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Connecticut's legislative session opens

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The state Capitol in Hartford welcomes Connecticut lawmakers on Wednesday, Feb. 4, kicking off three months of policy debate. The chamber welcomed Representative Iris Sanchez and Representative Larry Pemberton Jr., two new representatives from special elections. PHOTO COURTESY OF @CTPUBLIC ON INSTAGRAM

Connecticut opened its 2026 legislative session yesterday. This year, the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA) has a short session, as it is an election year for legislators. The session will continue until midnight on May 6.

The opening day began with a prayer by Reverend Erica Thompson, the chaplain of the House of Representatives in Connecticut.

"In a season marked by deep complexity, competing priorities and strong convictions, this chamber remains a place where the common good is sought through dialogue, discernment and decision," Thompson said. "As you begin today's session, I invite you to take a moment to breathe, to center yourself and to remember the trust that has been placed in you by your constituents, by your state and by generations yet to come."

The chamber also welcomed two new representatives from special elections: Representative Iris Sanchez of New Britain and Representative Larry Pemberton Jr. of Ledyard, Montville and Norwich.

When the session officially began, Gov. Ned Lamont gave his opening day address to the Senate and House of Representatives. He said that despite the hardships facing the country, he felt "fortunate to live in Connecticut."

"We were the birthplace of freedom, for signers of the Declaration of Independence, penning the words that we live by: all men and women are created equal. These words should still be our North Star 250 years later," he said. "I live by these words as I think about our values and our budget. And unlike many other states, which are facing federal cuts or deficits of their own, Connecticut is stepping up to protect our most vulnerable."

Lamont brought up state food healthcare assistance programs as examples of the state's successes in handling federal cuts. He thanked the CGA for funding these initiatives and requested that they extend the funding through the end of the fiscal year.

Lamont also said that the state could not keep making up for federal support forever and expressed hope for a better partnership between the state and federal government. However, he said he was "not so optimistic."

"The chaos in Washington, D.C. is the opposite of what we're trying to do here in Connecticut together," he said.

Lamont proposed an energy rebate at $200 per person or $400 per family to help Connecticut residents with high energy bills, garnering applause from the CGA's Democratic majority. He also emphasized programs to assist parents with childcare and legislate the usage of phones in schools, earning him more applause and a standing ovation.

Towards the end of his speech, Lamont criticized the Trump administration's immigration policy, especially the actions of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

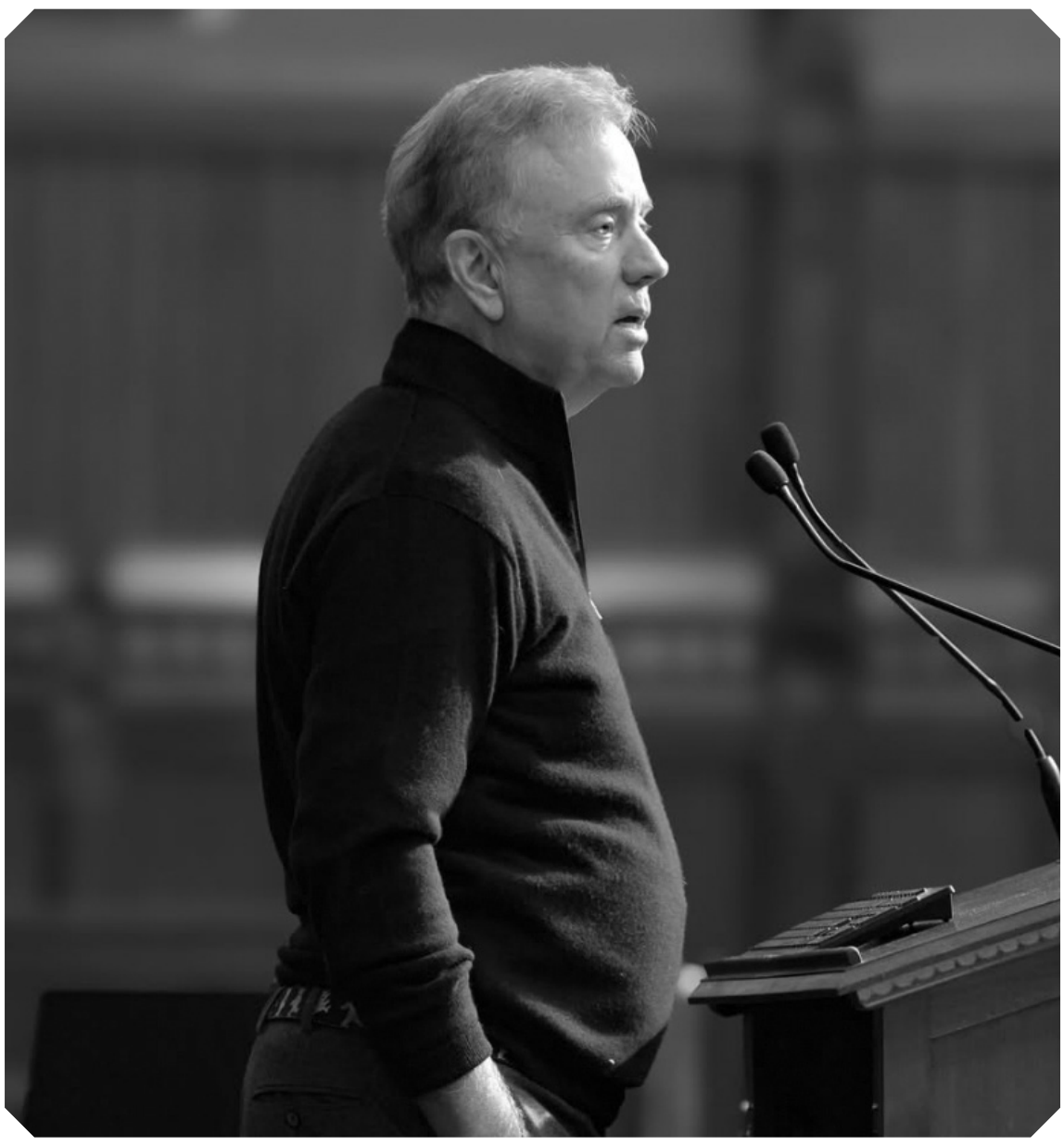
"ICE, everywhere you go uninvited, violence follows," he said. "Go home. We're keeping our Connecticut safe without you."

He ended his speech by appreciating the diversity of Connecticut, praising Pemberton as the first Native American legislator in the CGA and Norwich Mayor Swarnjit Singh as the first Sikh mayor in Connecticut.

"That's the Connecticut I love. That's the America we fight for," he said. "God bless America and the great state of Connecticut."

The Connecticut Senate began with a debate over a bill to extend the emergency spending fund controlled by Lamont. The bill is generally opposed by Republicans, who expressed concern about letting the governor unilaterally decide how the money should be spent. Democrats currently hold a strong majority in the CGA.

Continued updates for the CGA can be found on its website, which includes bill information, session schedules and information about legislators.



Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont preparing for State of the State address on Wednesday, Feb. 4. Lamont addressed the state's response to federal funding cuts and criticized the actions of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. PHOTO COURTESY OF @NEDLAMONT ON INSTAGRAM

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