



GHIAA

Greater Hartford
— Interfaith —
Action Alliance

Campaign

HAND UP
OR
DRAG
DOWN?

The Truth About
Welfare
Assistance:

It's a loan— not
a helping hand.

To get involved with this
campaign, email:
GHIAA@cljct.org

GHIAA is an initiative of
the **Center for Leadership
& Justice**.
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REPEALING WELFARE LIENS FACT SHEET

DID YOU KNOW?

- Connecticut requires welfare recipients to pay the state back for the financial assistance they have received—treating welfare as a loan.
- Connecticut is one of only two states in the country that still do this.
- The state places a lien on the recipient's assets, and demands repayment when the person sells or refinances a home, receives a legal settlement (for example, for personal injury), receives any inheritance, or dies and attempts to leave any inheritance to heirs.
- The effect of the lien is to push recipients (or their heirs) back into poverty whenever they begin to pull themselves out of it.
- A 1973 national study noted that over 30 states had this kind of provision in their law at that time. The study concluded—almost 50 years ago—that the policy was outmoded, and advocated: "As the Nixon administration has recommended, Congress should prohibit all recovery in the federally funded cash assistance programs; the states also should repeal the requirement in General Assistance."
- Since that time, at least 30 states have followed that recommendation. The time has come—in fact is long overdue—for Connecticut to do likewise.
- Working with GHIAA, House Majority Leader Matt Ritter has drafted a bill to repeal the current statute.

As compelling as the need for change is, repeal **WILL NOT** be easy. Potential skeptics may cite the loss of revenue, which amounts to about \$30 million per year. However, GHIAA believes that the cost to Connecticut of **NOT** repealing the statute could be much greater, in terms of the perpetuation of poverty, and the social cost that pervasive poverty brings!

Our state can do better—as 48 others already have—to enable those who receive assistance to make their way out of poverty and find their way off of assistance altogether.

YOU CAN HELP. Our GHIAA Core Team can show you how easy it is to contact your state legislators by letter or phone to encourage them to strongly support the repeal bill. Please be in touch with your Core Team Leaders to find out how you can make a difference in enacting the repeal bill into law.

Together, we can make this happen! Many thanks.