported that the initiative had utilized \$70 million in ARPA funds, supported 19 community-based organizations and workforce boards, and engaged 34,000 people through intake, with more than 8,000 registered participants. She further reported 80% completion and placement ratios and stated that, of the more than 6,000 individuals served, approximately 4,800 (about 80%) came from Disproportionately Impacted Areas (DIAs). She also highlighted the We Rise reentry program, which served 992 participants and achieved an 80% placement rate.

During discussion, Corrie Betts asked questions about the data related to concentrated poverty census tracts and requested access to the presentation slides. Tiffany Araujo and Caesar Valentin had worked on the participant mapping and DIA data referenced during the presentation.

Mr. McGee also noted that the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NoFO) was targeted for release by the end of the second quarter of 2026.

4) Good of the Order

Under Good of the Order, committee members were reminded to file their statements of financial interests by May 1, 2026. Tiffany Araujo and Caesar Valentin will provide Corrie Betts with specific mapping data regarding the 64 census tracts associated with concentrated poverty. Upcoming committee meetings, including the combined Policy and Legislative Committee and the Finance Committee, were noted for June 18, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.

5) Adjourn

At the close of the meeting, Avery Gaddis moved for adjournment. The meeting concluded immediately after the motion, although no formal second or recorded vote was clearly captured. Chair Naeem thanked everyone, and the meeting ended.