

Connecticut United Ways, in collaboration with many dedicated community partners throughout the state, are committed to helping address the challenges faced by many working families and individuals that struggle to make ends meet.

We recently joined with United Ways in five other states to release a report on ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) that documents the true scope of financial hardship in Connecticut. The Connecticut ALICE Report provides a detailed examination of the causes and effects of financial insecurity, with the goal of informing a public discussion of short and long-term solutions.

United Way strives to be non-partisan and non-ideological in our advocacy work. We seek to put a face on ALICE – who may be our friends, neighbors, co-workers, and family members – and call attention to the challenges that ALICE faces in our state.

Let's stand up for ALICE by promoting fairness and supporting solutions that expand opportunities to achieve financial stability and to pursue the American Dream.

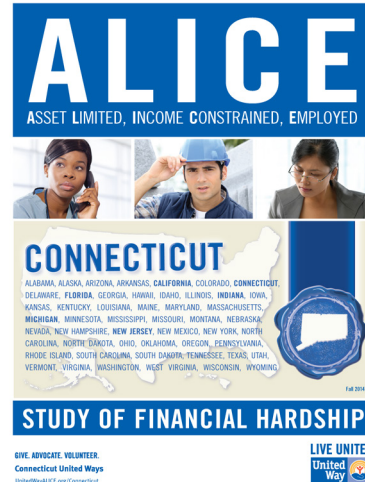
The ALICE Report identifies four key areas where progress will have the most beneficial impact for ALICE. They include:

- Child Care
- Housing
- Jobs
- Work Supports

Drawing from the in-depth research in the ALICE Report and from the work of nonprofit, business, and government leaders, Connecticut's United Ways developed the following policy recommendations to help working families and individuals that struggle to pay for their basic necessities.

For the recommendations, addressing abrupt loss of work supports due to increased earned income ("benefit cliffs"), Connecticut United Ways intend to assume a significant role in advocacy in Hartford and across the state. For the other recommendations, United Way will actively support the work of our partners, who are widely regarded as thought leaders in these areas.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this policy agenda further, please contact Richard Porth, President/CEO of United Way of Connecticut at (860) 571-7501 or via email at Richard.Porth@ctunitedway.org.



ALICE IN CONNECTICUT

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Child Care and Housing are by far the two most significant expenses for ALICE families with young children. Therefore United Way recommends increasing access to more affordable child care and housing to improve financial stability for ALICE families.



CHILD CARE

- Create a Dependent Exemption or a Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit in Connecticut Tax Code.
- Reinstate an Earnings Disregard strategy in the Care 4 Kids child care subsidy for lower-income working parents to allow families to maintain eligibility while earning more income for a time-limited period.



HOUSING

- Increase the supply of affordable housing by investing state capital financing and subsidies; offering incentives to encourage development in towns with a shortage of affordable housing; and, streamlining the permitting and development process. Affordable housing, connected to other services such as transit and child care will expand access to jobs and education.
- Reduce the amount of homelessness in Connecticut by supporting rapid re-housing strategies, Coordinated Access Networks for shelter diversion, and the creation of permanent supportive housing.

Strategies designed to protect and grow middle skill and higher skill jobs and to provide training and education for career advancement will help ALICE and build on Connecticut's traditional economic strengths.



JOBS

- Provide more opportunities for non-degree technical courses and "stackable" credentials or certifications necessary for career advancement in targeted occupational openings.
- Use state Unemployment Insurance Fund as a source to create a set-aside for employers to provide more incumbent worker training and more contextualized learning opportunities in targeted growth industries.



WORK SUPPORTS

- Restore State Earned Income Tax Credit to 30 percent of federal EITC.
- Address "benefit cliffs" for ALICE households when they earn more income so that the reduction of public benefits (Housing Vouchers, Care 4 Kids, etc.) is more gradual.