

Lawmakers back birth control bill

Minors would receive access to contraception without parental notice

By Christopher Keating
Hartford Courant

The state House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly Thursday night to codify into state law that minors can consent to contraception without parental notification.

After a lengthy debate, the House voted 117 – 27 as four Democrats joined with 23 Republicans against the measure.

The issue of parental notification of abortion has been controversial for years, but the bill focused only on contraception rather than abortion. Even though the word ‘abortion’ was never mentioned in the legislation, it came up constantly during the debate that lasted past 7:30 p.m.

“This bill is going to prevent pregnancies,”



Vahey

said Rep. Nicole Klarides-Ditria, a Seymour Republican. “It is going to prevent abortions. ... We want to make sure that our minors have the ability to get the care safely and without fear of repercussions from anyone. ... In a perfect world, we all want our kids to talk to us every day about everything we do. But unfortunately, we know that doesn’t happen.”

She added, “This bill, I truly believe, will help prevent unwanted pregnancies, and that’s the most important thing we need to

do here today.”

The debate focused on House Bill 7213, which was supported by Planned Parenthood of Southern New England.

The bill “simply codifies what has already been an established practice in Connecticut and dozens of other states by allowing minors to consent to contraception without involving a parent,” Planned Parenthood said in a flier distributed at the state Capitol in Hartford.

Concerns were raised following the U.S.

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Considerable kid creativity

ABOVE: Ifeoluagbenro Emokpaire, 10, tries on a pair of virtual reality goggles at the Hartford Public Library booth during the 2025 Hartford Public School STEM Fair at the Gov. William O’Neill State Armory in Hartford on Friday.

RIGHT: Ashley Gabezas Cruz used a micropipette at the Jackson Laboratory booth during the 2025 Hartford Public School STEM Fair on Friday. The STEM fair encourages kids to experiment and try different things. It was held at the Gov. William O’Neill State Armory in Hartford.

AARON FLAUM/HARTFORD COURANT



New cancer center coming

Fairfield facility will bring MSK trials to state

By Helen I. Bennett
Hartford Courant

As a CEO of a health care system, Jeffrey Flaks has worked to bring access to health care across the state of Connecticut.

And yet, when he recently toured the new Hartford HealthCare Fairfield Cancer Center, created as a Care Partner of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Flaks said about it: “It really is quite amazing.”

And that is after Hartford Health-care system has already created a new 24/7 concierge provision of health care app, opened at least 500 locations in the state and had 879,889 primary care and 473,795 emergency department visits in 2023. It also reports 6,608 physicians and 6,286 nurses (all types) on staff across the health system.

Now, the new Hartford HealthCare Fairfield Cancer Center is a first in the nation “MSK care partner,” Flaks said, and it

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Naumov finds comfort getting back to ice rink after tragedy

By Lori Riley
Hartford Courant

For Maxim Naumov, skating has always been a way to express himself.

But over the past few months, the sport has done more to help him navigate the grief of losing his parents, skating coaches Evgenia Shishkova and Vadim Naumov, who died in the American Airlines crash in Washington on Jan. 29. Sixty-seven people, including more than two dozen figure skaters and their parents and coaches returning from the U.S. Figure Skating championships in Wichita, Kansas, perished in the crash.

Naumov, who finished fourth at nationals and flew home earlier from the

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PURA releases records; says documents refute utility claims against them

By Edmund H. Mahony
Hartford Courant

The state’s chief utility regulator has produced hundreds of pages of documents that the authority says refute claims that its chairman froze fellow commissioners out of important rate decisions and showed bias by contributing to an anti-utility opinion column, but the material is unlikely to lay to rest a long running dispute with the industry.

Public Utility Regulatory Authority Chairman Marissa Gillett delivered the materials under court order to two gas companies appealing decisions that slashed their rates based on claims the regulatory authority is biased against them and failed to follow the law or regulations in its deliberations.

Among the records Superior Court Judge Matthew J. Budzik ordered PURA to produce is anything that elaborates on text messages between Gillett and two important

legislative supporters — a message exchange that led to speculation that she collaborated anonymously on a news opinion column, or op-ed, accusing the state’s biggest utilities of misconduct.

The Courant previously revealed one exchange, between Gillett and state Rep. Jonathan Steinberg, a Westport Democrat. The two talk about dodging public record laws before referring to the op-ed. Steinberg and State Sen. Norm Needleman, D-Essex,

co-chairmen of the Legislature’s Energy and Technology committee penned an op-ed in which they imply that local utility companies are colluding with international ratings agencies to undermine PURA.

“I finished my draft and am waiting for Theresa (PURA Chief of Staff Theresa Govert) and others to put eyes on it,” Gillett wrote.

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Edmunds small sedan test

The Honda Civic remains one of the most popular automobiles, but it's starting to face competition from the Kia K4. How well does the K4 stack up? **MOTORING, PAGE 12**