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## Does Trump suit have merit?

President's administration is taking Connecticut, New Haven to court

By Alex Putterman  
STAFF WRITER

Last week, the Trump administration announced it was suing the state of Connecticut and the city of New Haven over immigration policies the federal government says makes them "sanctuary" jurisdictions.

Recent history suggests, however, the suit might not get very far.

Over the past year, courts have thrown out several similar Trump administration suits against other states and cities

that restrict cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities. Many of these cases, experts note, have raised issues courts previously ruled on during Trump's first term.

Sheila Hayre, a law professor at Quinnipiac who specializes in immigration law, said she found little novel about the administration's suit against Connecticut and New Haven.

"I really wanted to read it because I thought we might see some new and interesting arguments that hadn't already been raised in prior administrations

in prior decades," Hayre said. "I was actually surprised to see that it doesn't really raise any interesting issues that haven't already been hashed out by the courts."

The Justice Department complaint seeks to invalidate Connecticut's Trust Act, which limits how and when local police can share information with federal immigration agents, as well as local policies enacted in New Haven.

The suit, which names Gov. Ned Lamont, Attorney General William Tong and New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker as defen-

dants, accuses Connecticut officials of "obstructing and refusing to comply with federal immigration laws over a period of years," which it says "has resulted in countless criminals being released into Connecticut who should have been held for immigration removal from the United States."

While the Trump administration claims Connecticut's Trust Act is "illegal under federal law," state officials say this isn't true, arguing they are not obligated to help immigration authorities do their jobs.

"Our laws do not prevent



Alex Brandon/Associated Press

**President Donald Trump speaks with reporters April 13 outside the Oval Office of the White House in Washington.**

federal authorities from enforcing immigration law," Lamont said in a statement last week. "Rather, they reflect a long-standing principle: the federal government cannot require states to use their personnel or resources to carry out federal  
*Suit continues on A4*



Photos by Paul Hughes/Hearst Connecticut Media

**Members of the Connecticut Citizens Defense League and Connecticut Against Gun Violence offer opposing messages Wednesday on a proposed "convertible pistol" ban that the House debated Wednesday in Hartford.**

## 'I don't know why anybody wants to make it easier'

Conn. ban on pistols that can be converted to full-automatic fire advances

By Paul Hughes  
STAFF WRITER

HARTFORD — A bill that would ban handguns that are easily converted from semiautomatic to full-automatic fire using outlawed devices advanced Wednesday in the state legislature.

The House approved legislation to prohibit "convertible pistols" in an 86-64 vote that broke largely along party lines in the Democrat-controlled chamber. The bill also would expand the state's existing "ghost gun" ban to include the unfinished frames or lower receivers of weapons.

Gov. Ned Lamont proposed to



**Holding a Gadsden flag-themed tumbler, state Rep. Craig Fishbein, the ranking House member of the Judiciary Committee, explains his opposition to the bill.**

ban the sale or importation of semiautomatic handguns in Connecticut capable of being readily converted into a machine gun by installing or attaching a pistol

converter as part of his legislative agenda for the 2026 session. The Judiciary Committee combined that bill and a committee bill to expand the 2019 ghost gun law outlawing unserialized, untraceable firearms.

Lamont applauded the House vote and said Wednesday he plans to sign the bill into law as soon as it arrives on his desk after Senate approval.

"I don't know why anybody wants to make it easier to take a pistol and turn it into a machine gun," he said.

The legislation is the first major firearms-related bill to come to vote in either chamber of the General Assembly this session. The vote Wednesday sends House Bill 5043 to the Democrat-led state Senate for possible final approval in the legislature. The session is due to adjourn May 6.

*Bill continues on A8*

## Homeschooling bill returns to House floor

Stripped, but still controversial

The homeschooling bill that drew thousands of opponents last month is back on the Capitol conveyor belt, ready for a vote in the House of Representatives Thursday, with the most far-reaching and objectionable measure removed.

That does not mean it lacks controversy. Far from it. Republicans and most home-schooling families say requiring local schools to demand any form of registration and checks on home-schooling is a government overreach.

But the bill in its current form, with a simple registration and check with the state Department of Children and Families, makes good sense for child safety, which is the whole pur-



DAN HAAR  
COMMENTARY

pose. It aligns with most states' practices, is weaker than the rules in some red states and has enough support to pass.

"The pushback that we experienced here in Connecticut happens in every single state that tries to regulate home schooling," Rep. Jennifer Leeper, D-Fairfield, co-chair of the Education Committee and the main champion of the bill, told me Wednesday.

*Haar continues on A8*



Courtesy of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

**The 2026 National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend will take place at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Maryland May 2 and 3.**

## Conn. firefighters will be honored after uncertainty

Cromwell Fire Marshal Todd G. Gagnon to be included in National Fallen Firefighters Memorial ceremony next weekend

By Ciara Hooks  
STAFF WRITER

The families of the 204 firefighters inducted into The National Fallen Firefighters Memorial will officially be welcomed back to the site for the 2026 National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend after uncertainty surrounding the shutdown.

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation announced this week that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security con-

firmed the ceremony will be at National Fallen Firefighters Memorial, which is on the campus of the United States Fire Administration in Emmitsburg, Md. The center has been closed to the public earlier this month.

Among those honored will be Plainville firefighter Raymond "Ray" Moreau and Cromwell Fire Marshal Todd G. Gagnon.

The event is May 2 and 3.

*Honor continues on A8*

## City reverses downtown development plan by starting with parking lot

By Cassandra Day  
STAFF WRITER

MIDDLETOWN — The city is not letting the uncertainty about a complicated project stop them from trying to solve an immediate need. Namely: public parking.

At the urging of the downtown business community, the city is moving ahead with the municipal parking component of the Village at Riverside site even though the larger — "more ambitious development" — is in limbo.

The initial, mixed-use project proposed by Spectra Construction & Development Corp. in 2022 called for a block-sized, multilevel housing and retail complex that would include a public square and pedestrian walkways in full view of the Connecticut River.

The site is located between deKoven Drive and Main Street, behind police headquarters.

The Village at Riverside was initially billed as a public-private partnership.

*Plan continues on A8*



Cassandra Day/Hearst Connecticut Media

**Middletown is moving ahead on the public parking component of the downtown development project. The city, which owns the Attention to Detail property on deKoven Drive, will be demolishing the building this summer.**

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**Weather:** Clouds giving way to sun. High: 64. Low: 37.  
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