

# CHRIS MURPHY

U.S. SENATOR FOR CONNECTICUT

# 2018

Year in Review



# SENATOR CHRIS MURPHY 2018 END OF YEAR REPORT

Senator Chris Murphy has worked tirelessly on the issues that matter most to Connecticut families. The following report outlines the efforts Chris led in the U.S. Senate and the work he did for Connecticut residents this past year.

## Listening to and Working Hard for Connecticut Families

### SENATOR CHRIS MURPHY - 2018 BY THE NUMBERS



Traveled across the state, hosting over **130 town halls**, roundtables, and listening sessions with Connecticut residents.



Introduced or cosponsored **132 pieces of legislation**, including bills and resolutions.



Completed the **3<sup>rd</sup> Walk Across Connecticut**: four days, 70 miles, through 15 towns, talking to hundreds of people and holding town halls along the way.



Responded to over **210,000 calls, letters and emails** from Connecticut residents.



Returned **over \$967,000** to residents, including owed Social Security payments, veterans benefits, tax refunds, and other savings from federal agencies.



Helped **over 5,300 Connecticut residents** work through federal issues and get their owed benefits.



Established **seven Economic Advisory Councils** to work with local community leaders, business owners, advocates, and other stakeholders.

## Delivering Legislative Results

**In 2018, Chris worked hard to deliver results for Connecticut. Here are a few examples:**

- ✔ **Reducing Gun Violence - Bipartisan Fix NICS Act signed into law**  
The new law, which improves the current background check system for gun sales, is the only legislation addressing gun violence to pass Congress since the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School.
- ✔ **Helping veterans - Honor Our Commitment Act signed into law**  
After learning that combat veterans were being denied mental health care, Chris passed a new law providing access to mental health services to over 500,000 veterans who were previously ineligible for the care.
- ✔ **Combating the Opioid Crisis - Bipartisan Recovery COACH Act signed into law**  
Based on the successful Recovery Coach program in Connecticut, the new law gives those struggling with substance use disorders access to specially trained coaches who are in recovery themselves to serve as a mentor, support families, and help patients navigate treatment options.
- ✔ **Supporting Connecticut jobs**  
As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Chris secured hundreds of millions of dollars to support Connecticut manufacturing, rebuild our roads and rails, protect Long Island Sound, expand mental health services, and combat the opioid epidemic.
- ✔ **Paying interns**  
Fund to pay Senate interns signed into law. Chris led the fight to fund paid internships, ensuring that the opportunity to intern in the U.S. Senate is open to young people from all backgrounds, not just a privileged few who can afford to work for free.

## **Standing Up for Connecticut Values**

Chris is committed to working with President Trump if he's doing something good for Connecticut and the country, but he fights him like heck if he's doing anything that hurts Connecticut. Too often, President Trump's actions and rhetoric divide us and threaten Connecticut values.

Chris has been a staunch critic of President Trump's divisive and dangerous immigration policies. He adamantly opposed President Trump's efforts to use billions in U.S. taxpayer money to build a border wall that no one wants and that Mexico was supposed to pay for. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Chris successfully blocked attempts to fund the wall. Additionally, when the Trump administration heartlessly started separating children from their families at the border, Chris spoke out and led calls for oversight hearings in Congress. He also cosponsored the Keep Families Together Act to end the separation of families at the border.

When President Trump nominated Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court, Chris opposed his nomination and called out his extreme views on health care and gun safety laws. After serious allegations of sexual misconduct, Chris spoke out against Judge Kavanaugh, saying he lacks the temperament and the impartiality for a lifetime appointment on the Supreme Court.

Finally, Chris has stood up to President Trump's dangerous attacks on the independent special counsel's investigation into foreign interference in the 2016 election. He is a cosponsor of legislation to protect special counsel Robert Mueller and prevent President Trump from firing Mueller or interfering in the investigation.

## **Improving Health Care**

Chris has been a leading voice in the fight for better health care and against the repeal and sabotage of the Affordable Care Act. As a member of the Senate Health Committee, Chris has worked to find bipartisan solutions to lower the cost of prescription drugs and expand access to services.

Chris joined Senator Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) to introduce the Choose Medicare Act, legislation that would provide every individual and employer the opportunity to enroll in Medicare. Medicare is consistently rated the most popular and efficient health insurance system.

Chris has been a vocal opponent of repeated actions by the Trump administration to sabotage the Affordable Care Act. For example, he co-authored and voted for legislation that would end the expansion of "junk plans" that offer skimpy coverage and don't have to provide care for people with pre-existing conditions.

## Fighting the Opioid Epidemic

After learning about the successful Recovery Coach program in Connecticut, Chris introduced the bipartisan Recovery Coaches Offer Addiction Counseling & Healing (COACH) Act and successfully got it passed into law. The bill expands access to the Recovery Coach program that provides those struggling with substance use disorders access to specially trained coaches who are in recovery themselves who can serve as a mentor, support for families, and help patients navigate treatment options.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Chris helped secure \$6 billion in emergency funding to fight the opioid crisis, including millions for Connecticut.

### newstimes

“Murphy’s warm reception was owing to the good news he brought about the budget...which allocates \$3.6 billion in emergency funding to fight the opioid abuse epidemic.”

*March 29, 2018*

## Improving Mental Health Services

After his Mental Health Reform Act was signed into law, Chris worked to fund its programs to support mental health services. Specifically, this year, Congress voted to fund \$1.8 billion in mental health programs created or improved by his Mental Health Reform Act.

For Connecticut, Chris helped secure a \$10 million grant from the Mental Health Reform Act to help the state integrate and coordinate primary care services and mental health and substance use services. He also helped the Wheeler Clinic secure \$500,000 per year for up to five years for the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health program, which was created by the Mental Health Reform Act. The program supports early intervention for infants and young children who are at risk of developing or are showing signs of mental illness.

## Protecting Our National Security

Chris has been a leading voice in the U.S. Senate for a progressive foreign policy. A strong American military is still vital to guard against conventional security threats, but many of the emerging threats to global stability cannot be checked with military power alone. Chris is actively working to increase U.S. investment in diplomacy, economic development, and humanitarian assistance to head off conflicts before they require costly military interventions. This year, Congress passed the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development (BUILD) Act. The new law establishes a consolidated development bank, which was one of the proposals Chris laid out in “[Rethinking the Battlefield](#),” a blueprint of specific recommendations to rebuild U.S. power through foreign policy tools.

## Sen. Murphy Moves To End War In Yemen

By CASSANDRA BASLER • NOV 29, 2018

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For the last few years, Chris has sounded the alarm over U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition in the Yemen civil war. Yemen is a humanitarian nightmare. 85,000 children under the age of five have died during this civil war from starvation and disease, there is the worst outbreak of cholera in recorded history, and al Qaeda and ISIS are only getting stronger in the region. Teaming up with U.S. Senators Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Mike Lee (R-Utah), Chris introduced a War Powers Act resolution that would end U.S. involvement. Their legislation passed the U.S. Senate with a bipartisan vote in December, and Chris will continue to push next year to end the United States' involvement in the Yemen civil war. He also joined a bipartisan coalition to trigger a Magnitsky investigation into the disappearance of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist and columnist for The Washington Post.

Additionally, Chris introduced an amendment to prohibit war with North Korea without congressional authorization. He also introduced the bipartisan European Energy Security and Diversification Act to provide new tools for the United States to combat Russian influence and create economic opportunities at home and abroad.

Chris also worked to support our national security assets in Connecticut, like the sub base and Coast Guard Academy in New London. Chris secured \$5 million for the National Coast Guard Museum in New London, and, along with Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Congressman Joe Courtney (CT-2), repealed current prohibitions that prevent federal funding from being used on engineering and design of the museum. Chris also successfully advocated for a federal grant for the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments to study the shortage of appropriate housing and infrastructure needs for servicemembers and workers around the sub base.

## Reducing Gun Violence

Chris is a leading voice in Congress in the fight to reduce gun violence and keep families safe. He met with President Trump in the White House to support legislation to reduce gun violence. Chris worked with Senator John Cornyn (R-Tx.) to pass the only gun violence prevention bill into law since the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School. The bipartisan Fix NICS Act, introduced in the wake of the tragic shooting at a church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, helps fix the broken background check system by ensuring that federal and state agencies upload records necessary to prevent criminals and domestic abusers from buying guns. He also worked with Sandy Hook Promise to pass the STOP School Violence Act into law. The new law funds school security improvements and invests in early intervention and prevention programs to stop school violence before it happens.

Chris is the author of the Background Check Expansion Act, a bill to expand background checks for all firearm purchases, with some reasonable exceptions.

In addition, Chris fought back against Education Secretary Betsy DeVos' rumored proposal to allow schools use federal education funds to buy guns and arm teachers. He filed a critical amendment to federal spending legislation that would have blocked this proposal from going into effect.

### Senator Chris Murphy has become a leader on gun-control

*That could make this his political moment*



## Honoring Veterans

After learning that over 500,000 combat veterans were ineligible for mental health care, Chris introduced the Honor Our Commitment Act in March 2017 to expand mental health care to veterans with other-than-honorable discharges. His bill passed Congress this year and was signed into law.

As a member of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee, Chris was selected to be on the conference committee for the bill funding veterans services to advocate the priorities of Connecticut veterans. He also fought for the passage of a law awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to the crew of the USS Indianapolis, including posthumously to Waterbury native Navy Chaplain Lieutenant Thomas M. Conway who risked his life to save others and comfort those who were dying.

## Supporting Connecticut Jobs

In the Senate, Chris has been focused on growing jobs in Connecticut and boosting our economy.

## Boosting U.S. Manufacturing

Last year, over half of Connecticut's new jobs were created in the manufacturing sector. In fact, Connecticut's 4,600 manufacturers account for 10% of the state's jobs, driven by the defense and aerospace sectors. Chris fought for a seat on the Senate Appropriations Committee to help bring federal money back to Connecticut. He's helped Connecticut manufacturers like Electric Boat, Sikorsky, and Pratt & Whitney and their hundreds of suppliers secure significant federal projects, growing good-paying jobs in our state. Specifically, this year, he:

- Secured \$7.1 billion for Virginia-class submarines and \$3.7 billion for the Columbia-class program produced at Electric Boat.
- Secured \$9 billion for 93 Joint Strike Fighters across the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps, which use Pratt & Whitney engines.
- Secured the following investments in Sikorsky-made helicopters: \$1.2 billion for 58 Black Hawk helicopters, \$1 billion for 8 CH-53K Heavy Lift Helicopters, and \$660 million for the Air Force's Combat Rescue Helicopter program.

## Murphy Bill Will Expand Mental Health Services For Vets

By NATALIE CIOFFARI/WSHU NEWS & WNPR • MAR 28, 2018

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**ctpost**

“Whether his initiative on steering more U.S. defense spending to American companies succeeds – and we hope it does – U.S. Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., has already made some headway on improving the situation in Washington.”

*January 17, 2018*

Since coming to Congress, Chris has been on a mission to fix our broken Buy American laws. These laws are designed to ensure taxpayer dollars purchase goods made by American workers, but they are riddled with loopholes. Over the last ten years, the Department of Defense – the largest purchaser of manufactured goods in the world – spent almost \$200 billion on manufactured goods made by foreign companies. Chris is fighting to keep taxpayer money from being sent overseas and instead to support jobs here at home. Chris

introduced the bipartisan BuyAmerican.gov Act with Senator Rob Portman (R-Ohio) to shine light on the issue of overuse and misuse of Buy American laws. The legislation would create an online hub to track federal contracts, increasing transparency and helping local manufacturers secure federal contracts.

After hearing from RADeCO, a manufacturer in Plainfield, about security concerns with Chinese-made drones, Chris successfully got the U.S. Department of Defense to stop purchasing foreign-made drones. The new policy protects our national security and was a victory for U.S. companies that have to compete with artificially priced Chinese-made drones.



“We would like to thank Senator Murphy for the recognition, and for his commitment to the Buy American Act, which will go a long way to help grow businesses and create jobs in Connecticut.”

*Brad Lovendale  
VP of RADeCO in Plainfield*

## Investing in Workers

Chris is focused on making sure workers have the skills they need to get good-paying jobs. In Connecticut, manufacturers are struggling to fill jobs with the increased demand. Chris fought to secure several major federal grants for manufacturing training programs in Connecticut, including a \$6 million grant to set up the Eastern Connecticut Manufacturing Pipeline. The Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative has trained and placed 1,023 Connecticut workers in jobs at more than 100 different companies in Connecticut, including more than 700 at Electric Boat. Earlier this year, Chris spent a “Day in the Life” of the pipeline, traveling across eastern Connecticut and meeting with students who were applying for the program and those currently enrolled, as well as manufacturers actively hiring new workers.

He also supported the passage of legislation funding Perkins Career & Technical Education, which provides about \$10 million to schools across Connecticut to support career and technical education programs in in-demand industries like manufacturing, agriculture, and health care. Chris also helped secure a \$5 million job training grant for Capital Workforce Partners in Hartford. Finally, after the Trump administration proposed eliminating the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP),

which provides job training for 400 low-income or unemployed older Americans in Connecticut, Chris led the charge to restore the program's funding.

Chris also introduced the Workforce Mobility Act to prohibit the use of non-compete agreements, while still allowing employers to protect their trade secrets. The legislation would help workers pursue new jobs and higher wages without fearing legal action.

## Incentivizing Innovation

Chris believes entrepreneurship and innovation are building blocks for a strong economy. There are over 6,000 technology companies in Connecticut that employ around 200,000 people. To support medical research and help local biotechnology companies grow, Chris voted for a \$2 billion increase in National Institutes of Health funding this year. Chris also highlights a new, innovative company each month as his "Innovator of the Month."



"We are excited to be honored as Innovator of the Month by Senator Murphy. Biorez has directly benefited from Connecticut's Angel Tax Credit and support Senator Murphy's Angel Tax Credit Act. We believe partnerships...between the public and private sector are important for developing innovative healthcare technologies and across the country,"

*Kevin Rocco  
CEO of Biorez, Inc.*

## Supporting Connecticut Farmers

Farming in Connecticut is on the rise, contributing \$4 billion to the state's economy each year and supporting approximately 21,000 jobs. This year, Chris launched the "[Our Farm Bill](#)" listening campaign to hear directly from Connecticut farmers on what he should be fighting for in the Farm Bill. As part of his listening campaign, Chris toured nine farms around the state and heard feedback from their owners and workers.

In December, Chris voted for a Farm Bill that includes programs for Connecticut farmers based on the feedback he heard from farmers and local residents. Thanks to Chris' work, the Farm Bill creates a new Century Farms recognition program, funds dairy processing as proposed in his Local Cheese Promotion and Dairy Support Act, and modifies current crop insurance programs to make them workable for shellfish farmers.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Chris secured over \$1 billion for programs that help farmers in Connecticut, including ones that fund beginning farmer training programs and agricultural research

### THE REGISTER CITIZEN

## Sen. Murphy pushes to help young farmers as interest in agriculture grows

By Leslie Hutchison



programs at UConn, as well as youth outreach programs like 4-H. Chris also worked hard to pass a bipartisan Budget Deal in February that included \$1 billion in additional supports for dairy farmers. As dairy prices remained low and dairy farmers struggled because of President Trump's trade war, Chris advocated for additional supports for dairy farmers. The new Farm Bill expanded coverage options and refunded \$58 million in premiums from the flawed Margin Protection Program.

Finally, after hearing from young farmers about the challenges of starting their own farms, Chris introduced the Student Loan Forgiveness for Farmers and Ranchers Act to create a loan forgiveness program for beginning farmers with less than 10 years of experience, as well as other groups like women, veterans, and minority farmers.

## **Spurring Economic Development**

Chris has traveled across Connecticut, joining local leaders and business owners to learn more about how Congress can incentivize the cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated industrial sites — called brownfields. Specifically, he helped secure \$1 million in brownfields remediation grants for the Capitol Region Council of Governments and Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments in Connecticut. He also introduced the Creating Livable Environments and New Usable Property (CLEAN UP) Act that includes two tax credits to incentivize the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields.

Chris also helped secured a \$1.3 million federal FEMA grant to help cities, towns, local business owners, and residents pay for damage caused by strong snowstorms.

## **Harnessing the Economic Power of the Long Island Sound**

Connecticut's economy depends on a healthy Long Island Sound. Each year, the Sound generates billions of dollars from tourism, fishing, shipping, and recreation. Chris was a co-author of the Long Island Sound Restoration and Stewardship Act, a comprehensive bill that funds water quality improvements and shoreline habitat restoration projects, and he worked hard to ensure it was signed into law this year. He also introduced the Living Shorelines Act to fund town and community projects that build green coastal resiliency infrastructure with natural materials such as plants, sand, shell, or rock.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Chris fought to increase investments that protect and clean up the Long Island Sound. After a proposal from the Trump administration to eliminate the Sea Grant program, Chris led efforts to restore the full \$71 million to the program, which is a critical source of funding for Connecticut's Sea Grant College program at UConn Avery Point. He also helped secure:

- \$12 million for the Long Island Sound Geographic Program
- \$9.5 million to monitor water quality at beaches
- \$15 million for aquaculture activities within National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, some of which will help fund research and operations at Milford Lab

- \$1.2 million for the Connecticut Sea Grant
- \$12 million for the Marine Aquaculture Program
- \$600,000 for the Long Island Sound Study through the National Estuary Program
- \$400,000 for the Long Island Sound Integrated Coastal Observation System

Chris has also fought for Connecticut’s shellfishermen. Connecticut’s aquaculture industry supports more than 700 jobs and has an annual economic impact of \$47.5 million. Because of Chris’ advocacy, the FDA began the process of re-opening the shellfish trade to the EU. Chris also successfully expanded crop insurance options for shellfish farmers.

Finally, Chris worked with the Connecticut Port Authority and Connecticut maritime businesses to improve and pass the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (VIDA), which was enacted into law in December 2018. This bill streamlines regulatory requirements for the discharge of ballast water. Earlier this year, when Republicans tried to vastly water down the environmental protections in the bill, Chris successfully worked to improve those protections. As a result, the final law is both a boon to Connecticut’s booming maritime economy and a strong safeguard for environmental and water quality standards.

## Improving Education

As a member of the Senate Education Committee, Chris is working to make sure every child, no matter his or her background, has access to a quality education. He introduced the Strength in Diversity Act to promote diversity in schools. Specifically, the legislation authorizes \$120 million in grants to support new and expand existing voluntary community-driven strategies to increase diversity in schools. He also introduced the Keeping All Students Safe Act to protect students from the dangers of seclusion and restraint at school.

In addition, Chris fought back against Education Secretary Betsy DeVos’ attempts to rescind protections for student loan borrowers who were misled by predatory for-profit colleges. As a result of this advocacy and oversight, the Secretary DeVos had to halt her plans to repeal these protections, meaning students will be protected under Obama-era guidelines until at least July 2020.

**NEW HAVEN REGISTER** ☰

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**Murphy talks school safety with New Haven high school students**

By Jessica Lerner

Updated 5:34 pm EDT, Wednesday, March 28, 2018

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## Rebuilding our Infrastructure

Chris knows that the lifeblood of Connecticut's economy is its transportation system, and he's doing everything he can to secure investments to upgrade our aging roads and rails. After hearing from Connecticut commuters, Chris voted for a bipartisan budget deal that invests \$20 billion in improving our country's transportation infrastructure, including \$1.9 billion for Amtrak and the Northeast Corridor rail. He also introduced a measure to boost rail funding along the Northeast Corridor.

## Helping Connecticut Homeowners

Crumbling foundations continue to be a nightmare for families throughout central and eastern Connecticut. Thousands of homeowners are trapped in dangerous homes through no fault of their own, and insurers have been slow to step up to the plate. Chris has worked hard to raise awareness of the issue with the Trump administration and fight for resources for homeowners.

Following an invitation from Chris, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Ben Carson visited Connecticut in May to hear firsthand from homeowners and to see the damage in person. Chris continues to work with Secretary Carson. Chris also introduced the Aid to Homeowners with Crumbling

Foundations Act, which would provide \$100 million over five years from HUD to states like Connecticut that have created non-profit crumbling foundations assistance funds to repair damage to residential structures due pyrrhotite. In August, the U.S. Senate passed two amendments sponsored by Chris and Senator Richard Blumenthal to provide assistance to homeowners and prevent future use of faulty concrete in foundations.

### Hartford Courant

"Kudos to Connecticut's two U.S. Senators, Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy, for trying to force the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help homeowners whose foundations are crumbling because of a mysterious mineral."

*April 26, 2018*

## Assisting Puerto Rico

When Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, Chris traveled to the island to see the destruction firsthand and hear from residents about rebuilding. Connecticut is home to the highest percentage per capita of Puerto Ricans of all the U.S. states, so when the hurricane hit, many residents fled to Connecticut. Chris fought against resistance from the Trump administration and helped secure emergency funding to provide housing assistance and help Connecticut schools absorb the influx of new students.