

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE POST-MACHINE REALITY:
FRAGMENTATION OF POLITICS AND ECONOMY IN A PERIPHERALIZED CITY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

BY

JAE WAN AHN

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

DECEMBER 2023

Copyright © 2023 by Jae Wan Ahn

All Rights Reserved

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	vi
LIST OF TABLES	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	x
ABSTRACT	xiii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
A. Literature Review	4
<i>Market Theories and The Growth Machine</i>	7
<i>Urban Regimes</i>	9
<i>Augmenting and Redeveloping the Theories</i>	16
B. Outline of Municipal Bankruptcies and Fiscal Crises in the United States	18
C. Methods, Data, and Case	24
<i>Case Study: Hartford, Connecticut</i>	26
D. Organization of the Chapters Ahead	32
CHAPTER 2: SITUATING HARTFORD IN CONNECTICUT	37
A. The Limits of Hartford’s Reach	39
B. State and Urban Politics before 1960	41
<i>Machine Politics, Progressive Agenda, and the Changes in Hartford’s Governance Structure</i>	42
<i>Partisan Politics</i>	44
C. State and Urban Politics since 1960	48
<i>Abolishment of County Governments and the Radical Change in State Taxation Policy</i>	49
<i>Constitutional Changes and Reapportionment</i>	51
<i>African American and Puerto Rican Political Engagement</i>	53
D. Discrepancy between Theory and Hartford’s Reality	56

E. Chronicling Hartford’s Development Regime	58
<i>The Bishops</i>	59
<i>The Greater Hartford Process</i>	63
F. Conclusion	70
CHAPTER 3: THE ABSENT CORPORATE ECONOMIC ACTORS	72
A. Changes in the National Economy and Hartford’s Declining Importance	76
<i>Historical Evolution of the American Economy</i>	76
<i>Changing Economic Landscape of Hartford</i>	85
B. The Last Days of GE in Connecticut	96
C. The Concurrent Decline of the Bishops and Corporate Presence	100
D. The Remnants of the Development Regime	105
<i>Decentralization and Professionalization of Charitable Giving</i>	107
<i>Leftover Fragments of Hartford’s Development Regime</i>	111
E. Conclusion.....	123
CHAPTER 4: STATE BUDGET POLITICS, THE GROWTH IMPERATIVE, AND THE LANGUAGES OF LEGISLATION	128
A. Connecticut’s Position at the Beginning.....	133
B. The Reality of Fiscal Year 2015.....	140
C. The Growth Imperative in Policy Discourse.....	141
D. Multiple Budget Revisions for Fiscal Year 2016 and the Rhetoric of Deficit Politics	143
<i>Lockbox Amendment for the Special Transportation Fund</i>	145
<i>State Spending Cap</i>	148
<i>The December Special Session, State Employees, and Business Interests</i>	150
E. Revisions for Fiscal Year 2017 Budget and Neoliberal Partnership of the Democrats.....	171
F. The Tumult Surrounding Fiscal Year 2018 Budget, Bipartisan Partnership, and Hartford	177
<i>The Partners and the Partisans of the October Budget</i>	179
<i>The Democrats Old and New</i>	186

<i>Hartford on Their Minds</i>	190
G. Conclusion	193
CHAPTER 5: CLASHING MUNICIPAL ACTORS AND THE PURSUIT OF ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY VERSUS MORAL IMPERATIVE	198
A. Hartford’s Fiscal Trend vis-à-vis Connecticut	204
B. Hartford’s Fiscal Situation during through Segarra and Bronin Administrations	215
C. The Debate Surrounding 2016 S.B. No. 464	223
<i>Mayor Luke Bronin</i>	224
<i>The Court of Common Council and City Treasurer Cloud</i>	235
<i>The City Unions</i>	245
<i>The Aftermath: You Win Some, You Lose Some</i>	248
D. The Debate Surrounding 2017 H.B. No. 7050	250
<i>What Remained the Same</i>	252
<i>What Went Differently</i>	256
E. Conclusion	262
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION	265
A. Summary of Findings	265
B. Contributions to Urban Sociology	275
C. Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research	277
REFERENCES	282
Archival Resources and Government Documents	282
Books, Book Sections, and Journal Articles	287
Newspaper and Magazine Articles, Other Documents	298
Statistical Resources	304

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1. The Three Biggest Lies in Connecticut, The Hartford Courant (Sunday, June 10, 1990)	50
Figure 2-2. Coventry Land Sales, The Hartford Courant (Saturday, January 20, 1973)	67
Figure 3-1. Number of Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) Containing Fortune 500 Companies.....	86
Figure 3-2. Number of Fortune 500 Companies by Census Regions	87
Figure 3-3. Number of Fortune 500 Companies in Connecticut and Hartford MSA	88
Figure 3-4. Exempt Payments to Hartford by Non-Profits	114
Figure 4-1. Connecticut Gross Revenue and CPI-Adjusted Gross Revenue, 1990-2022.....	134
Figure 4-2. General Fund Surplus-Deficit (in \$ millions), FY 2008-2017	134
Figure 4-3. The Percentage of Gross Revenue from Federal Grants	135
Figure 4-4. Federal Grants to Connecticut by Categories.....	136
Figure 4-5. Miscellaneous Aid and Others Percentage of Federal Grants to Connecticut	137
Figure 4-6. Total Outlays for Federal Grants to State and Local Governments by Category	137
Figure 4-7. Federal Remainder Outlays to State and Local Governments Percentage.....	138
Figure 4-8. The Percentage of Gross Revenue from Personal Income Tax, FY 1991-2023	139
Figure 4-9. Scatterplot of 1-Year Lagged GDP Growth Rate and Changes in General Fund Revenue Growth Rate	154
Figure 4-10. Personal Services and Fringe Benefits Added Percentage in General Budget Expenditures	155
Figure 4-11. 2023 Salaries and Benefits Percentage of General Budget Expenditures by State	155
Figure 4-12. Personal Services and Fringe Benefits Growth Rate	156
Figure 4-13. Connecticut General Budget Expenditures (in \$1,000)	156
Figure 4-14. Personal Services and Fringe Benefits Percentage from General Expenditures....	160

Figure 4-15. State and Local Pension Funding Status as Percent of State Revenue	161
Figure 5-1. Comparison of 2014 Grand List Composition of Relevant Connecticut Municipalities	204
Figure 5-2. 2014 Tax-Exempt Properties Percentage	206
Figure 5-3. Tax-Exempt Properties Percentage in Hartford	206
Figure 5-4. Net Taxable Grand List of Hartford in Constant 2001 U.S. Dollars, 1988-2021	207
Figure 5-5. Net Taxable Grand List of Hartford in Constant 2001 U.S. Dollars, 1999-2021	208
Figure 5-6. Mill Rate: Hartford, Bridgeport, Glastonbury, 1991-2021	210
Figure 5-7. Total Reimbursements from the State in Constant 2001 U.S. Dollars.....	212
Figure 5-8. Hartford PILOT Funded Percentage	212
Figure 5-9. State Grants to Hartford by Category.....	214
Figure 5-10. Hartford General Fund Revenues from Two Largest Sources by Percentage	214
Figure 5-11. Hartford General Fund Balance	217
Figure 5-12. Hartford General Fund Balance to Revenue Ratio in Percentage.....	218
Figure 5-13. Hartford General Fund Total Revenue, 2003-2022	218
Figure 5-14. Hartford General Fund Expenditures from Four Largest Sources by Percentage .	220
Figure 5-15. Non-Education Expenditures of the City of Hartford	221
Figure 5-16. The Organizational Chart of Hartford for Fiscal Year 2017	233

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1-1. Median and Mean Socioeconomic Data of All Pertinent Places.....	20
Table 1-2. Median and Mean Socioeconomic Data by Event Type	21
Table 1-3. Pairwise Correlations of Bankruptcy Events.....	22
Table 1-4. Pairwise Correlations of Predictors of Interest.....	23
Table 2-1. Demographics of Hartford, 1950-2020	53
Table 2-2. Demographics of Hartford-Middlesex-Tolland Counties (Hartford MSA in 2020 Decennial Census), 1950-2020	54
Table 2-3. Census 2020 Population Figures	54
Table 2-4. The Identified Bishops	60
Table 2-5. The Identified Projects by the Bishops.....	62
Table 3-1. 1970 Fortune 500 Companies in Hartford MSA	89
Table 3-2. 1990 Fortune 500 Companies in Hartford MSA	89
Table 3-3. 2022 Fortune 500 Companies in Hartford MSA	90
Table 3-4. 2022 Ten Largest Chambers of Commerce in Greater Hartford.....	91
Table 3-5. 2021 Socioeconomic Data for Hartford and Hartford MSA	92
Table 3-6. 1987 Ten Largest Employers in Greater Hartford.....	93
Table 3-7. 2022 Largest Employers of Connecticut	95
Table 3-8. The Identified Bishops with Corporate Mergers and Acquisitions	101
Table 3-9. 2023 Identified Senior Executives Associated with Hartford Charities.....	110
Table 3-10. Relevant Bills and Their Public Hearing Participants	115
Table 3-11. Rank Count and Count Order by Each Interest Group.....	116
Table 5-1. 2020 Population of Largest Connecticut Cities.....	205
Table 5-2. Geographical and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Select State Capitals	209

Table 5-3. The Court of Common Council Members, 2016-2018 236

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A good many people and organizations provided their assistance, guidance, and support during the arduous process of research and writing this dissertation. But first and foremost, I cannot overstate the importance of my committee in helping me accomplish this gargantuan and at times, lonesome task. I owe an immense debt of gratitude to Professor Andrew Abbott who anchored me back to the department when I was without an academic advisor. Without him (and his library research method class), I would not have been able to carry on as a PhD student let alone finish and defend this dissertation. He is conversant in all sociological topics, but his knowledge of American cities and urban sociology helped develop the dissertation to what it is today. Most of all, he remained a constant through the many ups and downs during my tenure at the University of Chicago. He was a patient guide who encouraged but never pressured.

I am also deeply grateful to Professor Elisabeth Clemens who has always been a kind and caring mentor. I relied greatly on her constructive critiques to finesse the main points of this dissertation. She also helped me explore the larger role this dissertation can play in academic literature, and her deep knowledge of political sociology contributed much to my understanding of the tradition of charitable giving in the United States. At the same time, Professor Josh Pacewicz's research on two Iowan cities has conferred upon this dissertation a solid theoretical base to stand on. His vision of how American politics work at the grassroots level provided me with new valuable analytical tools. He has been a diligent advisor whose incisive questions and suggestions saw to a continuous improvement of my dissertation.

I would like to thank the Connecticut State Library and the librarians and administrators responsible for its operations. The library's online archives contain a plethora of government documents from transcribed legislative proceedings to Governor Malloy's letter to Aetna. This

dissertation would simply not exist without these documents and the insight they provided. I would also like to thank those who shall remain anonymous for accepting my interview requests. Though I decided against using the interviews in my dissertation in the end, they generously afforded me their time and knowledge. And the interviews proved to be a good primer for understanding the politics and social relations of Hartford and Connecticut, facilitating the nascence of this dissertation. Many people working for the State of Connecticut and the City of Hartford endured a barrage of questions from me, and I am thankful for their prompt and detailed answers. They include Thomas J. Fiore, Jennifer L. Gauthier, and Martin L. Heft at the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, and John Philip, the City Assessor for Hartford.

I could not have completed this dissertation without warm and tireless encouragement from my friends. I am thankful for Maryam Alemzadeh and her husband Ali for their continued friendship beyond graduate school. The accountability meetings with Gyamfuah Sarfo-Mensah sustained me through difficult years as we commiserated over the pandemic and the struggle of balancing our lives with our respective PhD programs. Naeyun Lee and Yaniv Ron-El have been incredible friends who always championed my cause even when I was not able to. At critical junctures, Naeyun was there to provide sage advice. In both life choices and practical matters, she has made a lasting impact. Yaniv made sure I kept to the task, and we shared many moments of frank and honest communication that I will always cherish. When I stepped away from the dissertation for a while, Chelsea was there to support. She has read all my works, and this dissertation is no different. Without her help, the dissertation would no doubt be not as polished as I would like it to be. She has my eternal gratitude.

My family has always been there for me too. My cousins Min Kang and Kim Sunghyun lent sympathetic ears when I was struggling. My mom and dad helped me get to where I am

today, and I owe everything to them. This dissertation is as much theirs as it is mine. Finally, I thank Mike Kelliher who has been my constant companion for the last decade as I worked my way up from a PhD student to a PhD candidate to hopefully a PhD. Mike has been patient, loyal, and supportive without judgment, and he has been there whether I was happy or sad. You are my chosen family, and I love you.

ABSTRACT

Since the early twentieth century, urban sociologists have consistently documented diarchies in American cities. These diarchies are composed of a close alliance between municipal officials and various local economic actors advancing the growth imperative. The growth machine theory typologizes this as a growth machine; the urban regime theory typologizes this as a development regime. Yet, contemporary political economy has led to local economic actors leaving, breaking down the diarchies. It has also conferred much power upon state officials to intervene in local civic affairs instead. Where do local economic actors go? Through what processes do state officials interpose in municipal problems? How do municipal officials act without the diarchies? I analyze the case of fiscal crisis in Hartford, CT between 2016 and 2018, utilizing descriptive statistics and archival data from Connecticut and the city to answer these questions. I find that until the late 1980s, Hartford had a typical diarchical structure with corporate executives from insurance and banking companies adhering to the growth imperative by directing downtown revitalization. Yet, the advent of a post-industrial, financialized economy prompted local economic actors to flock to global cities like New York, peripheralizing Hartford. With the diarchy collapsed and the development regime fragmented, a new class of middle managers professionalized charitable giving, managing the corporate relationship with Hartford in the executives' stead. As a peripheralized Hartford sank into a fiscal crisis, Connecticut officials utilized legal authority and financial largess to intervene. The state itself was experiencing a fiscal issue at the time, which state legislators blamed on the state employees' union. Depending on their party affiliation, different legislators used different languages to denounce state employees and express their positions on Hartford's fiscal crisis, but they all relied on the growth imperative to justify their actions. The neoliberal language of partnership that privileges the

market-based policies and promotes the veneer of harmony juxtaposed the Keynesian language of partisanship that emphasizes labor-business factionalism. Hartford municipal officials mirrored their state counterparts in employing different languages to match their ideologies. I find that the economic style of reasoning, which privileges economic efficiency over moral imperative to encourage state intervention, dominates the municipal officials' political discourse. These findings reframe how American cities operate. Important economic actors have largely departed, leaving behind mid-level managers who wield no political power. In order to manage the fallouts from the long-term economic transition, municipal officials must ally with state officials, who may not be willing to disburse their resources to cities. The growth imperative remains dominant as the unifying ideology of the new regime populated by the state and municipal political actors. This new regime emphasizes the importance of the federal polity while possibly damaging local democracy.

Key words: Connecticut, development regime, Hartford, political discourse, U.S. political economy, urban sociology

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A gloomy day had descended upon Hartford, CT. Clouds hung low, saturating the air with tiny rain droplets, common in New England this time of the year but miserable, nonetheless. On Halloween Eve 2021 just outside Downtown Hartford, there stood a billboard by southbound I-91 near the glittering office towers. The billboard advertised New York City. “Time for NYC,” it trumpeted in a blocky font fit for a kitschy postcard from the 1950s. A giant painting of the Statue of Liberty was emblazoned on the right side of the canvas. The billboard’s call became ever more insistent as the day turned drearier. Why stay when you can zip down to New York City in just a few hours? After all, anyone worth anything wants to go to New York City. Or Boston. Why stay in Hartford?

The billboard is emblematic of Hartford’s dilemma: it is a city stuck between Boston and New York that is struggling to redefine its role in a globalized economy. It is the capital city of Connecticut, and all three branches of the state government reside there. Still, it languishes. Once known as the Insurance Capital of the World with the headquarters of Aetna, the Phoenix Companies, Travelers, and The Hartford Financial Services Group, it now has only The Hartford. The city has been losing population from the postwar high point of 177,397 in 1950 (U.S. Census Bureau 2005) to 121,054 in 2020 (U.S. Census Bureau 2020), a decrease of nearly a third. Now, it has a lower population than New Haven, its rival to the south, and even Bridgeport, arguably the lesser-known old industrial city on Long Island Sound. New Haven has Yale University and the attendant prestige and resources. Stamford, Hartford’s southwesterly cousin, has long ago staked out claims on commuters to New York City. Bridgeport still has a General Electric Company (GE) plant, and the city’s proximity to Stamford allows it to share in the wealth flowing from New York. Hartford, on the other hand, is in a twilight zone – too far

from the bright lights of New York City and Boston to benefit from belonging to their orbits, yet too minuscule to be its own source of urban gravity.

Hartford's descent culminated in a dramatic finale: a fiscal crisis struck the city between 2016 and 2018, and its mayor publicly contemplated filing for Chapter 9 bankruptcy. At a first glance, municipal fiscal distress presents a unique challenge to both local and state-level actors with vested interest in governance. A fiscal crisis undermines the resiliency of a municipality's integral organizations and tests a state's ability to intervene. Because of this, each instance of fiscal crisis elucidates something new about how a multilevel governing apparatus operates under duress. The potential for conflict and cooperation along these disparate but joined levels initially motivated this project.

When we discuss municipal governance in the context of fiscal crisis, there are three actors of interest to note: municipal political actors, state-level political actors, and local economic actors. The relationship between municipal and state-level political actors is predictably easy to comprehend. Should municipal political actors fail to exert control over the budget, which manifests initially as a fiscal crisis and then as a bankruptcy, state-level political actors intervene to force austerity and rein in spending. Because of Dillon's Rule, which stipulates that municipalities only have the rights explicitly granted by the state (24 Iowa 455 [1868]; see Chapter 5, D. The Debate Surrounding 2017 H.B. No. 7050), the influence of state-level political actors necessarily trumps that of municipal actors. Yet, extant theories miss the relationship between state and municipal political actors as a tangible factor in urban governance. This poses a theoretical puzzle that this dissertation seeks to solve.

Meanwhile, the relationship between municipal political actors and economic actors is less official and more complex. Local economic actors do not have a formalized role in urban

governance. Instead, they utilize their financial resources as a means to extend their influence within the government. Despite their differences, theories on urban governance all share a strong assumption that business interests have a major role in municipal politics. If the theories reflect reality, we should expect economic actors to be important in determining the resolution of serious civic problems such as a case of municipal fiscal distress.

Detroit is where the reality of urban politics converges with these theories. Detroit filed for Chapter 9 bankruptcy on July 18, 2013. The state officials intervened immediately, but the city's businesses did the heavy lifting, initially chipping in nearly \$50 million to assist their hometown. The list is long – General Motors, Ford, Fiat Chrysler, Penske Corporation, DTE Energy Foundation, and others (Bomey 2016:153-154). The involvement did not stop there. The charitable foundations established by these businesses engaged in direct talks with Kevyn Orr, Detroit's emergency manager, and Judge Gerald Rosen, the chief mediator, and pledged \$800 million over 20 years to lessen the cuts on pensions and save the Detroit Institute of Art (Bomey 136-149). When their city was in trouble, business leaders stepped in and alleviated the financial pressure on municipal political actors.

However, despite the expectation that municipal fiscal distress should present an excellent opportunity to observe the conflict and cooperation among these varied ruling groups, the Hartford case instead confronts us with a distinct lack of any significant interaction between local political actors and economic actors such as corporate executives. Indeed, the latter group seems to be almost entirely absent. This absence is incongruous with extant theories in urban sociology, for they depend on the strong presumption that cities are polities ruled by a coalition of these two groups.

Therefore, my central research question is: where are Hartford's local economic actors during periods of municipal fiscal crisis? This is not just to say these economic actors are physically absent, but also to suggest another possibility – their actions are lacking given their expected influence. Recognizing their significance in municipal politics, the baseline expectation is that they would intervene actively in local matters as much as elected officials do. However, in the case of Hartford, these business leaders were missing as an identifiable, unified group vying for power.

A. Literature Review

As I mentioned earlier, the theories on urban governance emphasize the role of economic actors. In fact, modern urban sociology is based upon the assumption of *diarchy*: it stresses the immense influence the informal business-government alliance exerts on communal affairs. The convergence of political and economic actors seems to occur in every city, mirroring the development of national power elites who control the government, corporations, and the military simultaneously (Mills 1956:283-288). But how do we change the theories to better account for anomalous situations, such as the absence of economic actors in community governance? In this study, I follow the development trajectory of Hartford's economic actors to better understand the new structure of governance that has replaced the old diarchy.

Traditionally, American municipalities have treated the voters differently based on their tax status, implementing policies more tailored to the needs of the taxpayers. Einhorn observes that in the nineteenth century, these governments saw themselves accountable to those who had “direct personal and pecuniary interests” in community affairs (1991:8, 21), which necessarily precludes those who do not pay taxes. Einhorn calls this a segmentation of governmental

accountability. In an era when local governments relied heavily on special assessment¹ to finance their services, it was logical to give political voice only to property owners in areas of the city that policy decisions would have the most impact (Einhorn 14-18). Until political machines became ubiquitous, municipalities acted more like publicly traded corporations beholden to propertied voters in each ward (Einhorn 6; Martin 2008:8-10).

Therefore, it is not surprising that ideological affinity brought the business community and local governments closer in form and function. Urban reformers in the early twentieth century saw new multidivisional corporations run by intricate bureaucracies as a good example for local governments (Menes 2006:88). The underlying postulation was that structures favored by businesses are well-tested by the market, which only lets the most efficient and the least corrupt of its participants to survive (Menes 89). By adopting civil service reform, municipal governments were signaling organizational efficiency regardless of actual improvements in their performance (Tolbert and Zucker 1983:25; Menes 79). Nonetheless, this organizational isomorphism and signaling of efficacy were in reality efforts to legitimize the functions of municipal governments in an institutional field that values individual entrepreneurship above all others (Meyer and Rowan 1977:348-353; Warner 1987[1968]:4). In other words, local governments had to prove their worth to taxpayers, oftentimes members of the business class, by remodeling their operational structures in the image of commercial enterprises.

Structural isomorphism tells the story of business-state alliance from the government side. Meanwhile, the private sector took on functions that fall under governmental purview

¹ Profligate spending by local governments following a speculation boom in the 1860s and 70s and increasing taxation to fund infrastructure growth after the Panic of 1873 strengthened public call for austerity. By the turn of the century, many governments had voluntarily cut spending and lowered taxes (Teaford 1984:294-296). To meet the demands for infrastructural investments while keeping the general tax rates low, municipalities began to depend more on special assessment taxes, levies that they channel to specified infrastructure projects. Naturally, only those residing or conducting businesses in areas directly affected by these projects would be required to pay (Teaford 297).

today, thereby defining good citizenship on their terms and finding ways to disseminate the ideology of civic boosterism, a vital component of the growth imperative. One example is the local provision of social welfare. Each city in the U.S. developed its own unique group of elites who came together to monopolize opportunities as well as civic obligations (Clemens 2010:380-381; Lynd and Lynd 1929:460-463). The business community achieved three institutional goals by providing social welfare. First, because business elites could not justify opportunity hoarding in a democratic polity, they used obligation hoarding, e.g., heading civic projects and creating community chests, as a means to gain loyalty and respect of the absolute majority of citizens who were kept out of their exclusive social circles (Clemens 382). In addition, the creation of community chests ingrained upon citizens a sense of belonging (Barman 2006:8-9, 26-27), which business elites found valuable in times of economic crises when they needed to mobilize the entire community to follow their leadership rather than opposing it (Yue 2015:2, 28-29, 35). Finally, because the business community was usually the source of money for charities (Lynd and Lynd 464-465), its members came to wield an inordinate amount of power within newly-centralized charitable organizations and over their cities in extension (Clemens 384-385).

In the U.S., there exists no formalized social barrier among classes, and this permeability has allowed the local business community and the municipal government to create an informal alliance within the constraints of procedural democracy. Yet even in their alliance, governments are junior partners to local business communities, as they usually carry out policies that appeal to commercial actors' desire for perpetual economic development. In fact, when their government partner strays from the growth imperative, representatives of local businesses do not hesitate to rally their resources to bring it back into the fold of the alliance and force pro-growth policies, even at the risk of their city suffering from such confrontation (Swanstrom 1985:166-167, 230).

Given this, Hartford's case presents a significant deviation from the established pattern of interaction between political and economic actors in American cities and enables us to update the theories on urban governance.

Market Theories and The Growth Machine

Over the years, the focus of the community power studies has been swinging between stressing the agency of political actors and the structure imposed by the market like a dialectical pendulum. The earliest group of theorists saw the market as the principal force of change in the city, followed by elite theories and pluralism that brought the local state to the fore. With the advent of a new economy, scholars of urban politics once again turned to the market as the chief agent of transformation. In the 1970s, two exogenous shocks eroded the stability of American urban economy: first, the increasing mobility of capital (Harvey 1982:393-395) that was followed by consequent disinvestments (Bluestone and Harrison 1982:8-10). Cities began to increasingly find themselves in competition against each other to stem disinvestments and capture benefits of mobile capital (Molotch 1976:311), a crucial consequence of which was the politicization of local boosterism (Swanstrom 244; Peck and Tickell 2002:394-395). In this increasingly inhospitable economic environment, the business community has successfully cultivated an ideology that equates economic development to public interest (Molotch 1993:33-34).

Interurban rivalries are common enough in the U.S., but only under the new economy did the competition become all-encompassing. Today, cities are forced to jockey for better market positions against all the other cities in the region, if not the entire country (Harvey 420; Peterson 1981:22). Creating developmental policies to foster economic growth has become the most

notable task for local officials, as better economic performance is one of the few remaining ways to maintain a healthy tax base and generate more resources that can be allocated for the communal good (Peterson 29-30, 41).

Yet, discord can exist among local actors in determining the course of urban development, and the growth machine theory recognizes this possibility. The growth machine theory also introduces variable definitions of the term *development*, as it emphasizes the difference between use and exchange values of urban lands. To put it simply, they assign different values to a property depending on the social context of its disposal (Logan and Molotch 2007[1987]:1-2). For example, if a person lives in a house, they are enjoying its use value; if a person extracts rent from the said house by leasing it out, they are enjoying its exchange value.

Molotch argues that economic growth, consequent population growth, and the increase in exchange value constitute the ultimate goal for American local governments (309-310). This goal evolves into an ideational imperative, namely the growth imperative. In turn, the growth imperative compels local political and economic actors, who are all invested in exploiting the lands and resources to increase exchange value, to coalesce into a growth machine (Molotch 310; Harvey 148). The choice to use the word *machine* to describe the pro-growth business-government alliance is revealing. Machines provide their patrons with undue political influence and economic benefits, and by using this word to label this informal alliance, Molotch seeks to accentuate the negative repercussions of politicization of growth policies.

These Marxians argue that economic growth is not inevitable but is a conscious policy choice implemented by the growth machine (Logan and Molotch 32), which in turn is backed by the rentiers who own the lands (Molotch 1979:293). In some cases when use value of the land exceeds its exchange value, the interests of the growth coalition and those of the rentiers collide,

and the resultant conflict opens up the possibility for an anti-growth coalition to form (299). For instance, the standoff between the growth coalition of the city hall and capitalists who pushed for oil drilling, and the local rentiers who depended on continued growth of tourism industry in Santa Barbara, CA (299) clearly illustrates that local actors can contend for divergent visions of development, thus validating the inclusion of Marxian emphasis of class conflict.

In truth, the tradition of growth imperative and civic boosterism, the concrete programmatic manifestation of such imperative, did not appear out of nowhere. As discussed earlier, American cities underwent a period in their founding years when their governments and local business communities came particularly close together to advance the cause of growth. Einhorn cites the example of Chicago, where the municipal government acted as a banker for the business community, redirecting money from the fund for public schools (44). During the Panic of 1837, the government proved to be a boon for businesses when private sources of credit dried up. Yet, the changing economy in the 1970s exacerbated the fiscal hardships municipal governments faced, the most politically expedient remedy of which was the expansion of their tax base through economic growth. The market was politicized and the focus of the community power studies adjusted to reflect how cities handle exogenous economic stress.

Urban Regimes

The community power studies have continued to oscillate between the market and politics as the source of power that guides urban development². As we have seen, the Marxians emphasize the power of the market to influence politics. Beyond this simple dichotomy of the market and

² For an earlier example of these dialectics, compare the Chicago School of urban sociology to Dahl's public choice theory.

politics, however, concepts of social and systematic integrations offer a new way to analyze how local power structures that plan and execute development policies reproduce themselves.

Marwell and McQuarrie distinguish two different theoretical approaches to understanding social processes of organizations: social integration and systematic integration. The basic unit of social integration is interpersonal interactions, whereas systematic integration is dependent upon the embeddedness of individuals in impersonal institutions of society that include “bureaucratic rules, money, or the written word (2013:129).” The former envisions social processes as consensus-derived, whereas the latter envisions them as conflict-derived (Marwell and McQuarrie 128-129). Marwell and McQuarrie see an unnecessary discord and disconnect between these two perspectives of social processes in urban research. The relationships between communities and higher-level organizations, organizations to the fields they belong, and organizations to larger political entities all come together to draw a complete picture of urban social and systemic transformations (Marwell and McQuarrie 137).

We may contend that Marxian theorists focus too much on systematic integration as the source of capitalist accumulation and persistence of inequality (Marwell and McQuarrie 129-131). Unlike the growth machine theory which precedes it, the urban regime theory stands out as an unusually omnivorous school of thought that makes use of both analytical concepts – social and systematic integration of local power structure. It sees each community of individuals seeking to influence urban policies through personal interactions (social), but the federal polity, the credit market, and changing production modes to which the city is embedded in (systems) intervene to bias the outputs both in regard to the policy choice and the outcome of that policy.

At the same time, the urban regime theory combines aspects of elite theories and the pluralist theory. Superficially, elite theories and the pluralist theory oppose each other. After all,

elite theories focus on a unified elite stratum that controls all aspects of urban governance (Mills 227; Baltzell 1958:9-10) whereas the pluralist theory argues that in a democratic polity, there are simply too many interest groups for a unitary upper class to control all communal decisions (Dahl 1961:83-86, 183, 228; Polsby 1963:25-26). But the urban regime theory seamlessly merges the decision-making apparatus headed by local political and economic actors from elite theories and the coalitional nature of political resource mobilization from pluralism into a ruling regime (Stone 1993:3-17). In other words, the urban regime theory combines “political economy approaches [of elite theories] and political science pluralist approaches” into a hybrid amalgam (Dowding 2001:7).

But with its focus on the diarchy, it is true that elite theories provide a firm ground from which the urban regime theory stands. In 1953, Floyd Hunter published research that looks at structural functions of an integrated urban elite stratum beyond a simple grouping of various elected officials. Hunter finds in Regional City³ a group of commercial elites dominating the elite stratum to the extent that “[t]he test for admission to this circle of decision-makers is almost wholly a man’s position in the business community (1953:79).” Yet, the business community is not the only source of developmental policies as the growth machine theory suggests. The policymaking structure is composed of pyramids of personnel that include all important sectors of urban life such as economic, government, educational, and professional associations (91).

What is noteworthy in Hunter’s observation is the informality of policy formulation system that complements the formal administrative apparatus (Stone 1989:3). Elite members of these groups may get together in private meetings, some as informal as dining clubs, to discuss and formulate new policies, and these committees are characterized by their fluidity. Business

³ Atlanta, GA.

elites claim expertise on economic matters (Swanstrom 16) and “volunteer” their time to articulate policies that align with their interests, and local officials come to expect and even depend on this involvement (Domhoff 1967:174). Policies formulated at these meetings are then implemented by the municipal government (93).

At first glance, this characterization of local power structure is not that different from that of the growth machine theory. Nonetheless, the difference becomes apparent when we observe the kind of elites that form the ruling stratum according to the growth machine theory and the urban regime theory. In the former, it is primarily the landowners who ally with political actors to influence the decision-making process. Their rent-seeking behavior leads to policies that favor extraction of exchange values from their lands. Corporate capitalists are auxiliary (Logan and Molotch 84-85). In the latter, a diverse set of economic elites with corporate heads at the center ally with political actors. This may or may not include landowners. It is a worthwhile exercise to analyze Hartford’s community power through the growth machine theory and the urban regime theory, for both theories emphasize the political economy of a place. Still, as I show in the next chapter, the urban regime theory with corporate executives at the center of the decision-making structure aligns better with Hartford than the growth machine theory with real estate owners at the center. Thus, this dissertation heavily utilizes the urban regime theory and its terminology of the development regime (see below for a discussion on the typology).

The urban regime theory argues that at its most basic level, the government is not a neutral forum for all interest groups to jockey for power as pluralists argue or a blind tool that business elites can exploit to profit as elite theories and Marxian market theories argue. Instead, the government is a biased arbiter with limited agency that allows the ruling coalition – different

from the electoral coalition (Stone 7) – to perpetuate the power structure in place (Stone 1976:206). The power structure in turn determines the kind of regime a city maintains.

Clarence Stone takes a cue from Hunter and proceeds to formulate a typology of urban regimes. The urban regime theory separates the day-to-day governance from procedural democracy embodied by elections, so that in practice, electoral democracy coexists side by side with unequal distribution of political power. There are four archetypical urban regimes in the United States: a maintenance regime, a development regime, a middle-class social activist regime, and a regime supported by a mobilized lower class.

Out of the four ideal types, the first two require the lowest amount of resources to create and sustain. The maintenance regime simply provides existing services (Stone 18). This is a regime that satisfices, not optimizes. The development regime, which is similar to the growth machine in how it operates, coordinates institutional elites within and without the government to help increase the exchange value of the city (Stone 23). The government is not an impartial arbiter that distributes opportunities equitably to all involved interest groups (Stone 4) but has its own agenda and actively champions interests that cater to their concerns. I show in Chapters 2 and 3 that Hartford's past is defined by a development regime with corporate executives at its center.

The middle-class progressive regime requires coordination outside the government and business and is therefore more complex to manage. Finally, the mass mobilization regime is the trickiest to build and successfully retain since it requires all citizens to constantly intervene in everyday governance and remain politically active. It is direct democracy in action.

The urban regime theory is especially useful because it does not assign a fixed number on regime categories, allowing for case-by-case application. But this does not mean a regime is a

simple descriptor to be attached to any number of different kinds of coalitions. Indeed, to be recognized as a regime, a coalition must be anchored by “a distinctive policy agenda” and include cross-sectoral political, economic, and social actors who remain in place despite personnel and electoral changes, reflecting the strength of the specific ideology around which it forms (Dowding 14).

In many cases, the growth imperative constitutes the unifying ideology and a source of legitimacy for the regime. In fact, in this dissertation, the growth imperative serves as an ideological fount for important actors. From the Bishops, a group of white, male corporate executives in Hartford, to state legislators and Mayor Luke Bronin of Hartford, the actors rely on the growth imperative to advance their agenda whether the expectation of continued economic growth is realistic or not. Hartford’s development regime headed by the Bishops had the growth imperative at its ideological center.

Given the coalitional nature of urban regimes, we are starting to find that hybrid regimes that incorporate parts of these four ideal types also exist. McQuarrie observes that the Great Recession begat a new heterarchic institution of governance in Cleveland. Within this heterarchic institution are political, economic, and social organizations from the federal level to the neighborhood level, all voluntarily coming together to build low-income housing. This kind of comprehensive cooperation is possible only through accommodation of both the growth machine and grassroots neighborhood groups (McQuarrie 2011:261). Interestingly, despite the appearance of coalitional nature of this regime, we see the continuing dominance of the growth imperative, as development and net profit increasingly become the standard by which even non-profit organizations are evaluated (McQuarrie 257-259). This is due to the ascendancy of what

Elizabeth Popp Berman calls “the economic style of reasoning (2022:5-6),” which is a salient feature of the discussion surrounding Hartford’s fiscal crisis as I explicate in Chapter 5.

Another possibility to consider is that some fundamental shift has taken place in the configuration of actors within the development regime. Pacewicz finds that increasing partisanship has alienated economic actors from local politics following the demise of the Keynesian state, to the extent that they shun overtly political occurrences (2016:280). Through the changes in the philosophical approach to local development, politics has become dislocated from community governance. While the Keynesian state was about internal contestation between businesses and the labor, neoliberal reforms⁴ validated a partnership approach to governance by which local economic actors could exert influence without having to directly participate in partisan politics (Pacewicz 2016a:127-131). Since local economic actors now stress the importance of consensus and can head big-tent urban development organizations, they have less need to explicitly ally with politicians. This in turn leads to gradual disengagement from issues that could be construed as partisan (Pacewicz 281), which may include negotiations to combat budget shortfalls and avoid municipal bankruptcy.

The urban regime theory is the most sophisticated and malleable thesis on community power to date, for it introduces the possibility for informal institutions that operate at the interpersonal level and can supplant the legitimate electoral process. At the same time, the urban regime theory allows non-elites to join the ruling stratum by modifying their preferences. For one, it does not take economic growth as the predetermined end result of local political affairs as Marxians are wont to do (Dowding 7-8). It also deconstructs the business-government alliance,

⁴ Pacewicz understands neoliberalism not as an economic doctrine but as a method of governance. He argues that neoliberal reformers share “a preference for impersonal, market-like systems of resource allocation (119),” which may not necessarily have any economical basis. I adopt the same definition in this study.

allowing each component to operate independently and push for divergent goals. These characteristics are extremely useful in framing what we observe in Hartford's case with absent economic actors, which other community power theories would not necessarily be able to explain.

Augmenting and Redeveloping the Theories

Borrowing parts from the theories on urban political economy, especially the urban regime theory, I seek to demonstrate that the rules of coalitional governance have changed. In the process, I argue that extant community power theories fail to synchronize with the realities of contemporary municipal fiscal crisis. The theories of community power have come to depend on the idea of cities as discrete diarchies: local economic actors have formed a tight alliance with their municipal political counterparts and involve themselves in governing their community. However, this view overlooks the changes that have happened to the national economy over the past half century. The theories speak of economic actors pushing their agenda, but we see only political actors in Hartford's crisis. Corporate executives and other relevant business leaders who must be an integral part of the ruling stratum do not appear to engage in the vital negotiation process.

Indeed, the coalitional networks in American cities have undergone a significant metamorphosis that wholly breaks down the assumptions made by existing theories. Pacewicz portrays how contemporary community leaders try to distance themselves from politics as they discuss the most efficacious way to develop their city (175-185). This has a cascading effect of isolating politicians who then go on to stoke partisan fire among their supporters. Because politicians are no longer beholden to decision-making processes dependent on public consensus,

they are given a free pass to advance partisan agendas (Pacewicz 175). And partisan agendas are apparent when we look at the way elected state and municipal officials talk about the fiscal problems facing Connecticut and Hartford in the General Assembly⁵ and joint committee meetings⁶. I delve into the changes in language in Chapters 4 and 5.

For local economic actors, there are two paths. First, the breakdown of the Keynesian state and the rise of globalized, digitalized economy allow local economic actors to transcend the local. Through financialization, mergers, and acquisitions, the primary field of their activities have scaled up to national and even global political and economic development. Second, with corporations professionalizing community outreach, corporate heads no longer need to involve themselves in urban governance. Local economic actors now comprise of a class of professionalized middle managers whose main purpose is inoffensive, apolitical community outreach. For them, the discussion surrounding the prospect of a municipal bankruptcy is too partisan and therefore needlessly conflictual, prompting them to avoid publicly voicing their support one way or the other. These changes point to the need to formulate a community power theory based on each actor's response to a crisis situation by employing the tools provided by the market theories and the urban regime theory but not blindly following them.

At the same time, the theories are silent on how federalism affects municipal governance. A municipal bankruptcy poses a danger to the state's fiscal health as well since it can become a contagion. It may negatively influence the economy and lower the bond ratings of related governing bodies. As I explicate in the next section, states with interventionist laws are always involved in preventing municipal bankruptcies. Yet, there is a definite shortage of theories in

⁵ Connecticut's main legislative body.

⁶ Joint Committees of the General Assembly.

urban sociology that include how American states seek to direct and control their cities. So far, scholars have been focusing solely on local decision-making structure. This structure, however, does not exist in a vacuum, given that state governments precede municipalities in the amount of authority granted by the Constitution of the United States. By observing how local actors interact with the legislature and other various agencies of state governments during a period of extreme fiscal stress, I can bridge this gap in the theoretical field.

B. Outline of Municipal Bankruptcies and Fiscal Crises in the United States

How is a fiscal crisis different from Chapter 9 municipal bankruptcy? What does it mean for a city to experience a fiscal crisis rather than a bankruptcy? It is imperative to understand this distinction as we go forward with the case of Hartford's fiscal crisis. Municipalities may file a petition to declare bankruptcy, but the bankruptcy court must decide whether to accept or refuse such a petition after hearing arguments made by creditors and their states. In fact, the law explicitly states that the court may not interfere with any state's power over municipalities:

Sec. 903. Reservation of State power to control municipalities

This chapter does not limit or impair the power of a State to control, by legislation or otherwise, a municipality of or in such State in the exercise of the political or governmental powers of such municipality [...] (11 U.S.C. Ch. 9 §903 [1978])

In order to better understand the underlying socioeconomic and political conditions that separate successful cases of Chapter 9 bankruptcy versus failures, i.e. fiscal crises that did not result in court intervention, I perform a series of descriptive and correlational statistics. I have compiled data on local, i.e. general governments of any defined administrative unit under the state excluding municipal utilities and competitive enterprises, bankruptcy and fiscal distress events

between 1987 and 2019⁷, state codes on local finances and Chapter 9 Title 11 U.S. Code, and attendant socioeconomic conditions of the places in question. From these data, I coded as outcome variables legal and administrative results of the crisis event. Performing a statistical analysis of these variables should reveal vital elements associated with varying degrees of control each state exerts on municipalities during the periods of fiscal stress.

Including the cases of New York City in 1975 (Phillips-Fein 2017) and Cleveland in 1978 (Swanstrom), there are 81 cases of local general governments declaring bankruptcy, defaulting, or undergoing an instance of fiscal distress in the United States from 1987 to 2019. I have pooled information from Bloomberg Law dockets of Chapter 9 filings (2019), Moody's report on municipal bond defaults and recoveries (Medioli, Strungis, Agarwal, Zheng, and Gates 2017; Medioli, Kanthan, Agarwal, Bui, Strungis, Zheng, and Gates 2018), a California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission study (Holian and Joffe 2013), and a working paper from the Mercatus Center (Gorina and Maher 2016). Bloomberg Law dockets provided most of the bankruptcy cases., i.e. those places that actually filed for Chapter 9 stay and went to the federal bankruptcy court, whereas others provided most of the defaults and fiscal distress cases. I visited each state's official website for state codes, I used U.S. Census Bureau for socioeconomic data, and I used Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED) by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis for federal economic indicators such as federal funds rate.

I coded state laws on Chapter 9 Title 11 U.S.C. by increasing permissiveness:

Explicit prohibition	1
No statutes; implicit prohibition since 1994	2
Authorization with procedural conditions	3
General authorization with unit constraints, e.g., no counties and special districts	4
General authorization	5

⁷ Though with addition of two significant cases before 1987: the budget crisis of New York City in late 1975 and a default of Cleveland in 1978 under Dennis Kucinich's leadership. Other than these two significant cases, only those cases from 1987 to 2019 provided reliable data for analysis according to my research.

Also, Wolman, McManmon, Bell, and Brunori (2010:69-120) have devised good factor indices for comparing local government autonomy across states, and I have included two measures as independent variables: fiscal limits score and home rule score. Naturally, high fiscal limits score and low home rule score indicate less autonomy granted to localities, and vice versa.

Table 1-1. Median and Mean Socioeconomic Data of All Pertinent Places

	Median	Mean	Observations
Proportion of population black	0.124	0.321	81
Proportion of population nonwhite	0.345	0.410	81
College educated	0.332	0.362	81
Unemployment rate proportion	0.090	0.100	81
Family poverty rate	0.173	0.203	81
Individual poverty rate	0.317	0.327	81
Median family income compared to national median	0.641	0.724	79 ⁸
Median individual income compared to national median	0.662	0.771	79 ⁸
Median housing value compared to national median	0.522	0.710	79 ⁸
Civilian labor force in public sector	0.131	0.139	81
Total population	7,366	235,097	81

The absolute majority of the socioeconomic data are not significantly associated with the outcome variables, which suggests that while the root cause of local fiscal distress may be socioeconomic, subsequent resolution of the event is political in nature. I am, however, including brief descriptions of them in order to contextualize the places that I am evaluating. As Table 1-1 shows, they are in general more nonwhite and economically deprived. Both in income and wealth, e.g., housing value, they trail behind the contemporaneous national figures. On average, unemployment rates are higher than the national figures. These socioeconomic features correspond with Hartford's experience as I describe in subsequent chapters. Nonetheless, the vast

⁸ Median incomes and housing value were not available for the 1970 Census, and therefore I was not able to include figures for New York City and Cleveland.

majority of bankruptcies and fiscal crises are by small towns unlike Hartford as the median population figure of 7,366 demonstrates.

Table 1-2. Median and Mean Socioeconomic Data by Event Type

	Median – Bankrupt	Mean – Bankrupt	Median – Less serious	Mean – Less serious
Proportion of population black	0.124	0.343	0.090	0.284
Proportion of population nonwhite	0.418	0.443	0.156	0.356
College educated	0.295	0.335	0.422	0.426
Unemployment rate proportion	0.091	0.098	0.090	0.106
Family poverty rate	0.190	0.219	0.167	0.178
Individual poverty rate	0.361	0.352	0.292	0.281
Median family income compared to national median	0.607	0.684	0.739	0.798
Median individual income compared to national median	0.592	0.723	0.763	0.859
Median housing value compared to national median	0.447	0.706	0.643	0.716
Civilian labor force in public sector	0.133	0.143	0.121	0.130
Total population	2,702	99,265	22,117	190,518
Total observations	51	51	28	28

The primary method of differentiating the cases is by the event type, which I have used as one of the dependent variables. I coded event types by decreasing seriousness of the distress level:

Bankruptcy legally affirmed	1
Bankruptcy dismissed	2
Default	3
Financial distress and/or state intervention	4

Places that have ended up declaring bankruptcy, coded as 1 and 2, therefore going a step further than asking for state assistance during a fiscal distress or defaulting, tend to exhibit marginally worse socioeconomic conditions than those that faced less serious consequences, as Table 1-2 illustrates. The population size is also different, with places that have had their petition for

bankruptcy accepted showing higher median and mean population size than those that have experienced less severe fiscal crises.

Since there are fewer than 100 observed cases, running complex multivariate regressions could report incorrect results as per type I and type II errors⁹. Instead, I have performed a series of pairwise correlations between a dependent variable and an independent variable for this round of preliminary analysis. Table 1-3 portrays the overall results.

Table 1-3. Pairwise Correlations of Bankruptcy Events

	Dismissed	Dismissal Voluntary	Event Type
Republican governor	-0.145	-0.458*	-0.071
Fiscal distress law	-0.142	-0.000	0.212
State intervention	-0.038	-0.385	0.249*
Fiscal limits score	-0.102	-0.408	-0.006
Home rule score	0.062	0.255	0.074
Chapter 9 state law	0.002	0.117	-0.400***
Federal funds rate	-0.021	-0.054	-0.189
CPI inflation	-0.077	-0.140	-0.006
Recessionary period	-0.130	0.281	-0.120
Log-transformed total population	-0.149	-0.064	0.304**
Observations	51	20	81

*P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001

As I mentioned previously, a municipality is free to file a petition to declare bankruptcy, but the bankruptcy court acts as a gatekeeper, deliberating on whether a bankruptcy declaration is merited or not depending on the state's law and the city's finances. Interestingly, there does not appear to be any significant correlation between state-level policies and whether the petitions are dismissed or accepted, but event type correlates significantly with the presence of state budget intervention program and the type of authorization. For the most part, states exert a great

⁹ Type I error is a false positive conclusion, attributing a significant correlation where there is none. Type II error is a false negative conclusion, attributing a null hypothesis when there is a significant correlation.

amount of control over municipalities and they are kept in line, so that only those explicitly authorized to declare bankruptcy do in fact go to the federal court.

The directions of the associations match the expectation, as the presence of an intervention program is positively correlated and the state authorization is negatively correlated to the event type. Meaning, municipalities in interventionist states are less likely than those in laissez-faire states to end up legally bankrupt. Of course, this means that there may exist the problem of multicollinearity between the intervention program and the type of Chapter 9 authorization should I decide to run a variant of multivariate regressions, as Table 1-4 displays. State intervention and Chapter 9 state law, both independent variables, are negatively correlated to each other. The log-transformed total population is also positively correlated with the event type, meaning larger cities were less likely allowed to declare bankruptcy.

Table 1-4. Pairwise Correlations of Predictors of Interest

	Republican governor	State intervention	Chapter 9 state law
Republican governor	1.000		
State intervention	0.105	1.000	
Chapter 9 state law	0.089	-0.257*	1.000

*P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001

Voluntary dismissal of the bankruptcy case presents another clue to understanding the dynamics of the state-local relationship. After the political and electoral realignment in the 1970s, the Republican Party came to advocate strongly for states' rights. In the context of budgetary and administrative control, the analysis shows that Republican governorship is significantly associated with voluntary dismissal of the bankruptcy case at the court. Thus, we can see that states exert an enormous amount of influence over municipalities in their financial and legal decisions. This confirms the need to introduce the aspects of federal governance into the extant theories that lack any recognition of the role of state political actors.

At the same time, we may assume that local economic actors have distinctive interests in the resolution of municipal fiscal crises and bankruptcies. For one, there is a long tradition of local business interests allying with their municipal government to promote economic growth in the United States, as demonstrated by previous research (Einhorn; Lynd and Lynd; Logan and Molotch; Clemens). A fiscal crisis and subsequent bankruptcy would result in a credit crunch and a disruption in growth. But more importantly, government bonds have become commodified investment products with public ratings. Government bonds are, in fact, touted as a safe investment choice as the U.S. public finance sector “is notable for infrequent defaults and extraordinary stability since 1970 (Medioli et al. 6).” Moody’s notes, however, that “[i]n extreme stress, [...] a municipal government will very likely choose to maintain basic services, and pay teachers and policemen before bondholders (Medioli et al. 6).” Thus, to ensure they are paid back in full, creditors have an interest in guaranteeing state intervention and preventing a crisis deteriorating into bankruptcy. A case of municipal fiscal crisis such as the one Hartford underwent should prove to be a particularly useful case for evaluating the strong assumptions about business interests in municipal politics shared by the theories on urban governance.

C. Methods, Data, and Case

While the rest of this dissertation analyzes recent events from 2015 to 2018, it is based on historical research. I observe and analyze one case that poses empirical and theoretical deviation: Hartford, CT. In urban sociology, the detailed case study has been the default method of research for generations. Starting with Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess of the Chicago School (1984[1967]:vii) to the Lynds’ Muncie, IN to Clarence Stone’s Atlanta to Saskia Sassen’s New York, London, and Tokyo (2001), case studies abound in urban sociology. Though this study

seeks to introduce new concepts and ideas to the existing theories, it follows on the footsteps of preceding case studies to understand urban phenomena.

I apply a two-pronged approach to this case study of Hartford, both of which rely on found materials. The original purposes of these materials do not necessarily include in-depth analyses such as the ones I perform in this study (Abbott 2014:ix). Rather, they are for recordkeeping and to inform the public on the important matters at hand. First, I have compiled an extensive collection of quantitative data on Connecticut and Hartford. On the relationship between the State of Connecticut and the City of Hartford, these include U.S. Census Bureau data on Hartford's demographics, Connecticut State budget books published each fiscal year by the Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut Grand Lists of local taxable and tax-exempt properties, the annual list of mill rates of Connecticut municipalities, and the adopted budget books of the City of Hartford. On the evolution of economic actors in Hartford, these include Fortune 500 lists by decade, the lists of largest chambers of commerce in the Greater Hartford Region, and the lists of largest employers in Connecticut. I fuse and shape these quantitative data into various descriptive statistics that illuminate the relationship between the State of Connecticut and the City of Hartford as well as the state of economic actors in Hartford.

Second, I have compiled a broad collection of archival materials. These run the gamut from official government documents to webpages. On the relationship between the state and Hartford, I have gathered transcribed records and public testimonials of Connecticut General Assembly and joint committee meetings from 2015 to 2018 as well as various letters and press releases. On past economic actors of Hartford, I have gathered articles published by major newspapers such as the Hartford Courant and the New York Times that list the important personages over the years and civic projects they sponsored. On contemporary economic actors,

I have looked through websites of charities registered in Hartford and LinkedIn profiles to collect, cross-reference, and verify information on important personages. In Chapter 3, I focus on the economic actors of Hartford, fusing past and present data to create a complete picture of their evolution from a cohesive group of corporate executives controlling the developmental agenda to a fragmented cohort of mid-level managers without much influence over civic affairs. In Chapters 4 and 5, I move on to the federal polity as the primary field of analysis. I analyze the transcribed government documents and testimonials to explicate the different types of languages utilized by relevant political actors in the context of the state-municipal relationship. The use of varied languages in the General Assembly and joint committee meetings is important as the languages and their attendant meanings elucidate ideologies the relevant actors are attempting to advance.

This two-pronged approach produces a full and complete analysis of not only Hartford's fiscal crisis but of the city's history and its relationship with the state. Indeed, this mix of statistical and archival data helps answer the main research question: where are Hartford's local economic actors during periods of municipal fiscal crisis? At the same time, a different combination of the gathered data helps shed light on how the state with its intricate innerworkings interact with Hartford. Thus, I offer the possibility of including the particularities of federal governance into theorizing urban governance. But first, it is imperative to explain the significance of Hartford as a case to study, which I do so in the following section.

Case Study: Hartford, Connecticut

Hartford is a good choice for studying urban governance because its history is shared by many small and medium-sized cities in the Northeastern and Midwestern U.S., which avails the case

for comparisons. Since the postwar highpoint in the 1950s, Hartford joined the ranks of older industrial cities that lost population and their tax bases. While those with financial means now reside in suburbs like West Hartford, Rocky Hill, and Glastonbury, the economically marginalized population continues to struggle in the city. Despite the similarities shared with other American cities, however, Hartford makes for a strategic choice because its fiscal crisis deviates so significantly from the theories' perspective of municipal politics as I have previously discussed.

Hartford's status as a state capital also undercuts the city's ability to tax. Properties affiliated with the state government, educational institutions, and other non-profits are not taxable. Despite this idiosyncrasy, the city relies heavily on property taxes. In fiscal year 2013, 47.62% of Hartford's total revenue (\$254 million) came from property taxes while 46.81% (\$250 million) came from intergovernmental revenues, including state and federal transfers. For comparison, only 11.62% of net revenues (\$68 million) came from general property taxes and 1.15% (\$6.7 million) came from intergovernmental transfers in Lafayette, LA, a city of comparable size of 121,374 residents, in the same period (Lafayette Consolidated Government 2012:35). Connecticut municipalities rely heavily on property taxes, meaning that a shrinking tax base from population loss and the capital status both threaten Hartford's finances.

We can trace the cause of the city's recent brush with fiscal instability to the fact that Hartford is a state capital with a declining tax base. The publicized crisis began with Luke Bronin taking office as the mayor on January 1, 2016. From the outset of his election campaign, Bronin has been vocal about the fiscal pitfalls the city faces and their underlying causes. He has consistently asserted that as the center of the larger metropolitan area, the city provides vital services but cannot rely on reliable sources of revenue as its suburbs do. Once in office, Bronin

took concrete measures to restrict the city's budget: halting all nonessential hirings (Carlesso 2016b; February 25) and maneuvering to renegotiate labor contracts and pension obligations (Bronin 2016; March 17). But the crisis was a protracted process. Credit rating agency Moody's downgraded the city's rating once in April 2016 (The Hartford Courant 2016a; April 20), and then again in October (The Hartford Courant 2016b; October 7).

From early on, Bronin aggressively advanced the city's negotiating position. By asking the state's Municipal Financial Advisory Commission (MFAC) to review the city's finances (Carlesso 2016c; November 4), he gained political legitimacy for increased state help and mediation with the city employees' unions. He also mentioned the Chapter 9 filing as a possibility while giving the state various alternatives such as a new oversight board that would handle negotiations with municipal labor, more sales tax, creation of a regional tax, or shared services with other municipalities in the area (Carlesso 2016a; November 7).

The state's response remained anemic because it faced budget shortfalls of its own. By conventional economic measures, Connecticut is one of the richest states in the U.S. Its median household income in 2021 stood at \$83,572 in the sixth place behind California, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Jersey (U.S. Census Bureau 2021)¹⁰. This figure is nearly \$15,000 higher than the U.S. median household income of \$69,021¹¹. Yet it faces a problem that has exacerbated the state's fiscal health: loss of businesses and population from urban regeneration. Connecticut's corporations and people are moving back to New York and Boston to enjoy new urban amenities (Thompson 2017; Greenblatt 2017). Connecticut with its smaller cities and suburban towns cannot compete. Moreover, before the Great Recession, state officials

¹⁰ Connecticut is also a highly unequal state. Its Gini index of 0.4972 puts the state well above the national figure of 0.4818 and in the second place among states behind only New York (U.S. Census Bureau 2021b).

¹¹ All figures are based on American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates.

decided to issue rebates worth \$100 million and leave the pension funds underfunded (Greenblatt). Decreasing revenues combined with underfunded pension obligations create problems for the state today, similar to Hartford's position.

Most of the conflict during the city's fiscal crisis was in the state legislature. In 2017, Connecticut had a deficit of \$3.5 billion and the General Assembly could not agree on the annual budget for the 2018-2019 biennium. This impasse continued well into July 1, when the new fiscal year began. Having achieved no progress on the legislation to provide extra funding for the city and create an oversight board that he advocated for, Bronin began to publicly explore law firms that specialize in Chapter 9 (Carlesso 2017c; May 9). Two months later, the city hired law firm Greenberg Traurig for the task of filing for bankruptcy (Carlesso 2017b; July 6). Whether these were signaling moves rather than actual preparations for bankruptcy is unclear from the narratives provided by the press.

The tide soon began to turn. The city council argued against bankruptcy (Carlesso 2017a; September 11), and the state legislature finally approved the budget for fiscal years 2018 and 2019 that included Bronin's proposal of a new oversight board (Altimari and Keating 2017b; October 26). The state would provide Hartford with \$40 million with the condition that it accepts the oversight board's authority to control its finances and contracts. In December, the city council approved Bronin's proposal to ask for the state's intervention, and in March 2018, the city officially sanctioned the state's bailout plan. Subsequently, the state oversight board, the Municipal Accountability Review Board (MARB), endorsed a five-year recovery plan for the city (Carlesso 2018b; May 3) and its budget (Carlesso 2018a; June 7), ending the two-and-a-half-year long fiscal crisis.

As the account above shows, the state was deeply involved in the resolution of Hartford's fiscal crisis in spite of its own financial difficulties. This encapsulates the need to introduce state political actors into the theories on urban governance. And Hartford makes for a perfect case study to accomplish this as state engagement averted the city's bankruptcy.

Meanwhile, agents representing economic interests, a constituent of ruling coalition in theory, were almost entirely absent in the negotiation process at the state legislature, the city hall, and unions, unlike what has been postulated by existing theories. Two exceptions to this trend actually accentuate this pointed absence. The first event took place in March 2017, when chief executive officers of the three major insurance companies Aetna, The Hartford, and Travelers decided to donate \$50 million to the city (Bertolini, Swift, and Schinitzer 2017). This move happened in the backdrop of an increasing fiscal pressure but did little in the way of resolving the structural problem that beleaguered the city. The donors specifically stipulated that the money be spent on continued provision of social services spread out over five years in \$10 million increments. To contextualize this amount, in 2016 Hartford's budget reached \$566 million and, similarly to previous years, the city had to rely on the state grants to pay for half of this (Rojas and Williams 2017). For fiscal year 2018, the city projected its deficit to reach \$65 million (Haigh 2017), which wholly exceeded the amount of donation the three insurance executives were willing to provide.

The second event corresponds better with the general atmosphere of crisis, but its link to the political resolution of this fiscal event is unclear: Aetna, one of the two insurance giants headquartered in Hartford, announced its move out of the city (Hussey and Rosenberg 2017). Neither the New York Times nor the Hartford Courant provides a definitive view on the incentive for the company to make this transition. The press instead focuses on how Hartford as

a mid-sized state capital near New York City has few attractions for young professionals looking for higher quality of life, neatly encapsulating the quandary posed by what Richard Florida has called the Creative Class (2012:186) and the urban hierarchy that favors global cities serving central functions (Alderson and Beckfield 2004:827-846). The extant narrative certainly paints a picture of a crisis on top of a crisis for Hartford. But the concurrence in timing does not equate to causation or even correlation. It is difficult to discern whether the potential move by Aetna had any effect on the cooperative resolution of the crisis or is merely a parallel development.

One could argue that the unclear relationship between the political context, i.e. the fiscal crisis, and the economic phenomenon, i.e. Aetna's potential move, emphasizes the divorce between political and economic actors in Hartford. To economic actors no longer interested in politics of a small place like Hartford, a fiscal crisis does not mean a crisis for their businesses. Rather, the city's ability to retain educated professionals is what makes the decision for economic actors. In his letter to his employees on the decision to move, Mark Bertolini writes, "Our strategy is to continue to grow in the digital space [...], requiring us to expand our access to talent for the knowledge economy (The Hartford Courant 2017a)," echoing Richard Florida's argument. These two seemingly independent events that implicate important economic actors prove that Hartford makes for a strategic case in developing an alternative view of the coalitional configuration that rules over the contemporary American city. In short, compared to what the extant theories argue, current economic actors are disinterested and disengaged from the governance of relatively small places like Hartford.

D. Organization of the Chapters Ahead

The rest of the dissertation is organized as thusly. In Chapter 2, I chronicle Hartford's comprehensive history from its founding to the current era using primary sources such as newspaper articles and secondary sources such as historical research that precedes this dissertation. This chapter is necessary to contextualize the predicaments Hartford has faced before and during the fiscal crisis. I divide the history into two parts with 1960 as the critical juncture. There are two events that serve as the turning points. First, Connecticut dissolved county governments in 1960. The loss of county governments made combining services across municipal borders and achieving economy of scale much more difficult for municipal officials and made regional integration an impossible goal. Second, Connecticut held a constitutional convention and implemented a new constitution in 1965. The founding charter of the Connecticut Colony from 1639 did not provide cities with a legal means to annex their suburbs, limiting the reach of Hartford. At the same time, there was no proportional representation, meaning large urban communities such as Hartford were not able to exercise corresponding power in Connecticut legislature. The 1965 Constitution rectified these features, yet established municipal borders did not change, political and economic integration of the Greater Hartford Region remained out of reach, and Hartford's economic descent continued. And this descent would eventually cause the fiscal issues I discuss in later chapters.

Chapter 2 also delivers a historical view of *the Bishops*, a group of white, male corporate executives who dictated Hartford's development from the early 1960s to the late 1980s. This era coincides with the construction of the Constitution Plaza, the initiation and the failure of the Greater Hartford Process, and the construction of the Hartford Civic Center, all of which the Bishops engaged with in order to advance Hartford's relative position as the political and

economic center of Connecticut. I explain how the appearance of the Bishops clashes with Logan and Molotch's growth machine theory but conforms to the urban regime theory. Logan and Molotch envision a set of actors that includes politicians and local media to lead a growth machine, yet in Hartford's case, it is corporate executives who take the rein. The urban regime theory has no such assumption, and corporate capitalists may situate themselves at the center of the governing regime without creating a theoretical inconsistency.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 all deliver descriptive statistics first followed by archival data analysis. Chapter 3 explores how the changing economic landscape of the United States has affected Hartford. With mergers and acquisitions by large corporations and global cities attracting people and businesses, Hartford has lost its centrality in the national economy. I demonstrate this with data extracted from Fortune 500 lists over the years, showing that the number of large corporate headquarters has diminished in Hartford while swelling in southern and western states. I also use the lists of the largest employers in Connecticut over the years and the lists of the largest chambers of commerce in the Greater Hartford Region to illustrate this sea change in the economy. This story by itself is not unique: many American cities in the Northeast and the Midwest – Detroit is one of the most famous examples – experienced similar processes of peripheralization from the national economy (McQuarrie 2017:S127). The next part of the research brings forth Hartford's uniqueness among these cases.

I then discuss the demise of the Bishops as a group in the late 1980s, resulting in the fragmentation of the development regime into competing interest groups. Next, I investigate websites of 505 charitable organizations officially registered in Hartford in 2023 to collect names, professional affiliations, and occupation titles of the board directors. I cross-reference the gathered names against those matching LinkedIn profiles. Through this analysis, I find that those

representing corporate interests in Hartford are now professionalized mid-level managers whose sole purpose is community outreach. I conclude that corporate economic actors were absent during Hartford's fiscal crisis because of this change. These mid-level managers do not have the influence necessary to pull the development regime together or to intervene during the fiscal crisis. As I stated previously, this is important because it deviates so significantly from the extant theories that emphasize economic actors' involvement in civic affairs.

Chapters 4 and 5 both elucidate the role Connecticut plays in preventing Hartford's possible bankruptcy, thereby adding to the extant theories that do not discuss how U.S. federal structure affects municipal governance. At the same time, I chronicle the continuing dominance of the growth imperative in contemporary policy discourse. I start Chapter 4 with a comprehensive breakdown of Connecticut's financial position through the period of Hartford's fiscal crisis. I find that the state has been suffering from the aftereffect of the Great Recession, consequently stagnant revenue collections, and the decrease in federal transfers. I then proceed to examine the languages used by state political actors, in particular state legislators during General Assembly sessions, to understand how they framed Connecticut's fiscal problems vis-à-vis Hartford's fiscal crisis.

I rely on Pacewicz's framework of the dichotomy between Keynesian partisanship and neoliberal partnership to categorize and analyze the legislators' rhetoric. The language of Keynesian partisanship stresses the labor-business axis of factionalism, thereby characterizing every decision as a result of a zero-sum competition. The language of neoliberal partnership, on the other hand, stresses the importance of public consensus and market solutions to communal problems. The Republican legislators use both rhetorical devices to build an argument that Connecticut is in a permanent fiscal crisis and that the Democrats are exacerbating the situation

by resisting the logic of the market and protecting the state employees' union. The latter point forms an important parallel between Connecticut's and Hartford's fiscal issues: both polities are wrestling with the demands of the labor. But even more crucially, I find the continuing dominance of the growth imperative as a policy directive that controls the Bishops, state legislators, and municipal political actors equally. The Republican legislators use the growth imperative as an ideological front for their political performance as they advocate for lower taxes.

Chapter 5 first examines the fiscal position of Hartford before and during the city's fiscal crisis. I confirm that the city has indeed been hamstrung in two ways as I mentioned previously: first, its economic decline has resulted in a tax base decline as well, and; second, its capital status makes many of the properties within the city limits tax-exempt, further decreasing the amount of taxes the city may collect. By cross-referencing state and city data, I also find that the federal government and Connecticut have not been consistent in their transfers to Hartford, which exacerbates the fiscal situation even more.

In the latter part of Chapter 5, I observe and analyze the words of four groups of municipal political actors in the state's Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee meetings: Mayor Luke Bronin, the state legislators representing their towns, Hartford Court of Common Council, and the leaders from the city workers' unions. These groups of actors rely on two types of languages that are contradictory: the economic style of reasoning, which emphasizes economic efficiency as the foremost goal to strive for and corresponds well with the language of neoliberal partnership, and the language of moral imperative, which stresses the need for equity and justice in the decision-making process. Mayor Bronin and the state legislators employ the economic style of reasoning to push for the bills that would institute state oversight over

Hartford, weaken collective bargaining rights, and cut benefits and insurance. This economic style of reasoning advances the growth imperative. The city councilmembers and the union leaders employ the language of moral imperative to argue against the bills and discuss what Hartford and its residents deserve.

CHAPTER 2: SITUATING HARTFORD IN CONNECTICUT

Hartford is a poor city. Its household median income of \$37,477 falls far short of the national figure of \$69,021, let alone Connecticut's figure of \$83,572 (U.S. Census Bureau 2021d). Those living under the poverty line amount to 28.4 percent of its population compared to 12.6 percent nationally and 10.0 percent in Connecticut (U.S. Census Bureau 2021c)¹. More than a third of Hartford households² receive aid from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP; U.S. Census Bureau 2021e). But these dire statistics must be situated in the context of Hartford's place in Connecticut's historical development.

More specifically, Hartford's geographical, political, economic, and social conditions are invariably tied to Connecticut's idiosyncratic political system that has been in development since its founding as an English colony. In this chapter, I trace the history of Hartford's political position within Connecticut vis-à-vis the state's changing political rules. I first explain how these rules, especially those regarding legislative representation and administration, were set up from the beginning to limit the political power of Hartford within the state. I then expound the concurrent development of state and urban polities from the late nineteenth century to today, with 1960 as a critical juncture that changed its developmental path, and not necessarily in Hartford's favor.

For the years before 1960, I cover topics ranging from machine politics and Progressive backlash to the emergence and entrenchment of partisan politics. The inflow of immigrants from Europe created an optimal environment for machine politics headed by political bosses. Progressive reformers sought to undercut machines by implementing the Model City Charter,

¹ All Census figures based on American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates.

² 33.9 percent.

thereby changing how the city carries out its executive functions. The Democratic and Republican Parties swept away political bosses and the Progressive reformers by co-opting their fundamental strengths and exploiting their weaknesses. The 1960s presents a turning point in Hartford's political development. County governments were abolished, and the Constitutional Convention was held in 1965, finally giving Hartford fair representation in Connecticut's legislature. Yet the city continued its socioeconomic deterioration. This overview of Hartford's history grounds the subsequent exploration of Hartford's development regime within historical contexts.

In later sections, I discuss how Hartford's development regime, which contains a variation of a growth machine, fits in the historical narrative yet deviates significantly from the growth machine theory. I also cite noteworthy historical events to argue that Hartford offers a unique opportunity to reexamine the theoretical premises I explained in Chapter 1. In both instances, corporate actors behaved as central players in Hartford's growth machine. Meanwhile, the growth machine theory argues that corporate actors are no more than auxiliary players of the growth machine. Therefore, the key feedback loop that sustains Hartford's development regime is different from what the growth machine theory postulates. If the latter emphasizes the increase in land value as the ultimate goal of governance and the means to perpetuate a machine, the former emphasizes fostering the right combination of land and labor force development. Corporate executives perceived their companies' success as dependent on Hartford's success as a major center of the economy, and at the same time, they associated the city's developmental success with their personal achievements.

A. The Limits of Hartford's Reach

Like many cities in the Northeastern United States established before the Revolutionary War, Hartford's physical size is disproportionately small compared to the metropolitan area that it anchors. The city covers just 18.05 square miles and counts approximately 120,000 residents compared to nearly 1.2 million residing in the surrounding metropolitan statistical area (MSA) that bears the city's name³. Only one out of every ten metropolitan residents call Hartford home. In comparison, Vallejo, CA, which filed for Chapter 9 bankruptcy in 2008, counts roughly the same number of people within 49 square miles. Vallejo's metropolitan statistical area contains 453,491 residents (U.S. Census Bureau), which means the central city comprises more than a quarter of the metropolitan population.

Hartford's small geographical size cannot all be attributed to its early founding, however. An idiosyncratic feature in Connecticut's first constitution intensified this issue more so than in other states. The Fundamental Orders of Connecticut (Ludlow 1638), the founding charter of the Connecticut Colony, prepared for future development of towns and cities by allowing for further division of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield – all towns that abut one another along the Connecticut River:

It is Ordered, sentenced and decreed, that Wyndsor, Hartford and Wethersfield shall have power each Town, to send power of their freemen as deputies to every General Court; and *whatsoever other Towns shall be hereafter added to this Jurisdiction*, they shall send so many deputies as the Court shall judge meet, a reasonable proportion to the number of Freemen that are in the said Towns being to be attended therein [...] (Ludlow; italics added for emphasis)

The problem becomes apparent when we consider the fact that there is an article that specifically allows for the breakup of a larger administrative unit but not an article that permits towns to

³ Hartford-East Hartford-Middletown, CT Metropolitan Statistical Area designated by the U.S. Census Bureau contains 54 towns of Hartford County, Middlesex County, and Tolland County. The population of the MSA is 1.2 million. Hartford-East Hartford, CT Combined Statistical Area, also referred to as the Greater Hartford Region, adds Norwich-New London, CT Metropolitan Statistical Area to Hartford-East Hartford-Middletown, CT MSA, increasing the population to nearly 1.5 million.

merge. Central cities in midwestern and western states were free to pursue annexation of surrounding areas until they began to face active resistance in the 1920s when suburban towns gained sufficient political powers (Merriam 1929:7-8). In Connecticut, resistance to annexation and tendency toward fragmentation was a built-in feature in state law since the seventeenth century. In any case, Hartford is sandwiched between Windsor to the north and Wethersfield to the south. As Windsor and Wethersfield are original towns, the law necessarily precludes annexation of these towns by Hartford. Thus was the limit of Hartford's reach, the city that was never able to expand beyond the downtown area. The fact that the city remained in its original land parcel of 18.05 square miles had lasting negative effects on the city's ability to tax itself.

Political representation was another area in which Hartford was disadvantaged. There was no proportional representation in the House of Representatives until 1965. As is common law tradition, the first state constitution promulgated in 1818 recognized the precedents and wholly adopted the representation practice of *the Fundamental Orders*: "The number of representatives from each town shall be the same as at present practised and allowed (The State of Connecticut 1818)."

An amendment in 1874 systemized representation so that every town with more than 5,000 residents enjoys equal representation in the form of two delegates to the House of Representatives (The State of Connecticut 1874). This only exacerbated the issue. Large industry and population centers that experienced sustained growth during industrialization like Hartford and New Haven exercised the same amount of political power as the towns that met the minimum requirement for representation. Meanwhile, this also discouraged annexation of suburbs since those communities subsumed under large cities would completely lose their political representation.

This limitation in the city's growth and the inability to annex surrounding communities, a feature from a historical idiosyncrasy of the Connecticut Colony, would have lasting consequences for Hartford into the twenty-first century. The idiosyncrasy in common law tradition also disadvantaged Hartford in its political representation, which lasted until 1965. These two problematic facets of the state law shaped Hartford's development until the critical juncture in 1960, the history of which I survey in the next section.

B. State and Urban Politics before 1960

Connecticut's modern statewide politics can be divided roughly into two periods with 1960 as the divide. In 1958, the Democrats won all major state offices in a landslide victory, ushering in an era of Democratic majority at the state level and ending Connecticut's status as a competitive state. In 1960 came the dissolution of county governments, which had the effect of functionally fragmenting the state, and following the 1965 Constitutional Convention, Connecticut voters ratified and implemented a new constitution.

In this section, I expound the development of modern politics of Connecticut and Hartford up to 1960, which includes discussions on machine politics, the Model City Charter, and partisan politics. Hartford underwent a period of political control by machines based on immigrant votes, the power of which was broken by the adoption of the Model City Charter and the council-manager system of governance that disconnected political offices from particular geographical locations. As machines disappeared, two major political parties filled the power vacuum, bringing about an era of competitive state politics. Meanwhile, the Democrats monopolized power in Hartford, perpetually relegating the Republicans to second place. As for the issue of disproportional representation discussed in the previous section, these developments

are relevant to the exploration of Hartford's political place within Connecticut. The changing form of governance is especially pertinent as it connects to the discussion of which disparate municipal actors advocated for the conflicting solutions to Hartford's fiscal crisis between 2016 and 2018.

Machine Politics, Progressive Agenda, and the Changes in Hartford's Governance Structure

American cities at the turn of the twentieth century were infamous for their political machines. Despite many criticisms from Progressive reformers, machines thrived because they worked. The conventional academic narrative accepts the premises predicated upon the Progressive Era assumptions and condemns machines for giving out undue benefits to their patrons (Tolbert and Zucker 25) and entrenching ethno-racial differences by appealing to tribal sense of loyalty (Park 1984[1925]:35-36). Yet, machines also provided tangible benefits from such small things like "the gift of a Christmas basket to the needy" to services vital to communal wellbeing such as "the social function that the political club performed (Lockard 1959:308-309)." Political bosses were also held accountable to some degree by voters, so they could not be too egregious in their corrupt dealings (Menes 78, 86). The anti-machine rhetoric misses the real struggle for political control between the political bosses relying on the common electorate's mandate and business actors who fronted as Progressive reformers (Kaufman 2002:98-100).

In 1900, 13.7 percent of U.S. population was foreign-born. 23.4 percent of the white population had foreign-born parents. (U.S. Census 1900). The percentage in New England states far exceeded the national figures. In Connecticut, 26.2 percent was foreign-born while an additional 31.6 percent of the state's white population had foreign-born parents. The figures for Hartford County were higher still, with 28.1 percent foreign-born and 32.6 percent of the white

population descended from foreign-born parents (U.S. Census). In exchange for jobs and favors, this diverse group of immigrant population and their direct descendants could be organized into an inclusive grassroots political group that may act as a casting vote in urban elections (Mandelbaum 1990[1965]:70-71; Brown and Warner 1992:294-295). Thus, with such a high concentration of foreign-born population who were convinced to cast votes as a bloc, Connecticut and Hartford proved to be fertile ground for the development of political machines.

Countering this trend were the Progressive reformers and their Model City Charter. The reformers represented by the National Civic League⁴ sought to break the dominance of political machines and to reconstitute municipal governments in the form and function closely adhering to those of private corporations. Voters would act as stockholders, and municipal governments would act as deliverers of service (Tolbert and Zucker 25). To that end, the National Civic League created a template for municipalities called the Model City Charter. Establishing a basis for the modern council-manager form of local governance, the second edition of the Model City Charter in 1915 advocated for an election of councilors, none that were beholden to particular districts within the city and none beholden to any particular political party (Svara 2020:44). The councilors would hire professionals to lead each municipal department, and while one of the councilors would be designated the head of the council, they held no executive power. McKee and Bacon observe that the council-manager model was a radical departure from how the federal or the state governments were organized (2013:223). Within the model exists no separation of power, and no real means of checks and balances (McGrath 2022:45).

In 1947, Hartford residents voted to abandon the weak-mayor model and adopt the council-manager form (Frederickson, Johnson, and Wood 2004:145) touted by the National Civic

⁴ Founded in 1894.

League. One of the theories on this decision speaks directly to waning Republican dominance in Connecticut. It asserts that as the state increasingly turned Democratic in all districts⁵, the Republican Party saw the capital implementing the council-manager model, specifically known for its non-partisan character, as a good way to stem the rival party's growth (McKee and Bacon 223).

The governance structure underwent another change in 1969 when the city instituted a direct election for mayorship and diminished the power of the city council, the Hartford Court of Common Council. This did not mean a return to a strong mayor system, however. While Hartford citizens voted mayors in, it was the city manager appointed by the city council who held the executive power (Frederickson et al. 145). The general framework of governance based on the council-manager model would persist until 2003 when the result of a referendum changed the city charter again, and the office of mayor regained its executive function (Frederickson et al. 147).

Partisan Politics

The Republican dominance in Connecticut following the Civil War lasted until the "Al Smith campaign of 1928 and the Wall Street crash (Lockard 229)," emphasizing the state's transition from a one-party state to a competitive one over the first half of the twentieth century. Until the seminal 1968 election and Nixon's Southern Strategy, Connecticut remained a competitive state for both major parties, prompting them to utilize high internal discipline to secure electoral and legislative victories (Lockard 1954:167-168). Party organization leadership commanded deference and much influence (Rose 1992:8), especially since Connecticut had no party primary

⁵ Registered Democrats increased until they outnumbered registered Republicans in 1960 (Reiter 1979:206).

law until 1955 (Reiter 206). Consequently, the competition between the two parties was fierce in the mid-twentieth century: from 1931 to 1958 the control of Connecticut's governorship and legislative houses belonged to competing parties for 18 years, compared to zero in New Hampshire and Vermont (Lockard 323).

This competitiveness stemmed from the division within Connecticut that carved up the state into three discrete parts: rural towns, suburbs, and urban centers. Due to the apportionment of the House of Representatives discussed previously, the ten percent of the population residing in the countryside among many small towns enjoyed half the representation (Lockard 228). Despite the massive migratory flow to the New England states, these small towns were still populated by the descendants of early colonial settlers, whose historical distrust of the Democratic Party derived from the experience of the Civil War naturally pushed them toward the Republicans (Lockard 229, 235). Suburbs populated by commuters to New York City tended to be wealthy and therefore voted Republican as well (Lockard 236-238).

Tempering the state's Republican support was the large contingent of Democratic support within industrial cities. In 1983, a staff writer for the *Courant* described the situation in Hartford thusly:

The powerful in Hartford most assuredly do not include this city's Republican Party. Even the word, "underdog" somehow seems inadequate. Republicans here are outnumbered by Democrats by more than 7-to-1. The average age of the Hartford Republican voter is 65. The city has elected only one GOP mayor in the last 35 years (Morse 1983:A11).

Lockard explains this lean toward the Democratic Party on three axes: "industrialization, ethnic minorities, and Catholicism (239)." Advanced industrialization had given rise to a powerful labor movement that allied with the Democrats (Lockard 241, 286). Meanwhile, the insurance lobby along with upper class aligned itself with the Republican Party.

Still, not until after 1960 were the cities overwhelmingly Democratic. The Republicans maintained machines in cities as well (Lockard 238). The difference was that the state Democratic Party became organized around city bosses, whose power bases were necessarily local. This meant that the state party was less centralized compared to its Republican counterpart (Lockard 258). The machines operated at a personal level. In Hartford, a lawyer named John Moran Bailey who served as state chairman of the party led the charge for the genesis of a Democratic party machine based upon alliances with organized labor and political moderates (Reiter 206). He handpicked potential council members and helped their election campaigns on the premise that they would act Democratic. Once they won the non-partisan elections and were appointed as members of the city council, he would control their actions through dinner meetings held at “the Bailey Room,” a literal backroom at the Parma Restaurant (McKee and Bacon 224). In these meetings, he formulated policies and commanded new members to follow the official position of the council manager closely, reviving the executive function in de facto without introducing any of the checks and balances. These backroom dealings would later be mirrored by the rise of the corporate executives at the center of the development regime.

As the head of the Connecticut Democratic Central Committee from 1946 and the head of the Democratic National Committee after the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960, Bailey was appraised as “one of the most effective political bosses in the country for more than 25 years” by the New York Times (2003). The emergence of John Moran Bailey and his control of Hartford politics were unforeseen by those who championed the council-manager form of governance, almost ironic given the theory that the Republican Party pursued this development in order to stem the encroachment of the Democrats on state politics.

Still, it was not as though the Democratic Party was a party of underdogs before 1968. After all, Connecticut was a competitive state for both major parties in the years leading up to the Constitutional Convention. Unlike Connecticut General Assembly's House, the representative apportionment in the Senate was based on population, so the Democratic Party easily maintained control there (Lockard 274). The slim advantage Republicans held over Democrats broke in the 1958 election, which saw a landslide victory for the Democrats in governorship, both chambers of the General Assembly, and all Congressional candidates (Reiter 206). In fact, this landslide victory for Democrats led directly to the political watershed moment in 1960.

Before 1965, home rule had made little impact on the governing landscape of Connecticut. Local governments derived much of their power from specific legislation passed by the state legislature to the extent that Lockard decried local officials who relied on the legislature to decide even the most minute matters of governance (293). In fact, the situation became so unsustainable that the state legislature actually passed a law that prevented local legislation in 1957. Nevertheless, this was undercut by a loophole that allowed local officials or petitions signed by over ten percent of the local voters to prompt the state legislature to produce local legislation. Indeed, there was no real motivation for both political parties to undercut local legislation, for it provided an easy means for them to rein in state representatives who may otherwise be tempted to break from their ranks.

Like many Northeastern cities at the turn of the century, machine politics dominated Hartford due to a high immigrant population and their direct descendants. The Progressive Reformers sought to undercut the machines by attempting to institute a council-manager system of governance in the city, which occurred in 1947 long after the Progressive Era ended. This implementation of the council-manager model is attributed to the Republicans' desire to disrupt

the Democratic growth in cities. Indeed, until the Democratic landslide victory of 1958, Connecticut was a competitive state for both the Republicans and the Democrats. This was despite a large contingent of Democratic supporters in industrial cities like Hartford, the statewide political power of whom were suppressed from the skewed representation system in the Connecticut House of Representatives. A constitutional convention in 1965 resolves this issue of disproportional representation, which I delve into alongside further political development of Connecticut and Hartford.

C. State and Urban Politics since 1960

The political landscape in Connecticut irrevocably changed following two major events in the 1960s. First was the abolishment of county governments in 1960, and the second was the Constitutional Convention of 1965 and the ratification of a new state constitution. Both events ostensibly conferred more political powers to individual municipalities and therefore to Hartford, but this positive effect was limited at best. While the new constitution rectified the underrepresentation of Connecticut cities in the House of Representatives by ensuring proportional representation, it did little to improve Hartford's situation. The city was already mired in socioeconomic issues that depressed tax revenues, and the dissolution of county governments made it impossible for the city to cooperate with its surrounding suburbs in coordinating tax policies let alone implementing a revenue sharing system. Conversely, political fragmentation from the lack of county governments deepened the distinct unwillingness of suburbs to engage with the city. Meanwhile, the white flight and in-migration of African Americans and Puerto Ricans transformed Hartford into a majority-minority city, altering the dynamics of its electoral politics.

Abolishment of County Governments and the Radical Change in State Taxation Policy

The first radical change came in the form of the abolishment of county governments in 1960. As mentioned in the previous section, the Democratic Party won the 1958 election by a landslide, winning all contested major positions. With John Moran Bailey at its helm, the party made a campaign promise that if it were to win both the gubernatorial seat and the two houses of the General Assembly, it would eliminate the inefficient county governments (Kravsow 1958:3) and convene a constitutional convention (The Hartford Courant 1958:B1). The functions of county governments were initially allocated among local governments with the state taking on some.

In order to remedy the gap left by this move, the General Assembly created a number of government bodies: the Department of Community Affairs, the regional councils of governments, and the regional planning agencies (McKee and Bacon 226). Despite their namesakes, these organizations lacked actual political authority to implement any of the plans they created⁶. Moreover, the regional councils of governments were staffed with unpaid, untrained members. The state had an important juncture in which it could have shored up these agencies and create functioning regional governments, but it failed to do so. The Capitol Regional Planning Agency (CRPA), which represented 29 metropolitan towns and cities that included Hartford, launched a major report that explained the innerworkings of seven different types of regional governance, ultimately recommending for regional federated governments in Connecticut (Capitol Regional Planning Agency 1967). This would have been tantamount to the resurrection of county governments since regional planning agencies largely coincided with former county lines (Augur 2023).

⁶ Connecticut does not have unincorporated areas outside municipalities. With the demise of county governments, the state divided into 169 municipalities.

This recommendation, however, was not implemented until 1971, and it then fell by the wayside when fiscally conservative Republican, Thomas J. Meskill, took office as the governor (McKee and Bacon 226). One of his first acts was to eliminate non-essential government functions in order to combat a mounting budget deficit, which included the Department of Community Affairs. Under this political climate and given the presence of local governments, establishment of an additional government agency that could be construed as redundant was not a probable outcome.

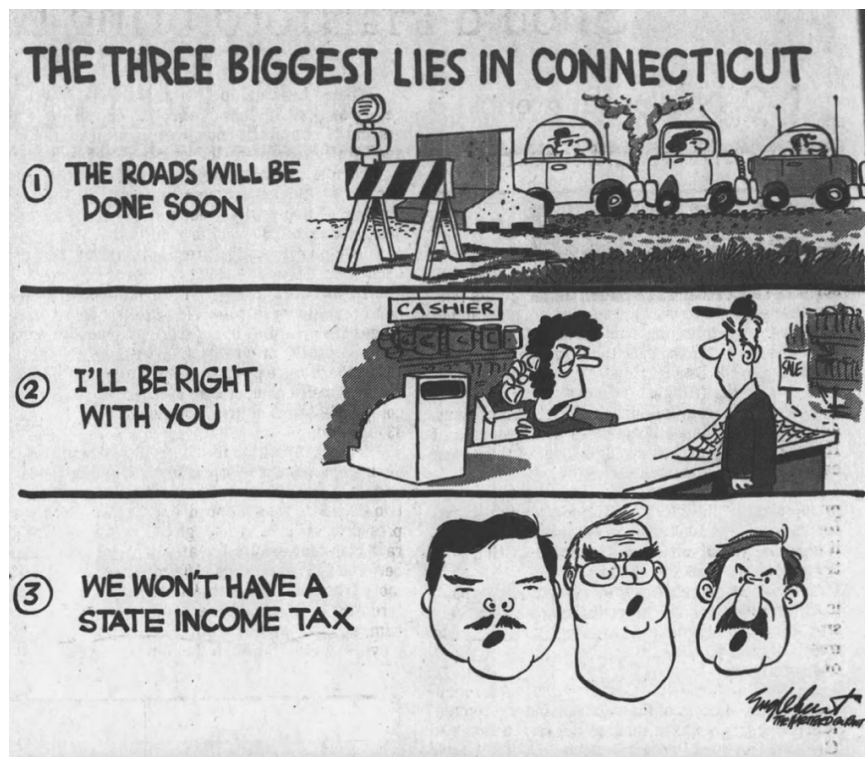


Figure 2-1. The Three Biggest Lies in Connecticut, The Hartford Courant (Sunday, June 10, 1990)

We must note here that budget deficit has a long history in Hartford and Connecticut. Connecticut traditionally relied heavily on different forms of indirect taxation such as sales tax and levies on consumer items, which due to their very nature tended to be regressive: assuming that the rich spend as much on essentials as the poor do, they pay a lower percentage of their income on these taxes. This was not unusual compared to other New England states, though

Connecticut tended to be less regressive (Lockard 329-330). What is notable is that Connecticut did not tax salaries and wages until 1991.

The state did attempt to adopt an income tax along with a host of others during Meskill's tenure in 1971, but the General Assembly repealed the legislation before the tax could actually be implemented (Pazniokas 2019). The state's fiscal condition continued to deteriorate, and by 1990, the sense that the implementation of statewide income tax was inevitable permeated the state (Furbish 2002) as Figure 2-1 illustrates. On February 13, 1991, Governor Lowell P. Weicker announced his plan to overhaul Connecticut's taxation system to the General Assembly. With gubernatorial will and strong support from businesses (Stern 2009:135), the General Assembly accepted the governor's demands after three vetoes by adopting a new 4.5 percent tax on wages and salaries while lowering other taxes such as sales and corporate (Pazniokas). It has been over thirty years since the implementation of state income tax, and today, the state derives nearly half its yearly tax revenues from income tax collections. Yet, the deficits remain an unsolved problem as I show in Chapter 4.

Constitutional Changes and Reapportionment

As I explicated previously, before the 1965 Constitutional Convention, the representative apportionment in the Connecticut General Assembly's House was based on a formula that disfavored densely populated cities. The amendment of 1874 codified the political representation as thus: every community, defined by administrative boundaries and with a minimum threshold of 5,000 residents, was permitted to send two representatives (The State of Connecticut). Consequently, this led to minority control of the state legislature that was detrimental to the interests of large settlements like Hartford. Representatives from small, rural towns and suburban

communities could divert most of the state's funds toward the benefit of their communities, leaving the cities underfunded. On the other hand, most of the state's treasury would be filled by taxing urban districts (Lockard 274).

Baker v. Carr (369 U.S. 186 [1962]), Wesberry v. Sanders (376 U.S. 1 [1964]), and Reynolds v. Sims (377 U.S. 533 [1964]) affirmed the principle of one person, one vote to all American legislative bodies and mandated proper apportionment of representation. These rulings had a direct bearing on Connecticut. In order to implement these rulings and codify a means of reapportionment, the state convened the Constitutional Convention on July 1, 1965 (Zaiman 1965:1). With 84 delegates from the two major parties, it was a partisan event. In addition to reapportionment of House districts, home rule was discussed. In fact, the delegates codified home rule for the first time in the new constitution:

ARTICLE TENTH.
OF HOME RULE.

SEC. 1. The general assembly shall by general law delegate such legislative authority as from time to time it deems appropriate to towns, cities and boroughs relative to the powers, organization, and form of government of such political subdivisions... After July 1, 1969, the general assembly shall enact no special legislation relative to the powers, organization, terms of elective offices or form of government of any single town, city or borough, except as to (a) borrowing power, (b) validating acts, and (c) formation, consolidation or dissolution of any town, city or borough, unless in the delegation of legislative authority by general law the general assembly shall have failed to prescribe the powers necessary to effect the purpose of such special legislation.

SEC. 2. The general assembly may prescribe the methods by which towns, cities and boroughs may establish regional governments and the methods by which towns, cities, boroughs and regional governments may enter into compacts. The general assembly shall prescribe the powers, organization, form, and method of dissolution of any government so established (The State of Connecticut 1965).

Article Tenth on home rule in conjunction with decennial reapportionment codified in Article Third conferred much political power to Hartford along with other major cities. Cities more than suburbs benefited from this formula of proportional representation. Yet, it was only a partial solution to the city's manifold problems, for it resolved neither the lack of cooperation between

Hartford and its surrounding suburbs nor the city’s inability to tax half the properties within its borders.

African American and Puerto Rican Political Engagement

As Table 2-1 suggests, Hartford has been losing its population. The white flight to suburbs played a large role in this, but middle-class and upper-class non-white families have moved away in search of better educational and living environments as well (Simmons 2013:87; Neubeck and Ratcliff 1988:303-304). This decrease has been partly offset by African American and Puerto Rican migration to the city. In fact, Hartford ranks among top five Puerto Rican communities in the contiguous United States after large cities like New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago (U.S. Census Bureau 2021a). Hartford MSA, on the other hand, did not experience population decrease as Table 2-2 demonstrates. At the MSA level, the percentages of black and Hispanic or Latino populations have also increased over the years, though not as dramatically as in the City of Hartford.

Table 2-1. Demographics of Hartford, 1950-2020

Year	Total Population	Black	Black Percentage	Hispanic or Latino	Hispanic Percentage
1950	177,397	12,654	7.13%	N/A	N/A
1960	162,178	24,855	15.33%	N/A	N/A
1970	158,017	44,091	27.90%	11,942	7.56%
1980	136,392	46,186	33.86%	27,898	20.45%
1990	139,739	54,338	38.89%	44,137	31.59%
2000	121,578	46,264	38.05%	49,260	40.52%
2010	124,775	48,331	38.73%	54,185	43.43%
2020	121,054	46,231	38.19%	53,315	44.04%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Table 2-2. Demographics of Hartford-Middlesex-Tolland Counties (Hartford MSA in 2020 Decennial Census), 1950-2020

Year	Total Population	Black	Black Percentage	Hispanic or Latino	Hispanic Percentage
1950	539,661	17,368	3.22%	N/A	N/A
1960	847,157	*34,973	4.13%	N/A	N/A
1970	1,034,993	59,132	5.71%	N/A	N/A
1980	1,051,606	71,614	6.81%	44,191	4.20%
1990	1,123,678	95,376	8.49%	75,909	6.76%
2000	1,148,618	110,500	9.62%	107,490	9.36%
2010	1,212,381	131,929	10.88%	135,199	11.15%
2020	1,213,531	141,209	11.64%	187,902	15.48%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

* 1960 Census divides population into white and non-white only; this figure includes non-white total.

Table 2-3. Census 2020 Population Figures

	Hartford		Hartford MSA		Connecticut		United States	
Total Population	121,054	100.00%	1,213,531	100.00%	3,605,944	100.00%	331,449,281	100.00%
Black	46,231	38.19%	141,209	11.64%	388,675	10.78%	41,104,200	12.40%
Hispanic or Latino	53,315	44.04%	187,902	15.48%	623,293	17.29%	62,080,044	18.73%
Puerto Rican**	40,770	33.68%	122,991	10.13%	298,272	8.27%	5,857,466	1.77%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

** From American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates; a subset of Hispanic or Latino category.

In Hartford today, the white population constitutes less than 20 percent of the total. As Table 2-3 illustrates, more than a third of the city’s population is of Puerto Rican descent while nearly 40 percent is of black descent. As Douglas Massey has shown, racial discrimination and segregation and poverty are significantly correlated in the United States (1990:331, 345, 352). Transformation of Hartford into a majority-minority city therefore has had the effect of concentrating poverty within its borders, further hampering the city’s effort to improve its fiscal position and leaving it with more socioeconomic challenges. Meanwhile, the demographic

growths have presented new political opportunities for the African American and Puerto Rican communities.

Minority representation in the city council began in the 1960s (Simmons 94). Thirman L. Milner was Hartford's first African American mayor elected in 1981, though the limited role of mayorship within the council-manager system frustrated him. Milner eventually urged Carrie Saxon Perry, a state representative, to run (Marshall 1988:66). In 1987, Perry won the election and became the first African American woman to be elected as a mayor of a major American city (Johnson 1993). In the same year, a radical third party named People for Change formed by community, labor, and civil rights organizations gained significant clout and won seats, pushing out the Republicans from the city council (Simmons 95). In 2001, Hartford elected Eddie Perez as its first Hispanic mayor, and he championed the strong-mayor form of government and oversaw the city's transition away from the council-manager form (Sacks 2013:130). These demographic and concomitant political changes in Hartford contextualize what we find at the center of Hartford's development regime between the late 1950s and the late 1980s: a network of corporate executives creating an informal decision-making structure that dictates the city's developmental policies. The corporate executives engaged with political actors to bring economic growth to Hartford and displace the urban poor, fulfilling the definition of a development regime according to the urban regime theory. Interestingly, this configuration of corporate executives at the center significantly deviates from what Molotch and Logan argue is the proper form of a growth machine as I discuss in the subsequent section.

D. Discrepancy between Theory and Hartford's Reality

The history of Hartford's development presents an interesting deviation from the established assumptions of the growth machine theory and affirmation of basic tenets of the urban regime theory. As discussed in the previous chapter, Logan and Molotch argue that the central players of a growth machine include those most invested in increasing the exchange value of a place, and in extension, the rent derived from it (ix-xi). This group counts among its members: politicians and elected officials, local media – “the metropolitan newspaper” in particular –, and leaders of public agencies dependent on a growing user base such as basic utilities (Logan and Molotch 66-74). Auxiliary players include universities, art and cultural institutions, professional sports teams, organized labor, retailers and professionals, and corporate capitalists who are leaders of modern multidivisional firms (Logan and Molotch 75-84). The former group's members are the primary beneficiaries of increasing land value, whereas auxiliary players derive incidental profit from it.

Within the auxiliary group, corporate actors are of primary interest to us. They do not extract rent from the places they conduct businesses in. Instead, they care more about the use value of the place (Logan and Molotch 84). Therefore, according to Logan and Molotch, they are by and large indifferent to local policies that seek to increase the land value, setting their eyes on influencing national policies instead. This postulation necessarily distinguishes the growth machine theory from the urban regime theory, which allows corporate executives representing large businesses and their chamber of commerce to occupy a central position in a development regime (Stone 33-39).

Refuting the growth machine theory and vindicating the urban regime theory in Hartford, it was corporate capitalists that acted as the central organizers and controllers of the machine within the development regime. Along with elected officials, they exerted a centripetal force on

various actors that attempted to create opportunities for land development and growth. In fact, this form of coalitional governance with corporate capitalists at the center is more in line with what Floyd Hunter and Clarence Stone found in Atlanta in the 1950s.

Hunter whittled down the list of Atlanta's prominent elites to forty policymaking leaders. These were the people at the core of the network of elites who set the agenda, who controlled the issues that ended up on the public forum. Out of forty, eleven were executive managers of utility companies and other commercial enterprises and four were high-level government officials. These are expected main players of the city's growth machine. On the other hand, the list also includes two presidents of local unions, seven high-level executives of finances, insurance, and real estate brokering (FIRE) companies, and six corporate attorneys (Hunter 76; see Table 4). If we are to accept Logan and Molotch's assertion, these people would not play a central role in the operation and the perpetuation of a growth machine. And yet, in Atlanta in the 1950s as well as in Hartford, corporate actors played a crucial role in determining the city's development policies.

So, why the discrepancy between the growth machine theory and the reality in Hartford? There are two possibilities. First, Hartford was an important central node in the insurance industry, similar to how global cities position themselves as command centers for various industries (Hawley 1950:256-257; Sassen 3-7; Castells 2010[1996]:414-417). Local corporate actors therefore saw ensuring Hartford's prosperity as a collective good that they must champion and that only they could promote (McKee and Bacon 230-232; Neubeck and Ratcliff 307). They equated the city's improving socioeconomic conditions with their personal achievements, wholly adopting the tenets of the growth imperative. At the same time, Hartford's prosperity would have a positive effect on their companies as it would attract the labor force suited for white-collar

work. As John H. Filer, the chairman of Aetna⁷, said during his interview with the Hartford Courant:

We cannot run a business in an orderly, profitable mode if the community around you is coming apart at the seams [...]. So we are very much dependent on a city that governs itself well, provides the services, the infrastructure – but also that has people living in it who are successful, happy, productive [...]. The community is dependent on companies like Aetna. So, I think they're really interdependent, that's the best word. If we are not healthy, they're not healthy. If they're not healthy, we're not healthy (McCollum 1983:A10).

Second, the de-localization of FIRE industries occurred gradually over decades after the 1980s as capital globalized⁸. Leading up to the globalization event, even those working within the FIRE sector were physically and financially tethered to their immediate localities. Thus, these economic actors were in some respects forced to care about local political economy.

In the next section, I outline a number of instances in which corporate actors – specifically, leaders of local banking and insurance corporations – played a public role in shaping Hartford's urban policies. Despite their political and financial resources, however, these actors were not able to hold the coalition together.

E. Chronicling Hartford's Development Regime

The development regime headed by leading corporate executives called *the Bishops* were successful in some endeavors, unsuccessful in others. The continuity seen in their endeavors is their effort to rehabilitate Hartford. As active participants of a city that experienced a concentration of poverty and population loss, the Bishops saw urban regeneration as their responsibility and the ultimate goal. Nonetheless, the Bishops and the growth coalition in

⁷ Filer also chaired the Commission on Private Philanthropy and Public Needs, better known as the Filer Commission from 1973 to 1975.

⁸ See Chapter 3 for more in-depth discussion.

extension failed to turn the city around as I explain through the case of the Greater Hartford Process. This failure partially contributed to the breakdown of the coalition itself in the late 1980s.

The Bishops

On January 23, 1983, the Hartford Courant ran an article titled, “The Bishops of the Board Rooms Set City’s Course.” The article claimed that a group of banking and insurance executives collectively called the Bishops were responsible for Hartford’s public policies (Martin 1983:A1). The claims of this article were subsequently bolstered with a month-long series of interviews of individual Bishops by Courant reporters (McCollum A1, A10-A11; French 1983:A1, A20-A21; Grant 1983:A1, A8-A9). They attempted to refine the list of individuals who shape the public policies based on C. Wright Mills’s definition of power, that power is held by “those who are able to realize their will even if others resist it⁹ (9).”

In the first article, Antoinette Martin, the staff writer for the Courant, described how a handful of major corporate executives came together and pledged \$11 million for the city to produce 1,000 rehabilitated housing units and to support local businesses (A1). Martin provided a view into the Bishops’ method of operation: the group was composed of ten to fifteen white, male “Bishops” affiliated with Hartford’s insurance and banking interests who gathered for regular breakfast meetings every month (Neubeck and Ratcliff 306). These individuals viewed themselves as paternalistic leaders of the city, going out of their way to research the city’s problems and to seek out their solutions that aligned with their interests (French 1984:A32).

⁹ This is in turn derived from Weber’s three-component theory of stratification.

Table 2-4. The Identified Bishops

Company	Identified “Bishop”
Aetna	- Olcott D. Smith, chairman and CEO (1963-72) - John H. Filer, chairman and CEO (1972-84) - James T. Lynn, chairman and CEO (1984-92)
Cigna	- Henry C. Roberts, president (Extant in 1971) - John K. Armstrong, executive VP (1982-88) - Hartzel Z. Lebed, executive VP (1982-85), representative to the Chamber - Robert E. Patricelli, executive VP (1977-87)
Connecticut Bank and Trust Company	Walter J. Connolly Jr., president (1970-77) and CEO (1977-80) and chairman (1980-85)
Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance	Denis F. Mullane (1983-93)
Dexter Corporation	Worth Loomis, president (1975-88)
G. Fox & Co.	J. Kent McHose, chairman (1982-85)
Hartford National Corp.	Robert L. Newell, president (1975-78) and chairman (1978-87)
Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance	John Gummere, president (1981-87) and CEO (1983-94)
The Hartford	DeRoy C. Thomas, president and CEO (1979-83)
The Travelers Company	- J. Doyle DeWitt, president (1952-65) - Gladden W. Baker, director and chairman of the finance committee (Extant in 1960) - Roger C. Wilkins, chairman (Extant in 1971) - Edward H. Budd, chairman and CEO (1981-1994)
United Technologies	Harry J. Gray, president (1971-86) and chairman (1974-86)
Chamber of Commerce	Arthur J. Lumsden, president (1956-81) Herbert W. Hansen, president (1981-86)

Source: Hartford Courant.

The reason why the Bishops thrived in their apparent secrecy was due to the city’s smaller size and the group’s resultant social cohesiveness. Herbert W. Hansen, the president of Hartford’s Chamber of Commerce, recounted that:

In New York City, you’ve got the downtown lower Manhattan group, and the upper Wall Street crowd. There’s no other place to go in Hartford. [The Bishops] bump into each other at cocktail parties, luncheons, dinners, civic affairs... God, they might as well be roommates. These guys see each other daily, someplace (Martin A18).

An individual Bishop’s residency did not matter in his participation in the group. Most executives lived in the suburbs, but they derived their power from the fact that they represented

the interests of the companies they headed, which in turn paid for a significant portion of the city's revenue (McKee and Bacon 231). The table above shows the Bishops the Hartford Courant has identified over the years.

Though the Hartford Courant coined the term in 1983, the Bishops as a coherent group of corporate executives invested in Hartford's development regime existed as far back as 1960 (Burns 2002:57-58). At the time, Hartford was planning for total redevelopment of a downtown neighborhood called Front Street that was characterized as "run-down [and] ethnic (Hartford Courant 2013)." A mixed-use development called the Constitution Plaza would replace the existing neighborhood. Despite much fanfare, the project immediately faced financing issues as F. H. McGraw and Co., the developer in charge, had trouble producing the fund necessary to purchase the downtown land and break ground (Morse 1959:1-2; The Hartford Courant 1959:22). The Travelers Insurance Companies soon intervened. On January 30, 1960, Gladden W. Baker, chairman of the Travelers finance committee, announced that his company would finance the redevelopment (Morse 1960:1). The Hartford Courant praised the takeover by Travelers, writing, "This is what Hartford has sought for 10 years. And now it is to be (The Hartford Courant 1960:8)."

On March 15, 1960, the president of the Travelers Insurance Companies, J. Doyle DeWitt, stated, "[W]e are investing in the future of our home office city and expressing our confidence the years ahead will be vigorous, eventful and successful ones for this company, for our city [...] (The Hartford Courant 1960)." Indeed, the Bishops and many Hartford residents had high hopes for the Constitution Plaza, an architectural combination of a roof garden, a public plaza, six buildings, and raised connectors. Built at a time when architects were "creating self-sufficient space away from the dirt, clutter and perceived danger of the street (The Hartford

Courant),” the Constitution Plaza was supposed to be a trendsetter in urban living and working. But planned housing for the site was never completed, and the plaza suffered because of it. By 1970, the Constitution Plaza was referred to as “isolated splendor (Hartford Courant 1970).” Still, the plaza was a successful endeavor by the Bishops inasmuch as it changed Hartford’s landscape to accommodate the demands of the growth machine dependent on returns by way of increasing values of real estate.

Table 2-5. The Identified Projects by the Bishops

Project	Year	Bishop in Charge	Success
Constitution Plaza	1960-64	J. Doyle DeWitt; Gladden W. Baker (Travelers)	Yes
Town Meeting for Tomorrow	1964	Olcott D. Smith (Aetna)	Yes
Greater Hartford Process	1970-79	Olcott D. Smith (Aetna); Henry C. Roberts (Cigna); Roger C. Wilkins (Travelers); Arthur J. Lumsden (Chamber of Commerce)	No
Hartford Civic Center and Coliseum (XL Center)	1971-75	Olcott D. Smith; John H. Filer (Aetna)	Yes
Founding Asylum Hill Inc.	1972	John H. Filer (Aetna)	Yes
Founding Leadership Greater Hartford	1977	Worth Loomis (Dexter Corporation)	Yes

Source: Hartford Courant, New York Times

The Bishops led the charge in other aspects of Hartford’s development as the table below clarifies. Olcott D. Smith, the chairman and chief executive officer of Aetna, also served as chairman of “Town Meeting for Tomorrow,” a 1964 conference on the future development of Hartford and its metropolitan region (The Hartford Courant 2000). Smith was an avid advocate for corporate responsibility to Hartford, involving himself in the construction of Hartford Civic Center and Coliseum¹⁰ (The Hartford Courant 1972). When Smith stepped down, he had John H. Filer, his protégé and successor, take control of his civic projects including the support for the

¹⁰ Renamed to the XL Center in 2007 after XL Group purchased the naming right.

construction of Hartford Civic Center (McCollum A10). Filer went on to make his own mark including establishing Asylum Hills Neighborhood Association with the intention of redeveloping the entire neighborhood.

However, the Bishops eventually encountered a project they could not successfully complete as Table 2-5 illustrates. McKee and Bacon assert that the Bishops reacted against the failure of the Greater Hartford Process by closing ranks. Corporate heads that invested in this large-scale urban rehabilitation project saw its failure as an indictment against transparency based on public checks and balances. They instead concluded that a unitary decision-making structure informally guided by the Bishops was a more efficient means of governance that would produce more positive outcomes (McKee and Bacon 231). But it is imperative to understand how the Greater Hartford Process transformed the Bishops' way of interacting with the city. In the following section, I describe how the Bishops attempted to sell the Greater Hartford Process to the public and failed.

The Greater Hartford Process

The Greater Hartford Process had a lofty goal of advancing integrated regional development in a state that lacked county governments. This plan would have built new towns and housing within the Greater Hartford Region that would engage with the city's downtown and revitalize it. The model itself came from the developer James W. Rouse's design for Columbia, MD. Located in a 32 square-mile plot of land in Howard County, part of the Washington-Baltimore-Arlington Combined Statistical Area, the planned town was touted as "the Next America" (Forsyth 2005:119).

Columbia was designed based on the philosophical belief that a planned town needs to provide its residents with benefits of racial and socioeconomic mixing, readily available educational opportunities, and the feeling of close-knit communities (Forsyth 119-122). The contemporary move toward suburbanization in the United States coincided with the white flight and the intentional promotion of racial homogeneity in the new towns that the outflow headed to (Jackson 1985; Sugrue 2014[1996]:266). Rouse sought to fight this trend by ensuring that Columbia was composed of racially integrated neighborhoods (Miller 2017). From the residents' standpoint, the town was a resounding success. In 1998, 79 percent of its residents agreed with the statement that they were "happy with their decision to continue to live in Columbia," which was comparable to the 82 percent who said it was an excellent place to live in the early 1970s (Forsyth 259).

Hartford and its planned suburban town, on the other hand, compare unfavorably against Columbia. Not only did Hartford's development regime fail to realize Rouse's vision, but they failed to launch the project off the ground. The main problem was that there was no coordination among interested actors so that when individuals acted against the group interest, there was no mechanism to appropriately handle the fallout. Another problem was that because the corporate actors spearheaded the effort, there was no political authority to overcome disparate interests of communities that their plan sought to change.

From the start, the Greater Hartford Process was intimately linked to Rouse Corporation's Columbia. The corporate executives in Hartford were familiar with Columbia because the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company (later Cigna) provided the fund for it (Anderson 1971b:15). Again, it is imperative to remember that the corporate executives linked Hartford's prosperity with their companies' success and their sense of personal achievement. They hoped to

emulate the success of James W. Rouse, bring back upper-class and middle-class residents back to Hartford and its immediate environs by rehabilitating downtown areas, break up the concentrated poverty in the city's center by moving the urban poor to a newly constructed suburban town, and improve Hartford's standing among American cities. To do so, they invited Rouse to survey Hartford and donated \$33 million. Out of this total sum, \$3 million was to be spent on creating a proposal and the remaining \$30 million as a working capital (The Hartford Courant 1970:1). After months of preparation, the president of Hartford Chamber of Commerce, Arthur J. Lumsden, presented their three-part plan.

First, the chief executive officers of 20 major corporations in the region formed the Greater Hartford Corporation, which hired a research team to investigate the issues Hartford faced. Second, the Greater Hartford Process, Inc. would be the planning arm headed by the president of the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Henry Roberts and included directors from "business, government, ethnic groups, suburbanites, plus a woman (Lumsden 1971)." The third part of their plan included a citizens' forum, soliciting opinions and suggestions from ordinary Hartford citizens. This part of the plan to include citizenry was shelved, however, and the Courant reported in August 1971 that the secrecy with which the Greater Hartford Process, Inc. operated as a private agency was "[i]rritating (Anderson 1)."

Out of the Greater Hartford Corporation came the Greater Hartford Community Development Corporation. DevCo, as it was colloquially known, was charged with building a new community for the urban poor. More specifically, the organization was responsible for securing funds, buying land, and developing recommendations from items suggested by Hartford citizens (Anderson 15). Problems plagued DevCo from the beginning. In fact, DevCo's failure is partially attributable to the limits set by its leaders at its nascence. In 1971, Lumsden publicized

the plans by DevCo (Condon 2011). The organization had four immovable principles it would base its actions on:

- (1) It shall *not* seize private land for public consumption;
- (2) It shall *not* breach the legal sovereignty of local government;
- (3) It shall *not* disregard the many means by which local government controls and regulates land, e.g., zoning practices, utilities, et cetera;
- (4) It shall *only* rely on the power of ideas (McKee and Bacon 229).

While these principles underscore the length to which the leaders went to anticipate the potential backlash against the development plans, they ended up hobbling the new organization before it even began operating.

At the same time, DevCo overcommitted itself. It embarked on three different projects at once: rehabilitation of South Arsenal neighborhood in northern Hartford to attract upper- and middle-class residents (Anderson 1971a:15), organization and realization of plans to stop urban sprawl, and construction of a completely new community located within Hartford's metropolitan region (McKee and Bacon 229). The new community would take \$200 million and two decades to build and would contain 20,000 residents (Condon). On top of these projects came other miscellaneous goals that were even less well-defined. DevCo would lead the effort to implement "new social and economic values," provide "local government a stronger economic base," and reform existing "institution and community agencies to respond to changing community patterns to change their delivery systems" (McKee and Bacon 229) even though creating an objective metric to measure the success of these endeavors would have been difficult.

The public and the officials immediately gravitated toward the prospect of a new community being built outside of Hartford. And in spite of the concerns about real estate price speculation, DevCo could not keep the lid on the information regarding the new community. Thomas J. Meskill, the governor at the time and an important personage unaffiliated with DevCo, prematurely announced that the new community would be built in Coventry, a town

approximately fifteen miles east of Hartford and close to the University of Connecticut (Young and Smith 1973:1). As the figure below illustrates, the Hartford Courant reported on the parcels of land already sold a day after confirming Meskill's statement.

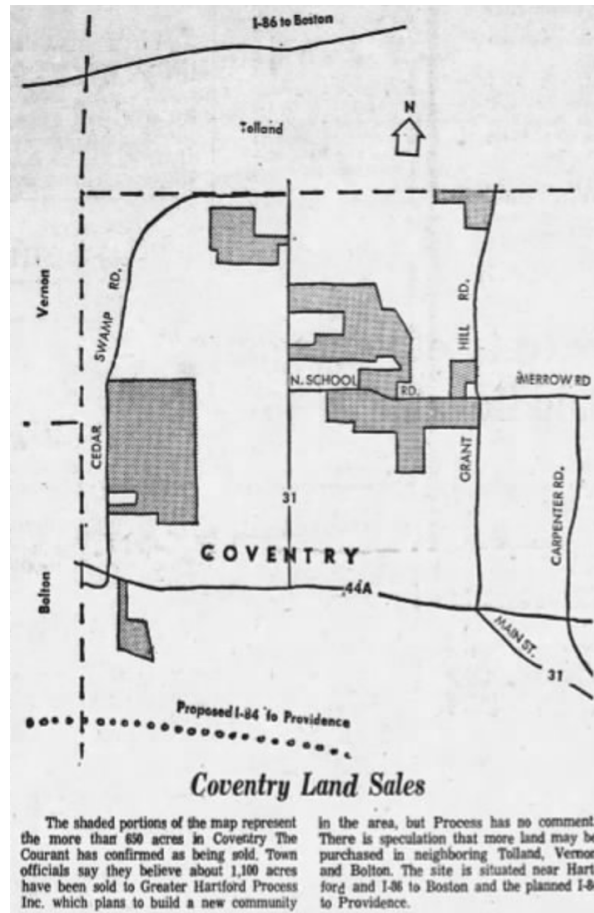


Figure 2-2. Coventry Land Sales, The Hartford Courant (Saturday, January 20, 1973)

The plan was met with skepticism and hostility from both Hartford and Coventry. If actualized, the new community would have been composed of mixed-income population, much like Columbia, MD and house those displaced by the redevelopment plans within Hartford's downtown. It was precisely this goal that spoke to built-in racial tensions. In Hartford, African American community viewed it as an effort to disperse the city's black residents and consequently its political power (Simmons 101).

In Coventry, the residents feared a potential influx of non-white Hartford residents into their town (Young 1973:18). But McKee and Bacon argue that the town residents' views were much more nuanced and were misrepresented in the print media. Clyde McKee and his wife, two outsiders who did not live or own property in Coventry, attended a town meeting called by the selectman and covertly recorded the discourse. McKee asserts that he found a mix of opinions on the new community proposal, including positive responses such as hopes for improved schools and healthcare (McKee and Bacon 230). Instead, the Hartford Courant article on the event published in 1973 focused solely on one attendee's viewpoint that denigrated the proposal (Young 18). DevCo could not overcome the resistance and the bad publicity surrounding the Coventry plan. Moreover, economic fallout of the 1973 oil crisis put the viability of the Coventry plan into question (Condon), and the Greater Hartford Process scrapped it entirely in December 1974 (Young 1975:44).

Meskill's announcement of the Coventry plan was not an isolated instance of information leak. In fact, information leaks continued to plague the Greater Hartford Process. Another leak occurred in January 1975 when the Hartford Courant obtained and published a confidential memorandum written by a DevCo staff person, reportedly the Greater Hartford Process vice president Robert Patricelli (Papirno 1975:2). The primary problem with the memo was that it blatantly stated unspoken goals of the Greater Hartford Process using vocabularies that were racially and socioeconomically offensive (Papirno and Grava 1975:1, 8). It proposed that low-income areas, termed "the ghetto," should be moved away from the downtown area and that new upper-income areas must "buffer" the core. In some neighborhoods, selective relocation of residents would ensure that "welfare populations" would be kept below 15-20 percent of total (Simmons 101). The memo argued that Puerto Rican in-migration must be curbed, equating the

population to welfare dependents. The publication of the confidential memo caused an uproar among Hartford residents of Puerto Rican descent who demonstrated at the dedication ceremony for Hartford Civic Center (Grava 1975:59). With one of its flagship projects shut down and with Hartford businesses pulling out their support, the Greater Hartford Process failed to achieve any of its stated goals. The organization itself was put on life support until it was subsumed to the Chamber of Commerce (Simmons 102).

Logan and Molotch point out that growth machines are not omnipotent (xiii). And tracing the Greater Hartford Process's progress makes it obvious that Hartford's development regime was far from omnipotent. There were three factors that contributed to the failure of the development regime in the 1970s. First, Hartford's limited geographical reach and the central players' corporate background resulted in no political power to enforce the will of the city's growth machine on surrounding communities. Connecticut's fragmented local governance structure added to this problem. Second, the Greater Hartford Process committed itself to too many projects while giving itself none of the requisite powers to carry these out. Finally, the Greater Hartford Process flagrantly ignored the volatile racial and socioeconomic issues that undergirded Hartford's community relations and the city's residents responded appropriately by turning against the rehabilitation proposals.

Hartford's Bishops and their informal decision-making apparatus survived the debacle of the Greater Hartford Process. Nevertheless, the group soon faced a decline. This was because the business environment changed for FIRE corporations. Globalization of capital naturally led to de-localization of industries that depended on the movement of capital (Bluestone and Harrison 40-41; Krippner 2011 33-41). As corporations merged and corporate headquarters moved out of Hartford toward global cities like New York City and Boston, so did the Bishops and their

interests (Burns 58). I cover the dissolution of the Bishops and the decline of Hartford's development regime in detail in the next chapter.

F. Conclusion

From its conception, Hartford was at a disadvantage. The arcane laws that governed Connecticut until 1965 did not give the city any means to expand or proper legislative representation in the state's General Assembly. Hartford's fiscal crisis was preordained from its limited geographical reach, as the city's reliance on real estate property taxes to fund its services inevitably clashed with the proliferation of tax-exempt properties within its small area. Within these limits, Hartford experienced machine politics, Progressive movement, and subsequent partisan politics by the two major parties, the Democrats and the Republicans. Only through the 1965 Constitutional Convention and the ratification of the new state constitution did the issue of political representation resolve for Hartford. Yet, the dissolution of county governments in 1960 made regional cooperation all but impossible, further relegating Hartford to a state of perpetual budget crisis.

With the cards stacked against Hartford, the city's corporate actors sought to advance its interests by banding together in an informal growth machine called the Bishops and try to actualize its vision for the future. This development presents an interesting deviation from the growth machine theory. In short, corporate actors are at the core of the growth machine when theoretically they should be outside. On the other hand, this configuration fits perfectly well within the context of the urban regime theory and the development regime paradigm it poses. The feedback loop that perpetuates the development regime is somewhat different from what drives the growth machine as well. In the case of Hartford's development regime, land value was

not the only motivating factor. The corporate executives were also motivated by the socioeconomic conditions of residents and the ability for the city to attract the kind of labor force right for their companies.

I further explore the Bishops and the group's relationship with Hartford through archival research in the following chapter. First, I develop a comprehensive picture of Hartford's devolution from a central city in the national economy to a peripheralized one over the years. A complex mix of factors such as changing macroeconomic conditions and suburbanization contributed to the city's downfall from the Insurance Capital of the World. By doing so, I set the stage for elucidating the breakdown of Hartford's development regime and the subsequent fragmentation of the growth machine undergirding the regime into segmented interest groups. Such fragmentation explains why economic actors, especially the corporate ones that formed the center of Hartford's growth coalition until the mid-1980s, were absent during the debate of Hartford's fiscal crisis: they had neither the desire nor the clout to affect changes at the citywide level.

CHAPTER 3: THE ABSENT CORPORATE ECONOMIC ACTORS

Hartford is on the losing side of economic history. The American economy has experienced an extensive transition. A Keynesian order based on a mass industrial production system gave way to post-industrialism following the implementation of the floating exchange rate for the U.S. dollar in 1971. The Soviet wheat deal and two energy crises closely followed and increased volatility in the economy. This economic instability discouraged corporations from manufacturing but encouraged them to gain profits by engaging in financial activities such as mergers and acquisitions, leading to the financialization of the national economy. At the same time, global cities like New York rose to further prominence as executive functions centralized. Company headquarters and white-collar professionals flock to global cities, leaving regional centers abandoned and peripheralized.

Here, the term *peripheralization* differs from the term *peripheries*. Peripheries is a geographical term synonymous with “outskirts, determined by their distance to a [pre-given center],” which restricts the term’s application to spatial fringes, e.g., rural areas or border areas (Kühn 2015:368). Cities as large centers of population and focal points of governmental administration cannot be peripheries by definition. Peripheralization, on the other hand, introduces a social dimension to spatial relations (Kühn 369). Its causes are multifaceted, from political to economic to social. Through peripheralization, a place is demoted or downgraded in relation to other spaces (Kühn and Bernt 2013:312). The center-periphery relationship shifts as a place is peripheralized, and the process can occur in central cities as well.

We see socioeconomic peripheralization in Hartford. With mergers and acquisitions by larger corporations and global cities exerting gravitational pull, Hartford has lost its centrality as the insurance capital of the United States. Aetna and Phoenix Mutual as well as United

Technologies, an aerospace manufacturing firm, became subsidiaries to larger companies such as CVS Health, Nassau Financial Group, and Raytheon respectively. And Travelers moved their headquarters to New York. Only The Hartford Financial Services Group retained its independence and headquarters in Hartford. Not only that, but with the departure of General Electric Company in 2016, Connecticut has been relegated to an economically peripheral position as well. This means that economic actors that used to be active in civic affairs – the top executives in large insurance and manufacturing firms – are no longer there to dictate the terms of the city’s development.

In this chapter, we explore the disbandment of the Bishops, a core interest group of white, male senior executives active through the 1960s to the 1980s (see Chapter 2), and the consequent fragmentation of Hartford’s development regime centered on corporate executives. Near the end of their tenure, John H. Filer, the chairman and the chief executive officer of Aetna, played a central role that anchored the Bishops to Hartford (McCollum A10), and with his retirement in 1984, the Bishops began to dissolve (French 1984:A1). All this happened with the changing landscape of the national economy and the breakup of large corporations in the backdrop. In the United States, vertical integration (Sabel and Herrigel 2019:240-241) and multidivisional form (Chandler 1990[1962]:2-7) have been the norm of the corporate world until the 1970s. Yet, the economic shocks rendered it costlier to do business by following the norm, and in AT&T’s case, the U.S. Congress intervened to break its monopoly on communications and equipment in 1982 (Coll 1986:347-380). By the 1980s, the national economy had radically transformed into something different just as the Keynesian partisanship had given way to neoliberal partnership in local governance.

Today, with the Bishops gone, Hartford still receives support from its corporations in the form of charitable giving, but there are no concerted efforts to bring about programmatic changes, no ambitious vision to overhaul the city's downtown area to spur growth. Instead, mid-level managers have professionalized their corporations' relationship with Hartford. They are numerous but wield much less influence than their senior executive superiors. In turn, senior executives who still remain in Hartford today, are far less involved than the Bishops, focusing their efforts on low-risk charities that promote non-confrontational causes like education, museums, and performing arts. With its core destroyed, Hartford's development regime has splintered into individual groups of interest that do not overlap. Through testimonials given by corporate groups and insurance industry associations at public hearings of the Connecticut General Assembly, I show that these interest groups set narrow boundaries on what constitutes their core interest. This has resulted in the pronounced absence of economic actors in the resolution of Hartford's fiscal crisis between 2016 and 2018.

In regard to Hartford, the story of peripheralization and marginalization of a regional economy within the national network of economies is not a unique one. Every developed country has undergone a varying degree of deindustrialization and a dismantling of old Keynesian institutions. In the United States, the working-class voters in the Rust Belt challenged the center-left Democratic Party that adopted the economic policies that disadvantaged the Midwestern states (McQuarrie S127). Instead of supporting Hilary Clinton in 2016 as they had done with Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012, these voters championed Donald Trump, a racist, misogynist, and nativist candidate who inveighed against the economic system that robbed the central position the Midwest had occupied in the American economy (McQuarrie S144). Even in Europe where the "urban system proves robust despite the crisis," the difference between regional cities

and primate cities like London and Paris that enjoy a higher average income, higher productivity, and demographic growth has deepened (King and Le Galès 2017:S26). In Japan, the aging population and its overall decline have been concentrated to peripheral rural towns (Wirth, Elis, Müller, and Yamamoto 2016:65-66).

Hartford as a peripheralized city is special, however. There, important business executives altogether stopped from participating in the local political processes. Those who remained are minor actors tethered to the city in less significant ways and have even less power to affect change. In Allentown, PA, Sean Safford found an intact network of economic actors that actively participated in civic affairs to advance the city's cause; in Youngstown, OH, Safford found the similar network collapsed, leaving the city leaderless as it faced external shocks (Safford 2009:139-143, 146-149). Socioeconomically, Allentown fared better than Youngstown because economic actors took a direct interest in the city's future. Hartford is somewhere in the middle between Allentown and Youngstown. The economic actors of national import have long since dissolved their core group of interest known as the Bishops and departed from the city. The development regime disappeared along with them, and only fractured interest groups remain in the aftermath. Yet, middle managers of large corporations still fulfill a role of connecting these important companies to Hartford through professionalized charitable giving. There are no more John H. Filers who viewed the city's development as a personal achievement and wielded the resources of the entirety of their companies as they saw fit, but there are vice presidents of community outreach aplenty. This chapter thus details the double transformation: one in which the national economy transitions from the Keynesian, mass production system to post-industrialism, and; one in which Hartford sheds its central position in the national economy and

becomes peripheralized. The new configuration of marginal economic actors embodies this peripheralization.

A. Changes in the National Economy and Hartford's Declining Importance

This first section explicates the declining importance of Hartford in the national economy through a series of exploratory statistics. But before doing so, it is worth exploring how the configuration of the national economy has changed over the years. It contextualizes the findings of this chapter on Hartford within the larger frame of the U.S. economy. At the same time, this historical analysis further contextualizes next chapters that rely on Keynesian factionalism, the moral imperative, neoliberal partnership, and the economic style of reasoning to explain different languages used by public officials.

Historical Evolution of the American Economy

A severe economic downturn that started with the stock market crash in 1929 necessitated a direct intervention by a centralized government. The U.S. government obliged by abandoning its laissez-faire and localized approach to governance and building up bureaucracies at the federal and state levels. This transition was especially pronounced in the administration of social welfare, an area where local private charities used to dominate before the Great Depression. The institution of decentralized policy implementation remained entrenched (Wallis, Fishback, and Kantor 2006:368-370), but welfare administrators trained by the federal government and states took over the operation (Tani 2016:8; Lynd and Lynd 466-468) with more centralized oversight in tow (Wallis, Fishback, and Kantor 368), and municipal and state governments became highly reliant on federal transfers (Monkkonen 1995:32, 116).

Keynesian economics, which gained ascendancy following the initial years of the Depression, legitimated governmental intervention in the market. Fighting an overseas war on two fronts against Germany, Japan, and Italy only made the need for a centralized coordination of production more urgent. The war ensured the recovery from the Depression, with real GDP doubling size between 1939 and 1944 (Gordon 2016:536). Between 1940 and 1945, the total outlays of the federal government grew by nearly tenfold from \$9.47 billion, 9.6 percent of GDP, to \$92.71 billion, 41 percent of GDP (U.S. Office of Management and Budget 2023). Enlarged and empowered, the government bureaucracies and their dependents maintained their centrality after the war.

In addition to shoring up regulatory powers, the federal government raised individual and corporate taxes in order to fund war efforts, both of which depressed the income share of top earners (Piketty and Saez 2003:13). This period is also notable for productivity growth and diffusion of technological advances in regular households. Gordon elucidates that the growth rate of total factor productivity¹ steadily increased from 1920 to 1950, only to decrease and then stagnate thereafter (Gordon 547).

Historical contingencies forced the state's hand and Keynesianism provided a theoretical tool to justify governmental intervention. Even more significant for analyzing local politics is the fact that the federal government did not retreat from these roles after the war, and instead set a new developmental trajectory. The construction of the Keynesian state, through which the federal government gained the administrative power for social engineering and the regulatory power over the market, drove post-war economic growth in the United States. With governmental intervention, capital and labor came to an uneasy compromise, by which the workers gained

¹ An economics term that refers to any part of output not explained by the combination of labor and capital inputs. Technological advances account for this increase.

collective bargaining and wage security in exchange for capital maintaining authority to organize workplace (Castells 1980:92-95). The birth of the Bretton Woods system centered on fixed exchange rates among gold, the U.S. dollar, and other national currencies as well as trade globalization, ensuring that American firms could penetrate overseas consumer markets and expand their operations. Yet the success created by these factors soon inverted and heralded a time of economic trouble by the 1960s.

At first, globalization allowed the U.S. to dominate world trade after three decades of warfare and economic collapse disrupted capital accumulation and technological development in other industrial countries. Globalization, however, turned out to be reciprocal, meaning the U.S. had to open its market to competitions from abroad. With the recovery of Western Europe and Japan, and subsequent rise of Korea and Taiwan as important manufacturing nodes, American firms gradually lost their comparative advantage and America began to accrue trade deficit (Castells 109). Additionally, “the international economy heavily relied on dollar outflows for liquidity (Ki and Jeung 2020:156)” seen in the emergence of the Eurodollar Market (Friedman 1971:16-17), which created a persistent balance of payment issues for the United States. As more money left the U.S., the larger the trade deficits grew.

With the economy losing steam and the process of capital accumulation slowing down, consumer credits and corporate debts provided a temporary reprieve only to lead to new inflationary pressures (Castells 114-123; Krippner 64). These new debts along with the deposits in the Eurodollar Market had to be quantified, increasing the money supply. The Keynesian state oversaw an enormous expansion in social welfare through the New Deal and the Second World War, but ironically it was this growing public sector that contributed to inflation. When the Johnson administration faced the prospect of having to underwrite governmental operations in

addition to the Vietnam War and the Great Society programs, it decided to avoid a tax increase and instead manipulate the money supply. With more money available in the economy, higher inflation was the natural outcome (Krippner 64; Castells 130-132; Piore and Sabel 1984:170). The refusal to raise taxes and the increase in various expenditures such as war efforts and social services created chronic budget shortfalls (Krippner 92). When deficit spending and quantitative easing became the norm and not the exception, the mechanism of the Keynesian state fell into dysfunction: the government took on the primary responsibility for maintaining a delicate equilibrium between employment and inflation in the economy, but it was now forced to choose one and not the other.

The fixed exchange rate between gold and the U.S. dollar which was so essential to the Bretton Woods system became indefensible with the rapidly rising money supply. Thus, the Nixon administration implemented floating exchange rates in 1971. This action conferred a greater freedom in domestic economic policies desired by the government, but it also destabilized the world economy, and undermined American manufacturers' ability to predict the price of the dollar and plan their production accordingly (Piore and Sabel 170-174, 183). In short, the federal government managed to resuscitate the Keynesian state, but weakened the Fordist² production system it was supposed to protect.

The integrated mass production system in the U.S. took another hit following two energy crises in 1973 and 1979 arising from political conflicts in the Middle East and the Soviet wheat deal in 1972. These events undercut the supply of basic goods that were crucial for smooth

² Bob Jessop identifies four distinguishing characteristics of Fordism. It is (1) a capitalist labor process that relies on the technical and social division of labor to produce standardized goods, (2) a macroeconomic regime that relies on simultaneous mass production and mass consumption, (3) a collection of institutions such as the compromise between the capital and labor, a multidivisional corporate form, a Keynesian state that manages aggregate demand, and others as well as (4) a mode of social structuration in which most people depend on individual wage to satisfy their needs for the entirety of their lives (2005[1992]:42-47). In other words, every facet of the American economy I have enumerated in this section.

operation of the mass production system, thereby setting off yet another round of inflationary pressures and intensifying the feeling of uncertainty that many American manufacturers found unacceptable (Piore and Sabel 175-177). They responded in two ways. First, by moving their operations to developing countries with cheaper labor and importing back finished products, which by the 1980s began to negatively impact domestic employment and wages (Revenge 1992:281). Second, by financializing their operations. That is, they restructured their operations so that they would derive much of their income from financial activities rather than their original industries (Ki and Ahn 2020:75-78).

Technological advances that came with external economic shocks further tested the strength of the Fordist system and the social contract based on an unsteady compromise between the labor and the capital. In order to streamline the production and keep the costs down, manufacturers began to automate and lay off workers. As machines became ever more sophisticated and attendant labor skills became more narrowly focused, fragmentation of the production process through subcontracting, outsourcing, and offshoring replaced labor-intensive mass manufacturing of standardized goods that symbolized Fordism (Piore and Sabel 49-51; Aronowitz and DiFazio 1994:305-306; Castells 254).

Perhaps most importantly, trade liberalization and the collapse of the fixed exchange rates broke down geographical limits of capital. From a historical materialist perspective, this was foreseeable. The foremost goal of capitalist production is uninterrupted accumulation and only by circulation can capital gain more value: once rendered, commodities must be sold to produce surplus value, and values accrue with every step of additional circulation. Ironically, in order to facilitate more accumulation, some of the capital must be expended to build immobile infrastructures (Harvey 1982:379-380). The crises of the 1970s helped dissolve fixed capital and

contributed to the creation of the globalized capital that began to circulate freely at increasingly higher speed.

Subcontracting and outsourcing, which devalue labor in favor of automation and force the breakup of obsolete industrial establishments, can be interpreted as the act of releasing bound capital (Harvey 393-395). Thus, an important side effect of the creation of mobile capital was the shift in balance of power between employers and workers: no longer did the labor hold the bargaining power that the Keynesian state promised (Peck 2002:185) and employers could nullify the post-war social contract without negative consequences (Peck 188-189). This imbalance in power translated to the wholesale changes in political discourse, the specifics of which I explain in Chapter 4 and 5. Contentious factionalism gave way to consensus-driven partnership that emphasizes business development.

As I have stressed before, the creation of mobile capital rendered physical capital less important, which favored some places and peripheralized others. Place-specific capital investments suddenly became vulnerable, as they could easily be liquidated and moved elsewhere (Bluestone and Harrison 6-8). Increasing mobility of capital pitted cities against cities and regions against regions as each sought to attract capital. Civic boosterism in the form of neoliberal partnership has become the dominant ideology of local governance, with municipalities, landowners, and real estate developers coming together in an informal alliance to capture some amount of mobile capital (Harvey 420).

The dissolution of fixed capital can lead to creative destruction, which is necessary for the reproduction of capitalism (Schumpeter 1994[1942]:82-83). Nonetheless it is also true that socioeconomic and fiscal conditions of places abandoned by mobile capital have rapidly deteriorated (Bluestone and Harrison 8-10). Disinvestments de-commodified labor power,

pushing many workers out of the market (Molotch 1979:305-306). Capital accumulation went on as before, albeit under a different set of rules, but once displaced by the destruction of fixed capital, the working class found it hard to make up for lost wages and cope with concomitant psychological distress (Bluestone and Harrison 10-11). Even if workers managed to avoid unemployment from disinvestments, implementation of just-in-time production and flexible working arrangements in the 1980s depressed wages and fringe benefits that helped propel many to middle-class status in the 1950s (Wallace and Fullerton 2003:23).

The newfound mobility of capital ended up decimating many urban neighborhoods beyond recovery. In northern cities, the federal government sanctioned informal yet systemic residential segregation that created pockets of concentrated minority presence and intense poverty (Massey 345). The lower-class residents of these neighborhoods faced an even direr situation as corporations broke up urban productive facilities. With the loss of the primary source of wages and communal capital, local businesses had no choice but to close too (Wilson 1996:5). With the departure of factories and the death of small-scale neighborhood businesses came pervasive joblessness (Wilson 18-20, 34-35). This was further exacerbated by employment mismatch, a condition in which new jobs are being created in suburbs but potential employees are residing in inner-city neighborhoods (Wilson 37-42). Hartford was no different than many of its counterparts. It suffered.

The federal government led the way in residential segregation and suburbanization (Quillian 1999:23; Jackson 284). The jobs, especially those of manufacturing, moved to the Sun Belt to exploit a high supply of housing (Glaeser and Tobio 2007:1-5) and policies that cater to the needs of businesses (Holmes 1998:702-704). Central cities in northern states, therefore, held bad cards in their hands even before the 1970s, but economic crises forced on them even worse

cards to play. First came the collapse of the Fordist economic order. Manufacturing became less labor-intensive and trade liberalization encouraged many corporations to simply move their operations abroad where they could exploit cheaper labor if not the most advanced technologies. Then came the capital drain and residential isolation. While suburbs were expanding rapidly into so-called edge cities (Garreau 1991:7), central cities saw most of their middle-class and upper-class residents abscond with mobile capital. The new economy that replaced the Keynesian order was not kind to urban cores either, and their socioeconomic decline continued.

This new economy was decidedly post-industrial. In 1971, Touraine coined the term *post-industrial society*³ and Bell introduced the concept to the U.S. two years later (1973:126-164). They are careful to base their theory of post-industrialism on micro-level struggles within the established class system, thereby emphasizing the continuities within the new economy. Regardless of the changing character of the economy, class cleavages and the struggle for socio-political dominance continued among different groups of people.

As the term *post-industrial* suggests, service, or works that require processing of intangible information, has surpassed manufacturing to become the mainstay of the new economy. Service, however, is a broad category that encompasses every economic activity from domestic work to the provision of utility goods such as transportation to personal services (Bell 127-128). In other words, any activity that involves specific skills rather than goods production to improve the quality of life of consumers can be described as service (Bell 127).

³ To be used interchangeably with “the programmed society” and technocracy (Touraine 1971:3), Touraine sought to understand the new economy from a structural Marxian perspective, arguing that exploitation has been sublimated into alienation. If exploitation, which undergirds industrial mass production, is purely an economic condition, alienation that undergirds the new economy also includes social and political dimensions. The hegemonic ruling class alienates the working class by dictating the terms by which it can relate socially and culturally, hence eliminating the potential source of interclass conflicts before they can arise (Touraine 8-9).

Service occupations in finances, insurance, and real estate brokering (FIRE) in particular have gained ascendancy (Krippner 31-33). This was preceded by the ad hoc deregulation of the financial market by the federal government as it sought to combat social ramifications of credit crunches. As the state expanded its social commitments, the availability of capital became a pressing issue. It could only fund so many programs and projects before credits ran dry, and this led to distributional conflicts among interest groups (Krippner 59). Instead of negotiating a compromise, federal regulators abandoned restrictions on interest rates in the hopes that the market could distribute credits more efficiently (Krippner 73; Lin and Tomaskovic-Devey 2013:1292), a neoliberal solution to a Keynesian problem. In reality, variable interest rates only served to increase the velocity at which credits flowed through the economy, pushing firms to move away from production and obtain more of their income from financial activities like capital investments, mergers, and acquisitions (Bluestone and Harrison 40-41; Krippner 33-41; Lin and Tomaskovic-Devey 1284-1288, 1292).

In the midst of labor polarization between high-end professional and low-end service jobs (Castells 2002[1989]:285, 308; Esping-Andersen 1990:215, 228), cities also formed a network of hierarchical relationships. The global cities act as command centers from which information emanates (Sassen 3-7; Castells 414-417) and where capital investments are absorbed (Molotch and Logan 1985:148-150). Because “the logic of the global” trumps that of “the local” in these nodes, residents who do not partake in the FIRE are marginalized (Castells 2010[1996]:xxxix, 458; Sassen 289-290; Tomaskovic-Devey 1313). At the same time, cities that serve fewer central functions – like Hartford – are systematically subjugated into an unequal relationship with global cities (Alderson and Beckfield 827-846). This skewed power distribution among urban agglomerations results in intense inequality in population and economic growth, and negatively

contributes to extant socioeconomic problems of peripheralized cities in the U.S. Every city that is outranked by a global city seeks to catch up by growing and the new economy has only fueled the drive to develop, hence the enduring neoliberal dogma of the growth imperative in urban politics.

In this section, I traced the history of national economic development in order to contextualize Hartford's fall from a central position within the U.S. to one of many peripheralized regions in the new economy. At the same time, the analysis of national and international economic changes explains what variations exist among urban regime types and how they can shift. The breakdown in the Keynesian order of industrial production into a new post-industrial economy based on service and FIRE has had the effect of concentrating executive functions in a handful of global cities. While the dominant industries in Hartford had included insurance and banking and high-tech manufacturing, the city was not able to escape this trend toward centralization of executive functions. I explicate in the next section that Hartford, despite many advantages, has not been able to capitalize on them and has relinquished its central position to global cities like New York City and Boston.

Changing Economic Landscape of Hartford

To provide concrete evidence of the changes from a mass production system to a service-based economy as well as the rise of a hierarchical relationship among cities mentioned above, I analyze the Fortune Directory lists of top 500 national companies over the years. Specifically, I have compiled, processed, and investigated lists from 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2022. Originally, the Fortune Directory was divided into two distinct parts, presenting the 500 largest U.S. industrial firms by sales revenue and the 500 largest non-industrial firms by asset size. In

1995, the publisher stopped distinguishing between industrial and non-industrial firms and started compiling a comprehensive list with only the 500 largest corporations by yearly revenue (Groves 1995). In order to maintain consistency, I merge the two lists and extract the 500 largest corporations by asset size⁴ for data from the 1970, 1980, and 1990 lists.

First, we demonstrate the increasing centrality of global cities and concurrent decline of peripheral cities by counting the number of metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) companies are headquartered in.

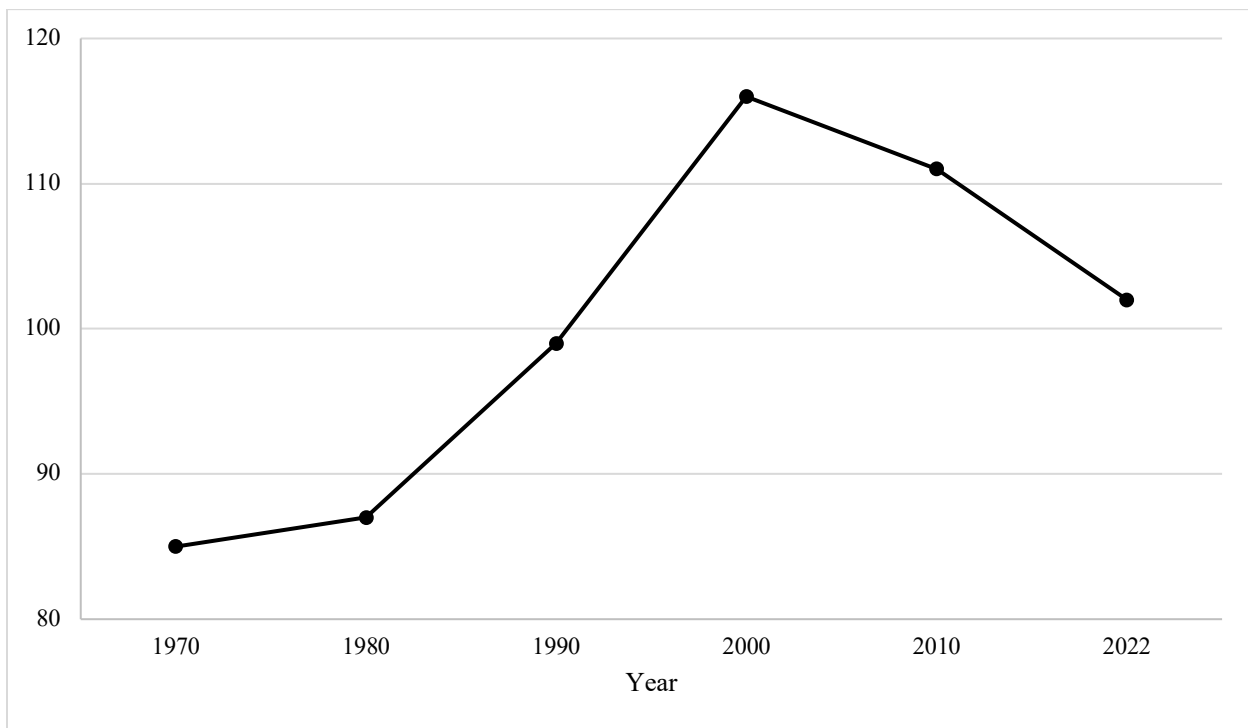


Figure 3-1. Number of Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) Containing Fortune 500 Companies

The figure above shows a trend of increasing diversity in MSAs containing Fortune 500 companies from 99 in 1970 to 116 in 2000. Many company headquarters left the northern states to follow the migration of the labor force to the Sun Belt cities, thereby increasing the number of

⁴ Traditionally, the Fortune ranked the industrial corporations based on their sales revenue, but not for non-industrial corporations. Thus, it is only possible to merge industrial and non-industrial lists by company asset size comparison.

MSAs containing Fortune 500 companies until 2000. However, with mergers and acquisitions and centralization of executive functions, a handful of global cities and their attendant regions have exerted centripetal forces on economic activities, thus leading to a diminishing number of MSAs performing executive functions since 2000. By 2022, the number of MSAs containing Fortune 500 companies has decreased to 102.

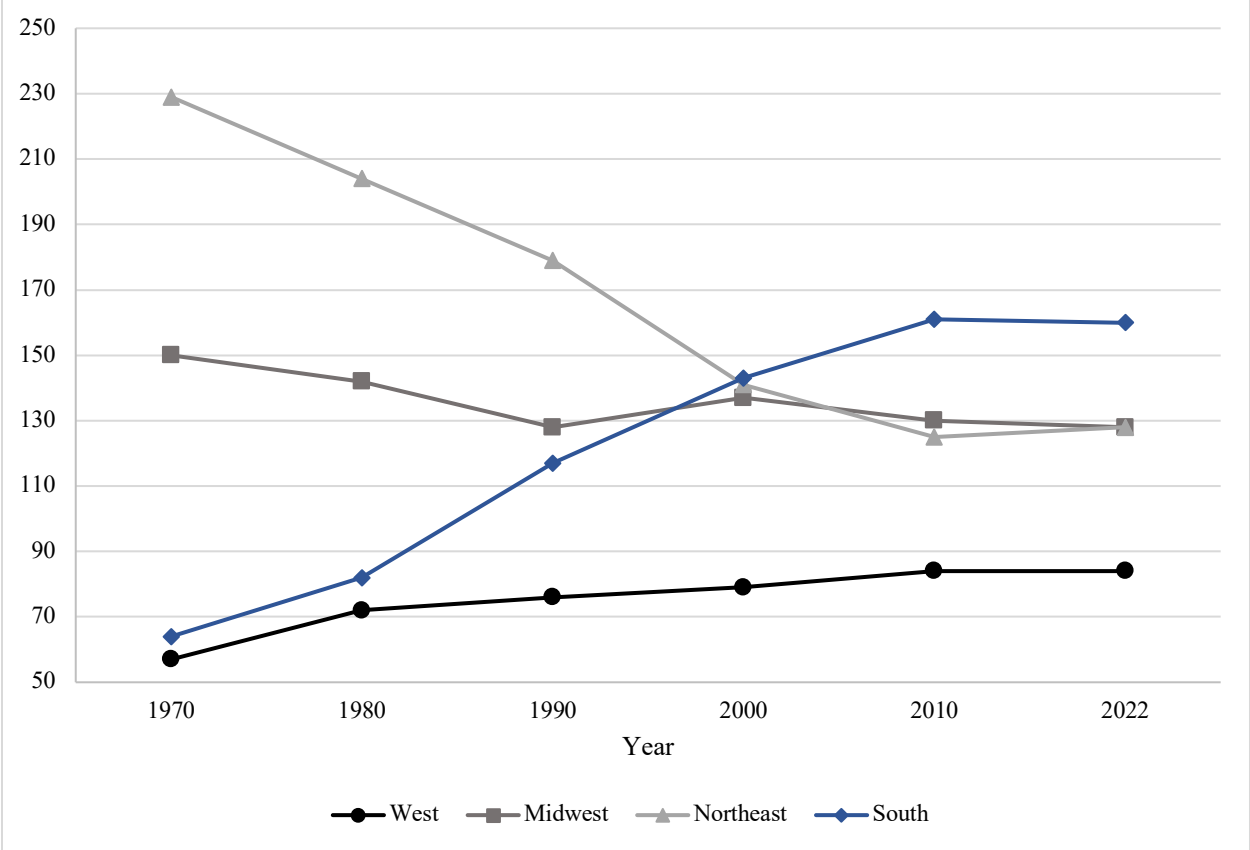


Figure 3-2. Number of Fortune 500 Companies by Census Regions

At the same time, we witness the rising centrality of the Sun Belt and the simultaneous decline of the northern regions. Figure 3-2 illustrates that with nearly half of the Fortune 500 companies headquartered in the region in 1970, the Northeast, home to New York City and its tri-state metropolitan area, dominated as the center of executive functions in the national economy. The Midwest followed in a distant second with 150 companies in 1970, and the South and the West trailing far behind with 64 and 57 companies respectively. By 2000, the numbers

even out with 141 in the Northeast, 137 in the Midwest, and 143 in the South. The South's rise is meteoric over the years, overtaking all other regions and gaining centrality.

The rise of Sun Belt cities and the unraveling of the Keynesian state into neoliberal financialization occurred concurrently, and Connecticut and Hartford ended up on the losing side of the transition. Figure 3-3 traces the changes in the number of Fortune 500 companies headquartered in Connecticut and Hartford. We see that both the state and the city experienced their heydays in 1980 and 1990 with the largest quantity of headquarters. Following the high point of 12 headquarters in 1990, Hartford has only seen a decrease since then. Indeed, the figure stabilizes at 4 in 2010.

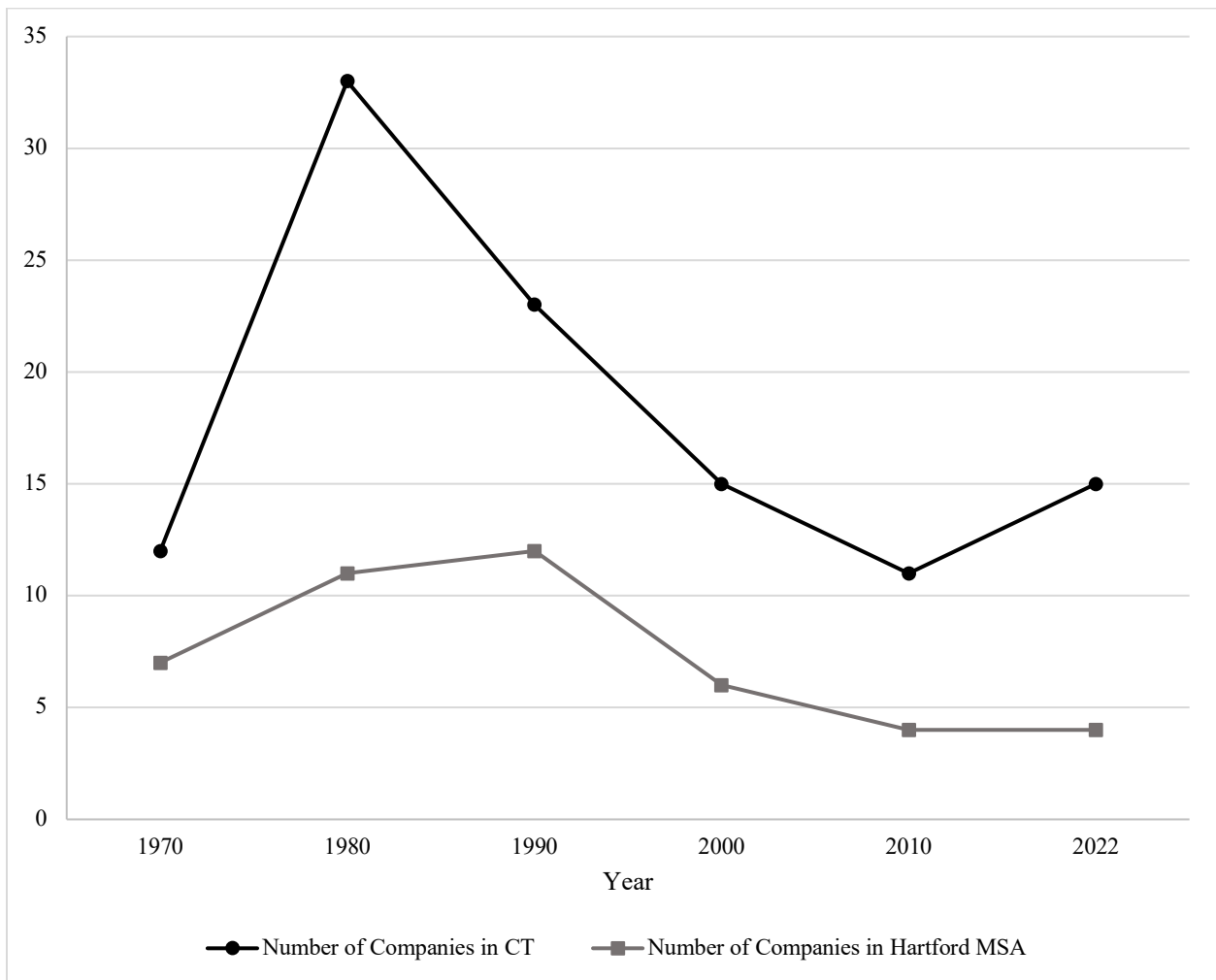


Figure 3-3. Number of Fortune 500 Companies in Connecticut and Hartford MSA

Table 3-1. 1970 Fortune 500 Companies in Hartford MSA

1969 Name	Current Name	HQ City	1969 Assets (\$M)	1969 Type
Aetna		Hartford	6,949.00	Life-insurance
Connecticut General	Cigna	Bloomfield, CT	4,725.00	Life-insurance
Travelers		Hartford	4,506.00	Life-insurance
Connecticut Mutual	MassMutual	Hartford	2,625.00	Life-insurance
United Aircraft	United Technologies	Hartford	1,488.40	Manufacturing
Phoenix Mutual		Hartford	1,333.00	Life-insurance
Northeast Utilities	Eversource Energy	Wethersfield, CT	1,286.00	Utilities

Source: 1970 Fortune 500 Directory.

Table 3-2. 1990 Fortune 500 Companies in Hartford MSA

1989 Name	Current Name	HQ City	1989 Assets (\$M)	1989 Type
Aetna Life & Casualty		Hartford	87,099.00	Diversified-financial
Travelers		Hartford	56,563.00	Diversified-financial
Aetna Life*		Hartford	52,022.60	Life-insurance
Connecticut General Life	Cigna	Bloomfield, CT	33,991.20	Life-insurance
Travelers		Hartford	32,087.50	Life-insurance
United Technologies		Hartford	14,598.20	Manufacturing
Connecticut Mutual Life	MassMutual	Hartford	11,133.70	Life-insurance
Aetna Life & Annuity*		Hartford	9,731.90	Life-insurance
Hartford Life**		Hartford	8,238.80	Life-insurance
Northeast Savings		Hartford	7,942.70	Savings Institutions
Phoenix Mutual Life		Hartford	6,162.60	Life-insurance
Society for Savings***		Hartford	4,417.10	Savings Institutions

Source: 1990 Fortune 500 Directory.

* Wholly owned by Aetna Life & Casualty

** Wholly owned by ITT Inc.

*** Acquired by Bank of Boston on August 31, 1992.

The tables above provide further context to the changes Hartford experienced from 1970 onward.

In 1970, Hartford could indeed boast itself as the insurance capital of the United States. Three of the top ten insurance companies by asset size – Aetna, Connecticut General, and Travelers –

called the Hartford region home. But it also had a significant high-tech manufacturing presence with Pratt & Whitney (see the next section for more explanations) and its parent company, the United Aircraft Corporation, located in the region. With financialization and the boom of mergers and acquisitions, the insurance companies diversified into the financial industry, and by 1990, Hartford had become a hub of financial activity. By assets, Aetna Life & Casualty and Travelers were among the top ten diversified financial companies and had become flagship enterprises of the respective corporations. Aetna Life, Connecticut General Life, and Travelers yet again counted amongst the top ten life insurance companies in the country. The strong tradition of high-tech manufacturing continued as well with United Technologies ranking seventeen among the 500 industrial companies by revenue size.

Table 3-3. 2022 Fortune 500 Companies in Hartford MSA

2022 Name	HQ City	2022 Revenues (\$M)	2022 Assets (\$M)	Type
Cigna	Bloomfield, CT	174,078	154,889	Health Care: Pharmacy and Other
Hartford Financial Services Group	Hartford	22,390	76,578	Insurance: Property and Casualty
Stanley Black & Decker	New Britain, CT	17,252.70	28,180	Home Equipment, Furnishings
Otis Worldwide	Farmington, CT	14,298	12,279	Industrial Machinery

Source: 2022 Fortune Directory.

Things took a turn for worse for Hartford by 2022, however. The number of Fortune 500 companies in Hartford declined significantly to only four in the metropolitan area. Despite maintaining its headquarters in Hartford, Aetna had been bought out by CVS Health in 2017, which had its headquarters in Woonsocket, RI. Travelers relocated its headquarters to Minnesota and then to New York City. The Phoenix Companies maintained its headquarters in Hartford though it lost its independence when acquired by Nassau Financial Group in 2016, and Cigna had always been located in Bloomfield, CT in the city's outskirts, leaving The Hartford Financial

Services Group as the only independent Fortune 500 insurance company left standing in Hartford. In 2020, United Technologies merged with Raytheon Technologies in Arlington, VA. Though some important manufacturers such as the Otis Elevator Company remain in Connecticut, none are to be found in Hartford. In short, after mergers and acquisitions and some shuffling of headquarters, Hartford had lost much of its executive function and had become peripheralized in the network of global cities. And Hartford’s relatively smaller size compared to other major cities⁵ means that every company leaving the town would have an outsized impact.

Table 3-4. 2022 Ten Largest Chambers of Commerce in Greater Hartford

2022 Rank	Company	HQ (All CT)	2022 Members	2016 Members	Minimum Dues	Year Founded
1	Middlesex County	Middletown	1,986	2,100	\$220+	1895
2	Central Connecticut	Bristol	1,600	1,600	N/A	1889
3	West Hartford	West Hartford	575	N/A	\$275+	1908
4	Connecticut River Valley	Glastonbury	538	638	\$195-\$5,000	2016
5	Midstate	Meriden	500	600	\$295-\$10,000	1896
6	Quinnipiac	Wallingford	461	585	\$395	1915
7	MetroHartford Alliance	Hartford	450	600	N/A	1799
8	Greater Manchester	Manchester	425	500	\$305+	1901
9	Simsbury	Simsbury	374	340	\$198-\$1,072	1961
10	Avon/Canton	Avon	350	350	\$140-\$745	1965
10	Cheshire	Cheshire	350	330	N/A	1974
10	Windham Region	Windham	350	378	\$300-\$1,000	1887

Source: 2016 and 2022 Hartford Business Journal Books of Lists.

The peripheralization of Hartford and its diminishing importance can be seen in many aspects of economic measures. For example, Table 3-4 elucidates that the MetroHartford

⁵ In 2020, Hartford’s population of 121,054 put it in 240th place after such regional cities as Independence, MO, Rochester, MN, and Lafayette, LA (U.S. Census Bureau). Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, CT MSA with 1,213,531 residents ranked in 48th place.

Alliance, the primary chamber of commerce for Hartford and the oldest one by far, is only the seventh largest in the Greater Hartford Region. In fact, despite not having the minimum dues to join, its membership shrank by a quarter from 600 in 2016 to 450 in 2022. In a competition for dues-paying members, the MetroHartford Alliance is losing to other chambers of commerce in the metropolitan area. This is a long way from the precursor to the MetroHartford Alliance that provided a vital communication link between the city hall and the Bishops under the leadership of Arthur J. Lumsden and Herbert W. Hansen. Back then, Hartford’s chamber of commerce played an active role in planning and realizing large-scale urban rehabilitation projects (see Chapter 2). The MetroHartford Alliance, reflecting the waning political and economic influence of Hartford itself, no longer holds that kind of power.

Table 3-5. 2021 Socioeconomic Data for Hartford and Hartford MSA

	Hartford, CT	Hartford MSA
Population	121,562	1,213,324
Median Household Income	\$37,477	\$82,359
Poverty Rate	28.43%	10.19%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 3-5 shows that Hartford is socioeconomically isolated from its suburbs, with a median income less than half that and a poverty rate nearly triple that of the metropolitan area. I discussed in Chapter 2 the limits of Hartford’s reach – the city cannot annex surrounding communities, which necessarily restricts its influence within the metropolitan area. This socioeconomic isolation is not an overnight trend. Indeed, Thomas Sugrue argues Detroit’s decline had already begun by the 1950s. In 1950, almost one-fifth of adults in Detroit worked informal jobs or did not work (Sugrue 262). Intense residential segregation by race and class which worsened in the 1970s and 80s, persistent employment discrimination by race, and a secular decrease in blue-collar manufacturing jobs all came together to devastate urban black

communities in Detroit (Sugrue 268-271). Today, Detroit’s center is spatially and economically peripheralized (Kühn and Bernt 313). Though the makeup is different from Detroit’s economy focused on automobile manufacturing, we can observe a similar trend in Hartford. The in-migration of racial and ethnic minorities throughout post-war years and the entrenchment of poverty in the central city constitute a common theme (see Chapter 2, Tables 2-1 and 2-3).

Table 3-6. 1987 Ten Largest Employers in Greater Hartford

1987 Rank	Employer	HQ	Greater Hartford Employees	Total Employees	Type of Business
1	State of Connecticut	Hartford	19,800	58,092	Government
2	Pratt & Whitney, subsidiary of United Technologies	East Hartford	16,890	177,000	Aerospace
3	Aetna Life and Casualty	Hartford	14,200	41,100	Insurance
4	The Travelers Insurance	Hartford	11,000	30,000	Insurance
5	Hamilton Standard, subsidiary of United Technologies	Windsor Locks	9,100	170,000	Aerospace
6	Hartford Insurance Group	Hartford	8,280	23,800	Insurance
7	Cigna	Hartford	7,000	47,000	Insurance
8	Connecticut Bank and Trust	Hartford	5,454	6,400	Banking
9	Hartford Hospital	Hartford	4,863	N/A	Healthcare
10	Combustion Engineering	Windsor	4,500	26,000	Nuclear manufacturing

Source: Hartford Courant

Table 3-6 depicts the preponderance of insurance companies among Greater Hartford’s ten largest employers in 1987. Out of 101,087 residents of Greater Hartford employed by them, 40,480 worked for the insurance companies – Aetna, Travelers, The Hartford, and Cigna –, which is over 40 percent. In 2022, as Table 3-7 demonstrates, the employee figure for these four insurance corporations and their successor companies has dropped to 27,790 Connecticut residents out of 139,969, which is less than 20 percent. Aetna, absorbed by CVS Health, now employs nearly 5,000 fewer people in Connecticut compared to 1987; Travelers 3,600 fewer

employees; The Hartford nearly 2,000 fewer employees, and; Cigna nearly 2,500 fewer employees. The United Technologies Corporation, merged with Raytheon, shed employees as well from more than 25,990⁶ in 1987 to 16,600 in 2022, though it should be noted that earlier figure only counts those in the Greater Hartford Region and likely undercounts the total number of employees in Connecticut.

Along with Table 3-4, Table 3-7 also illustrates that Hartford has lost its central position in Connecticut's economy as well as the national economy. The state government has become the largest employer in Connecticut, which does put Hartford at the center of state politics, yet the city is sorely lacking in private enterprises as employers. As a matter of fact, Table 3-7 additionally highlights the waning importance of Connecticut as a component of the national economy. Out of the ten largest employers in Connecticut, four are based out of the state – Raytheon in Virginia, CVS in Rhode Island, Walmart in Arkansas, and Trinity Health in Michigan. If we envision the national economy as a network composed of hubs of global cities fulfilling executive functions and spokes of peripheralized regions, Hartford and Connecticut are now spokes of peripheralized regions connecting the distinctive centers of New York City and Boston.

⁶ A combined figure of Pratt & Whitney and Hamilton Standard.

Table 3-7. 2022 Largest Employers of Connecticut

2022 CT Rank	2022 Hartford MSA Rank ⁺	Employer	HQ	Connecticut Employees	Total Employees	Type of Business
1	1	State of Connecticut	Hartford	51,374	51,374	Government
2	-	Yale New Haven Health System	New Haven	29,145	N/A	Healthcare
3	2	Hartford HealthCare	Hartford	26,489	27,319	Healthcare
4	-	Yale University	New Haven	16,837	N/A	University
5	3	Raytheon Technologies ⁺⁺	Arlington, VA	16,600	195,000	Aerospace
6	-	General Dynamics Electric Boat	Groton	12,000	17,500	Nuclear submarine
7	4	CVS Health	Woonsocket, RI	9,370	300,402	Healthcare
8	-	Walmart Inc.	Bentonville, AR	8,626	2,200,000	Retail
9	-	Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin Company	Stratford	8,100	13,000	Aerospace
10	5	Trinity Health of New England	Livonia, MI	8,053	11,245	Healthcare
11	6	Travelers Cos. Inc.	New York, NY	7,400	30,000	Insurance
12	7	The Hartford	Hartford	6,500	19,500	Insurance
13	-	Mohegan Sun	Uncasville	6,000	N/A	Casino
14	8	UnitedHealth Group	Minnetonka, MN	5,573	320,000	Healthcare
15	-	Foxwood Resort Casino	Mashantucket	5,500	5,500	Casino
16	9	Cigna Corp.	Bloomfield	4,520	70,000	Healthcare
17	-	City of New Haven	New Haven	4,198	4,198	Government
18	10	City of Hartford	Hartford	4,090	4,090	Government

Source: 2022 Hartford Business Journal Book of Lists.

⁺ Ranked if the employer maintains a local headquarters in the Hartford Metropolitan Statistical Area.

⁺⁺ Includes figures for the United Technologies Corporation.

Overall, the trajectory is clear. The national economy, once controlled and regulated by the Keynesian state, has given way to ad hoc deregulation. As external shock after external shock mounted, the Keynesian state could not temper down rising contradictions in the form of swelling public, corporate, and consumer debts and consequent inflationary pressures. Neoliberalism that touts market solutions to governance problems has become the main ideology around which we organize the economy. Through this transition, capital has become mobile, destroying fixed amenities and decimating many industrial cities in the North. The growing financialization hastened capital leaving northern cities to the Sun Belt and encouraged mergers and acquisitions. Post-industrialism and mergers and acquisitions culminated in the centralization of executive functions in a few global cities. The corporate economy of Connecticut and Hartford, which excludes the urban poor, managed to prosper through the 1990s with a solid base of high-tech manufacturing and insurance industries. Yet, the growth of global cities and the rise of the Sun Belt disfavored the state and the city. By the late 2010s, the decline of Hartford as a center of economic activities was palpable. It could no longer call itself the insurance capital of the United States.

B. The Last Days of GE in Connecticut

The peripheralization of Connecticut and Hartford in the national economy is a result of many decades of irreversible trends such as post-industrialism and the neoliberal transition. These trends are far larger than any one individual participating in the economy. Yet, some changes within these trends are influenced by decidedly personal decisions of corporate executives. The departure of General Electric Company (GE) from Connecticut is a primary example of personal and subjective reasons contributing to the irresistible demands of the economy.

GE's history in Connecticut started in March 1971 with a land deal for 66 acres of undeveloped land in Fairfield (The New York Times 1971:55). On July 3, 1971, GE announced the company would move its executive headquarters from Manhattan to a new office being erected in Fairfield, CT after a deliberation that lasted twenty years (Smith 1971:29). The company considered only sites in the Northeastern U.S. The reason given for the move was that "it would be desirable to draw together in an integrated facility the executives responsible for the long-range planning, resource allocations and over-all direction of the company, along with the necessary supporting staff (Smith 29)," implying that the new headquarters would mostly be organized around top executives.

The corporate move from New York to the Fairfield area was not an unusual occurrence in the 1970s, indicating the urban regime in New York failed to maintain the city as a desirable place for executives to live and work. Around the same time GE announced its move, the RCA Corporation also announced that it would consolidate executive functions scattered throughout New York and New Jersey in New Canaan, CT; in 1972, Chesebrough-Pond's, Inc., a corporation specializing in toiletries, moved its world headquarters from New York to Greenwich, CT (The New York Times 55). Though the public viewed this move as an economic victory for Connecticut, the number of staff who moved to Fairfield was not large. The plan in 1971 called for a move of 500 of the 3,400 GE employees in New York, with the General Electric Building in Manhattan still serving as the worldwide headquarters (The Hartford Courant 1971:3). Still, its top executives were ensconced in Fairfield, and GE operated its global business from there.

However, GE would not last in Fairfield. On June 1, 2015, Connecticut General Assembly's Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee held a hearing to discuss the new revenue estimates for the fiscal year 2016 budget. When the committee chair called on

Representative John Frey, a Republican legislator from District 111 that includes Ridgefield, he dropped a bombshell on an otherwise calm meeting:

So I got a call yesterday afternoon from Jeff Bornstein, who's the CFO of GE, who's a constituent of mine, and he was expressing concern about the pending proposed tax increases [...]. [T]he bottom line was whether GE reconsiders [...] calling Connecticut home and we're talking, you know, 50,000 employees that either directly or indirectly are related to GE, that's terrifying. Um, Jeff said if he had known [...] where this was heading, he would've written an op-ed last week. Um, so I said, well, maybe it would be helpful if you put out a statement today, and they did about an hour ago (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 2015:00:41:34).

The official statement put out by GE is indeed threatening. In it, the company blasts Connecticut for its uncompetitive business environment while praising other states in an obvious attempt to insinuate the potential move:

Reports that Connecticut officials intend to raise taxes by another \$750 million are truly discouraging. Retroactively raising taxes again on Connecticut's residents, businesses and services makes businesses, including our own, and citizens seriously consider whether it makes any sense to continue to be located in this state. The Connecticut economy continues to struggle as other states offer more opportunities and a better environment for business growth (General Electric Company).

After the budget passed with the tax increases in spite of the protests (see Chapter 4, section on fiscal year 2016 budget revisions), GE quickly conducted an extensive deliberation. First, it rid the candidate sites that were represented by the Congresspeople who voted against reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank of the United States, which the company heavily utilized to sell its manufactured wares overseas (Gryta and Mann 2020:239). After a bidding war between New York and Boston, GE eventually chose former candy factory buildings in Boston as the new site of its headquarters on January 13, 2016 (General Electric Company 2016). In a telling move, the company announced that it would unload its offices in Fairfield, CT and at 30 Rockefeller Plaza in Midtown Manhattan to pay for the move to Boston.

This narrative of GE leaving Connecticut for greener pastures with lower taxes – or at least a better package of incentives from Massachusetts – and a higher concentration of educated urban professionals (Nickisch 2016) is simple, effective, and convincing. Florida and others

(McGranahan and Wojan 2007:197-216; Long 2010) have written extensively on the so-called Creative Class and how the creative people flock to urban areas with many jobs and many amenities (Florida 186). And GE's move reflects this truth as much as a manufacturing company attempting to refurbish itself and turn it into a firm specializing in software does. Yet, Gryta and Mann find that what went on behind the scenes reveals murkier and more capricious motives. For one, they report that GE executives had personal reasons to leave, that they were "settling older scores" accrued against Connecticut (Gryta and Mann 239).

Top executives at GE including Bornstein and Jeff Immelt, the chief executive officer, were furious at Connecticut for championing Pratt & Whitney to be the sole recipient of the engine development funding for the new F-35 fighter jet. The F-35 had been in development for fifteen years with Pratt & Whitney as the primary developer and manufacturer of engines. GE and Rolls-Royce formed a joint alternative venture. The Department of Defense viewed the extra engine as too costly, and on March 24, 2011, with Congress's approval, the Department finally issued an order to GE to cease working on an alternative engine (Majumdar 2011). The company along with its partner, Rolls-Royce, kept funding the development privately until they abandoned the project in December. Connecticut's representatives and senators in Congress had voted in favor of Pratt & Whitney. While GE only had headquarters in Fairfield, Pratt & Whitney had headquarters in East Hartford and a production plant in Middletown. And with its parent company the United Technologies Corporation, Pratt & Whitney constituted the largest manufacturing company and the largest private employer in the state in the mid-2010s (Hartford Business Journal 2016:66, 78).

On top of the vote that signaled hostility to GE, the Connecticut delegation held a party to celebrate Pratt & Whitney's victory in East Hartford (Gryta and Mann 239). Governor Malloy,

just inaugurated into his first term in office in 2011, accepted the invitation from the delegation and attended the party. That was the final straw for GE executives. Bornstein already abhorred the Fairfield headquarters, describing it as “a morgue (Gryta 2017).” The company’s departure from Connecticut had been decided well before fiscal year 2016. The executives simply kept mum until they had an excuse in the form of corporate tax increases. One may view mergers and acquisitions, one of the reasons Hartford gradually lost its central node position, as a rational response to market pressures and incentives. On the other hand, GE’s response to both perceived and real slights by moving its headquarters to Boston is essentially a solution in search of an organizational problem (Cohen, March, and Olsen 1972:3). In any case, GE’s departure accentuates the gravity global cities exert on the companies that provide financial and specialized services and the companies that are dependent on the former (Sassen 127-130) and elucidates one of the reasons for the fragmentation of economic actors at the local level.

C. The Concurrent Decline of the Bishops and Corporate Presence

In Chapter 2, I describe how corporate actors at the center of Hartford’s economy coalesced into a coalition of self-appointed civic leaders. These civic leaders were at the heart of the city’s development regime. The Hartford Courant gave this group of corporate heads a collective sobriquet of “the Bishops” in its January 23, 1983 edition with a set definition: “They are white, male executives whose banks and insurance companies have statewide, national and international interests, and whose own homes are outside city boundaries (Martin A1).”

Table 3-8. The Identified Bishops with Corporate Mergers and Acquisitions

Company	Identified "Bishop"	Present Parent Company	Merger Year	HQ
Aetna	- Olcott D. Smith (1963-72) - John H. Filer (1972-84) - James T. Lynn (1984-92)	CVS Health	2017	Hartford
Cigna	- Henry C. Roberts (Extant in 1971) - John K. Armstrong (1982-88) - Hartzel Z. Lebed (1982-85) - Robert E. Patricelli (1977-87)			Bloomfield
Connecticut Bank and Trust Company	Walter J. Connolly Jr. (1970-85)	Bank of New England	1985	Boston, MA
Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance	Denis F. Mullane (1983-93)	MassMutual	1995	Springfield, MA
Dexter Corporation	Worth Loomis (1975-88)			Windsor Locks
G. Fox & Co.	J. Kent McHose (1982-85)	Macy's, Inc.	1993	New York
Hartford National Corp.	Robert L. Newell, (1975-87)	FleetBoston Financial	1988	Boston, MA
Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance	John Gummere (1981-94)	Nassau Financial Group	2016	Hartford
The Hartford	DeRoy C. Thomas (1979-83)			Hartford
The Travelers Company	- J. Doyle DeWitt (1952-65) - Gladden W. Baker (Extant in 1960) - Roger C. Wilkins (Extant in 1971) - Edward H. Budd (1981-1994)			New York, NY
United Technologies	Harry J. Gray (1971-86)	Raytheon	2020	Arlington, VA
Chamber of Commerce	Arthur J. Lumsden (1956-81) Herbert W. Hansen (1981-86)			Hartford

Source: The Hartford Courant.

There were approximately a dozen Bishops, though DeRoy C. Thomas of The Hartford, Walter J. Connolly Jr. of Connecticut Bank and Trust, and John H. Filer of Aetna (see Table 3-8) stood out among them as the preminent personages (McCollum A10). They gathered once every six months at exclusive dining halls or their own board rooms to discuss the city's affairs with the president of the Chamber of Commerce (French A32). And these Bishops used their

companies' money to fund civic projects such as condominium conversions on Asylum Hills in the 1970s (McCollum A10) and continuous efforts to revitalize the downtown area. As I discuss in Chapter 2, throughout January and February of 1983, the Courant covered the rich and the powerful in Hartford including the Bishops, providing an adequate overview of the city's power structure with the Bishops at its center. The Bishops were eager to participate in the city's life. In December 1983, they even formed a coalition called Connecticut Countdown with other state professionals such as "university presidents and religious, labor and civil rights activists" (Walsh 1983:A18). It was founded to raise funds to hold a conference in May 1984 and publish a book on nuclear warfare, which was an ever-present danger during that period.

By the end of 1984, however, the Courant was reporting that the Bishops started to lose their clout with John H. Filer's retirement from Aetna (French A1). Filer was the most activist and therefore regarded as the most senior Bishop of them all, the "First among Equals (McCollum A1)," and his retirement heralded a time of change. Allan B. Taylor, a city councilman, told the Courant, "The Bishops are dead," though he quickly added, "Saying the Bishops are dead is like saying God is dead (French A32)." Furthermore, another reason for the decline was that more corporations began to charge professional managers with the task of community liaison, formalizing the informal role and thereby taking away the self-proclaimed responsibilities of the Bishops. There were other auxiliary reasons. Herbert W. Hansen, the president of the Chamber of Commerce, began to take a more active role in connecting the Chamber and non-corporate groups, and Hartford's councilmembers became increasingly comfortable exerting influence on civic affairs to the detriment of the Bishops (French A32).

James T. Lynn, Filer's successor at Aetna, was not keen on engaging the company in further civic endeavors that cost the company money. The only noteworthy record of Lynn in the

Courant that involves civic engagement following his takeover of the role as the chairman is partaking as a judge in the Gourmet Gala to benefit the March of Dimes in April 1986 along with his wife and other dignitaries (The Hartford Courant 1986:E10). In a three-page long profile piece in the Courant, Lynn's professional achievements, his vision for Aetna, and his hobbies are all discussed (Levick 1987:1, 20-21), but nothing about the Bishops or civic affairs of Hartford. The influence of the Bishops had dissipated to the extent that the Courant was asking whether Hartford should "bring back the 'corporate bishops (Loomis and Case 1990:D3)" by 1990. It featured two editorials to debate the past presence of the Bishops with Worth Loomis, a former member of the Bishops, extolling the non-profit groups that filled the vacuum in civic affairs and concluding the Bishops are no longer needed (Loomis and Case D3).

One way to interpret the rise and the decline of the Bishops is that their relatively short tenure marks one fractal cycle of a generational change in American urban development. In his essay on the lineage of sociological knowledge, Abbott observes that each strand of social scientific discipline continually fragments into a new series of branches or fractals. Each fractal distinction remains hegemonic for one fractal cycle, which lasts about twenty to thirty years (Abbott 2001:23-24). Every twenty to thirty years, a new fractal distinction becomes en vogue, replacing the old until the new then becomes the old. At that point, what had been previously considered the old makes a return with new theorists and empiricists defending it.

What the Bishops attempted to do between the 1960s and the 1980s in Hartford in the way of tearing down old slums and erecting new commercial and residential developments had been done before in different cities. In Detroit, the Citizens Housing and Planning Council (CHPC) proposed clearing the black neighborhoods like the Eight Mile area to make inroad for surrounding white communities in the early 1940s (Sugrue 68), though this plan was

unsuccessful (Sugrue 71-72). In Chicago, the Southtown Planning Association (SPA) helped pass the Illinois Redevelopment Act of 1941, which would demolish existing structures in black neighborhoods like Ogden Park and build new middle-class housing (Hirsch 1998[1983]:37-38). Hyde Park neighborhood and the University of Chicago were successful in this endeavor (Hirsch 38). As I have shown in Chapter 2, though not as official or overtly integral to the plans, there was just as much racial animus imbued in the Bishops' projects from the Constitution Plaza to the Greater Hartford Process. The only difference was that the Bishops came twenty years after the boom in exclusionary urban renewal.

Also, in retrospect, the Bishops ended up aggravating Hartford's fiscal condition rather than helping it. The Greater Hartford Process fizzled out after having spent all of its resources on fruitless endeavors. The Constitution Plaza, the Bishops' crowning achievement alongside the Hartford Civic Center and Coliseum (currently the XL Center), is entirely tax-exempt and thus does not generate any revenue for Hartford (Gosselin 2022). The XL Center in theory does generate revenue through entertainment and sport events, but the City of Hartford does not see any of it under the current agreement. Oak View Group, the company responsible for running day-to-day operations, keeps all profit up to \$4 million. The company shares any profit above \$4 million with the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) (Dylan 2023), a quasi-public agency established by the state in 2012. Furthermore, the XL Center's "age and obsolete design" render it necessary for major renovations that may cost over \$250 million (Leser 2022:5).

As Abbott's observation of fractal cycles suggests, the days of the Bishops controlling the direction of Hartford's development were inevitably numbered. The 1980s brought about a fresh wave of mergers and acquisitions from which many of the Hartford-based corporations lost business independence. The table above is an expanded version of Table 2-1 that chronicles the

changes in company structures over the years. Out of the eleven corporate entities that had the Bishops at their helms, only five remain in Hartford MSA and three remain in Hartford city proper. Out of the three that remain in Hartford, only one is not a subsidiary to a larger parent company – The Hartford Financial Services Group. This is in line with what I discussed in the previous section, that following its heyday in 1990, Hartford MSA has experienced a gradual decline in corporate presence and therefore lost its central nodal position in the network of global cities. The decline of the Bishops as a coherent group of executives interested in urban affairs of Hartford presaged the decline of corporate presence not just in Hartford but in Connecticut as well.

D. The Remnants of the Development Regime

With the Bishops no longer present to exert a centralizing force, Hartford's development regime stalled and fragmented into individual groups of interest, unallied and in a disarray. At the same time, corporations formalized the functions that used to be fulfilled by the Bishops with mid-level professional managers who specialize in community outreach. In this section, I demonstrate through analyzing two different sets of data the fragmentation of Hartford's development regime and professionalization of community-corporate relations management. First is the current database of charities registered in Hartford, which clarifies the new pattern with which corporations relate to the city and its people. Second is the compiled data of testimonials given at public hearings conducted by Connecticut General Assembly to portray the state of fragmentation of the growth machine that undergirds the development regime.

Money provides economic actors with the means to control the direction of a city's development, and charitable giving is the method with which they wield the influence. As briefly

mentioned in Chapter 1, charitable giving by businesses and businesses in turn affecting urban governance both have a long tradition in American society. From the early nineteenth century up to the turn of the century, American municipal governments adopted a segmented approach to governance. In other words, municipalities adopted different – segmented – responses depending on whether the individual in question had “direct personal and pecuniary interests” in community affairs (Einhorn 8). Simply put, the influence over municipalities could be bought by paying property taxes. The city governments geographically divided property owners into separate chunks of decision-making groups and responded to their needs individually, acting as though they were private corporations beholden to stockholders (Einhorn 6, 14-18).

Such mercenary nature of political power only changed in outward appearance and not in content. Reflecting the fragmented polity of the United States, each city developed a distinctive set of economic actors who banded together to create a customized system of social welfare at the turn of the twentieth century (Clemens 380-381). And economic actors were the ones with the most financial resources to spend on gifts, which conferred upon them much power over their city (Clemens 384-385). Robert and Helen Merrell Lynd observed in Muncie, IN how its business leaders created a community chest that centralizes and secularizes the practice of charitable giving (460-464). We may focus on the aspect of centralization and interpret the Bishops as the final manifestation of such movement in gift-giving: a group of powerful agents who came together and focused the astronomical amount of resources at their disposal on grand projects designed to overhaul their city (see Table 2-2). Some Bishops like Filer were self-aware enough to express genuine doubts as to whether they could affect positive changes: “What the hell, nobody elected me mayor and so I shouldn’t be. I should be very careful to restrain the exercise of clout and not try and interfere (McCollum A11).” Yet, projects like the Constitution

Plaza and the construction of the Hartford Civic Center, currently the XL Center, have echoes of Napoleon III and Baron Haussmann's renovation of Paris (Kirkland 2013:1-2) and the wholesale destruction of minority neighborhoods in New York by Robert Moses in favor of highways (Caro 1975[1974]:837-894) than Filer's thoughtful musing. And these grand projects evidently failed to reverse Hartford's decline.

Decentralization and Professionalization of Charitable Giving

With the Bishops' passing, the development regime splintered, and charitable giving became decentralized and professionalized. In order to clearly elucidate this trend, I have compiled a database of charities registered in the City of Hartford and their boards of directors. Unlike the executive leadership composed of non-profit professionals who directly operate the charities and provide services, the boards of directors are often composed of representatives from sponsoring corporations and other organizations. By understanding the composition of the charity boards, we can better understand how corporate presence has evolved since the days of the Bishops.

To perform in-depth analyses, I looked up webpages of 505 charitable organizations registered in Hartford in 2023.⁷ From their webpages, I collected names, official affiliations, and occupation titles of the board directors. I then cross-referenced the gathered information against those of the board directors on LinkedIn and company websites to ensure accuracy. This means that I only included an individual if they were (1) matched with their LinkedIn profile by their

⁷ I have included the data for the CBIA (Connecticut Business and Industry Association) and the MetroHartford Alliance. These are not charitable organizations but nonetheless important mouthpieces for business interests. I have also included the United Way of Connecticut, which is a charity registered in Rocky Hill and not Hartford. I determined the United Way of Connecticut is a charity that must be included from the Courant's article in 1983 detailing its importance in funneling much of the Bishops' resources to charitable organizations in and around Hartford (Bernstein 1983:A1, A20-A21).

name, (2) indisputably the only person matching that profile based on photographic evidence, job title, and naming, and (3) matched in their company website by their job title. It is thus likely I have undercounted the number of corporate professionals represented in Hartford charities since some names were unverifiable due to missing LinkedIn profiles or multiple individuals sharing a same name with no detailed evidence provided in their profile pages to isolate.

I focused on capturing those companies that can legitimately be categorized as private corporations, which excludes organizations like local law firms and universities. Additionally, I included (a) those that are listed in the Fortune 500, e.g., Amazon or (b) those that are not as large but have headquarters in Connecticut, e.g., Chase Enterprises. In the dataset, there are 64 different corporations represented. Travelers, which maintains its largest office in Hartford over New York City headquarters, has the largest presence with 42 individuals in charity boards, followed by The Hartford Financial Services Group with 30, Raytheon with 25 overall⁸, the Hartford Health with 16, and then at 14 is Eversource Energy, a utility company headquartered in Hartford and Boston. Aetna, including CVS Health comes at sixth with 13 people. Cigna comes in at a distant tenth place with seven people.

Out of 505 organizations, only 91 retain board directors of corporate origin. In those 91 organizations are 270 corporate actors who represent their employers. Though their titles vary widely, most of them are vice presidents of the sections they are responsible for. Some noteworthy ones include a vice president of community relations and a vice president for community health and engagement, emphasizing that the entirety of their professional function is to engage with the Hartford community and funnel money into inoffensive causes. And all 91 organizations represent innocuous causes without any relations to contemporary politics, from

⁸ Includes figures for Pratt & Whitney, which is a subsidiary company.

Riverfront Recapture that maintains and operates four parks near the Connecticut River to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford to the Mark Twain House & Museum. Out of 270 total people, there are 16 individuals listed in their respective company websites as senior executives, who are shown in the table below with their charity associations.

Here, we can make a direct comparison between the Bishops and today's senior executives. Instead of belonging to one charity, the Bishops funneled money into multiple causes (McCollum A1, A10-A11; French A1, A20-A21; Grant A1, A8-A9), sometimes through the United Way (Bernstein A20). The United Way was a centralized fundraising organization for each community that held monopoly over workplace charitable giving (Barman 35-40). And like the Asylum Hill condominiums and Capitol Avenue rehabilitation (Grant A1) as well as the Constitution Plaza and the Hartford Civic Center, the Bishops' projects focused on revitalization of Hartford's downtown core and sought to achieve large-scale changes starting at the neighborhood level.

In contrast, today's senior executives patronize one or two charity organizations like their subordinates. The centralized fundraising of the United Way has given way since the 1960s to particularistic nonprofits that focus on different collective identities and causes (Barman 41-51), which the senior executives and professionalized community outreach personnel can pick and choose. Only four people out of 270 patronize more than two charities, and no one patronizes more than three, limiting the potential for interlocking networks and amalgamation of interest groups into a development regime with corporate executives at its core.

Table 3-9. 2023 Identified Senior Executives Associated with Hartford Charities

Initials	Title	Affiliation	Charities and Other Organizations	Hartford MSA Based
M.N.	President and CEO	Berkshire Bank	Junior Achievement of Southwest New England	No
J.A.	Board Member	Boeing	Connecticut Forum	No
C.L.	Vice President	Chase Enterprises	- The Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford - Connecticut Invention Convention	Yes
C.A.	Co-President	Chase Enterprises	Connecticut Public Broadcasting, Inc.	Yes
C.C.	Co-President and General Counsel	Chase Enterprises	- Connecticut Science Center - Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art	Yes
E.B.	Executive VP and CFO	Cigna	Connecticut Science Center	Yes
S.P.	Executive VP, Operations	Cigna	CIL Community Resources	Yes
B.J.	Director	Entergy	Connecticut Public Broadcasting, Inc.	No
F.J.	President and CEO	Hartford Healthcare	- Connecticut Public Broadcasting, Inc. - The Bushnell - MetroHartford Alliance	Yes
G.D.	President and CEO	Liberty Bank	Connecticut Science Center	Yes
W.D.	Executive VP and Chief Human Resources Officer	Raytheon	Connecticut Forum	No
A.D.	President and CEO	Stanley Black & Decker	Junior Achievement of Southwest New England	Yes
R.G.	Senior VP	Stanley Black & Decker	Connecticut Business and Industry Association	Yes
C.B.	Executive VP and CFO	The Hartford	The Bushnell	Yes
K.D.	Executive VP and Chief Human Resources Officer	The Travelers	Connecticut Science Center	No
S.A.	Chairman and CEO	The Travelers	ReadyCT	No

Source: LinkedIn and other relevant websites.

And as the table above demonstrates, the organizations the senior executives support tend to be recognizable ones with long history and low risk associated with them. For instance, the Bushnell is a theater that has been around for 90 years, and the Wadsworth Atheneum was founded in 1844. If the Bishops focused on building physical infrastructure and dared to attempt the total renovation of the city, education and passive intervention are the preeminent causes for today's senior executives. The Connecticut Forum was founded in 1992 to bring in famous panelists to discuss issues pertinent to Connecticut, and Connecticut Public Broadcasting has been around since 1962 to inform and educate. In fact, out of ten charities⁹ the senior executives patronize, seven¹⁰ have either a direct or an indirect relationship with public education. Indeed, the contemporary senior executives exert far limited influence than the Bishops on Hartford. The Asylum Hills Neighborhood Association, which John H. Filer helped to found, is still extant, yet it is now composed primarily of residents, non-profit professionals, and representatives from the Mayor's Office (Asylum Hills Neighborhood Association 2023).

Leftover Fragments of Hartford's Development Regime

If professionalization and decentralization of charitable giving is one effect of the Bishops' passing, fragmentation of the development regime is another. The second dataset I have compiled looks at the public hearings on bills held by the joint committees of Connecticut General Assembly from 2016 to 2018, the period during which Hartford underwent a fiscal crisis. Specifically, I selected bills that (1) were formulated to address the issue of Hartford's fiscal

⁹ Excluding non-charitable organizations like CBIA and the MetroHartford Alliance.

¹⁰ Junior Achievement of Southwest New England, the Connecticut Forum, the Connecticut Invention Convention, Connecticut Public Broadcasting, Inc., the Connecticut Science Center, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, and ReadyCT.

crisis or (2) explicitly stipulated Hartford receive funding from the state government whether in the form of payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) or other transfers. There were 21 bills that matched the criteria in 2016, 20 in 2017, and 12 in 2018. As I discuss in detail in Chapter 5, two bills out of the total of 53 directly addressed Hartford's fiscal crisis in some way: 2016 Senate Bill 464 An Act Establishing the Hartford Financial Sustainability Commission and 2017 House Bill 7050 An Act Establishing the Municipal Accountability Review Board and Designated Tiers. Both bills would allow the state to directly intervene in Hartford's fiscal affairs by instituting an oversight board.

2016 S.B. No. 464 died in the Joint Committee on Finance, Revenue, and Bonding without a vote, but the same committee voted to report 2017 H.B. No. 7050 to the General Assembly, culminating in its inclusion in the October 2016 budget that passed both chambers and the foundation of the Municipal Accountability Review Board (MARB), an oversight board for distressed municipalities. The focus of this chapter, however, is on those who came to the public hearings and testified either for or against the 53 bills of interest. The reasoning behind this analysis of public hearings is to clarify how interest groups of Hartford, categorized according to Logan and Molotch's theoretical paradigm, engaged with the bills in ways that advance their causes.

In total, there are fifteen different types of groups represented at the public hearings. Nine are directly derived from Logan and Molotch's classification of the growth machine: politicians; local media; utilities; universities; museums, theaters, and expositions; professional sports; organized labor; self-employed professionals and retailers, and; corporate capitalists. These are the main and auxiliary actors who "make their money from land and buildings" and "have most at stake in what goes on" in a city like Hartford (Logan and Molotch ix-x). As I analyzed the raw

data, however, it became clear these nine categories cannot adequately sort all the actors. To do so, I devised six more categories: public agencies; real estate; non-profit and non-governmental organizations; intergovernmental organizations like Connecticut Conference of Municipalities; hospitals and healthcare; and those who were unaffiliated with any of the above categories. With the government and healthcare being two of the largest employers in Hartford MSA today as Table 3-7 portrays, people representing public agencies and hospitals and healthcare facilities must be included as separate categories.

With the tradition of a fragmented and localized social welfare system instituted by private charities, fraternal associations, and businesses that resist centralization efforts by the federal government in the United States (Kaufman 144-177; Clemens 377-396; Tani 4; Esping-Andersen 158), it stands to reason that local provision of welfare would heavily depend on grassroots non-profits and non-governmental organizations. In fact, Dunning observes that “grants, contracts, and [...] loans increasingly linked private nonprofits to public governments in every sector of American social policy [...] (Dunning 2022:3).” Non-profits have become the primary means by which the U.S. addresses urban problems. Further, Connecticut provides 14 different property tax exemptions (Schaeffer-Helmecki 2020:1-2) and a sales and use tax exemption (Connecticut State Department of Revenue Services 2023) for non-profits certified by the Internal Revenue Services, privileging its operations. If non-profits were to pay Hartford the property taxes owed from the Grand List, they would pay \$31 million to \$36 million every year as the figure below demonstrates.

This privileging of non-profit operations and their service provisions necessitate the inclusion of them as a category of their own. Though real estate agents could be included under the self-employed professionals category, they are given their own separate category because I

want to further differentiate and specify how the rentier class that directly benefits from land development reacts to the bills. Finally, intergovernmental organizations have to be separated out since by definition they represent interests of multiple public agencies and therefore do not advocate for policies that benefit Hartford’s development only.

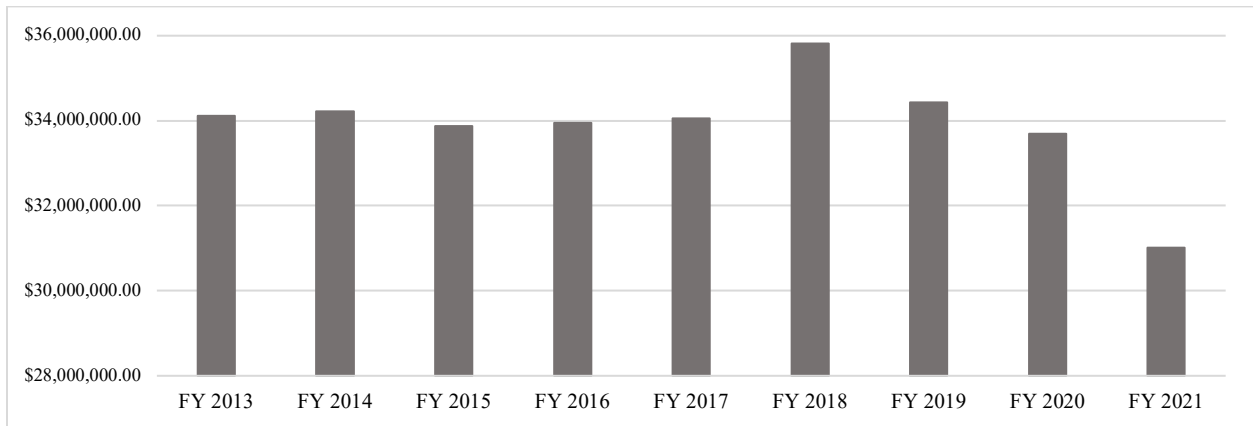


Figure 3-4. Exempt Payments to Hartford by Non-Profits

For each hearing testimonial, I distributed counts by (1) the content of what each person promotes and (2) their professional affiliation. For example, a neuroscience professor at Trinity College writing a letter for the Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut (BIAC), a brain injury advocacy group, would count toward the non-profit and NGOs category, not the universities category. If a student attending Trinity College has written in support of the said advocacy group, it falls under the unaffiliated category since the student is neither professionally affiliated with an organization nor is able to directly represent an organization’s interest. There are multiple cases in which the person giving a testimonial belonged to an organization that could be categorized under disparate categories, e.g., the Connecticut Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Network, a preventive healthcare advocacy group affiliated with the University of Connecticut, a public university. In these cases, I lean into the content of their testimonies to determine which category they belong to. Table 3-10 presents the categories and their counts by the relevant bills.

Table 3-10. Relevant Bills and Their Public Hearing Participants

Interest Group	2016 S.B. No. 464	2016 Other Bills Total	2017 H.B. No. 7050	2017 Other Bills Total	2018 Bills Total
Politicians and Political Parties	4	35	17	62	6
Local Media	0	0	0	2	0
Utilities	0	1	0	3	2
Universities	2	87	0	36	38
Museums, Theaters, Expositions	0	23	0	33	5
Professional Sports	0	0	0	3	0
Organized Labor	17	45	14	40	7
Self-Employed, Retailers, and Other Private Providers	1	57	0	69	5
Corporate Capitalists	2	28	1	39	16
Public Agencies	2	183	5	210	101
Real Estate	0	0	0	1	1
Non-Profit and NGOs	6	482	3	657	373
Intergovernmental Organizations	0	5	8	35	27
Hospitals and Healthcare	3	63	10	71	43
Unaffiliated	4	637	4	1308	260
Total	41	1646	62	2569	884
Number of Bills	1	20	1	19	12

Source: Connecticut General Assembly.

In Table 3-10 and Chapter 5, I demonstrate that the testimonials given by politicians and organized labor constitute the majority provided for 2016 S.B. No. 464 and 2017 H.B. No. 7050, the bills that directly relate to Hartford's fiscal crisis and seek to set up a commission to oversee the city's negotiations with its employees' unions. But corporate capitalists from insurance companies, formerly at the core of Hartford's development regime, do not show. Other actors representing corporate interests give testimonials, but their influence is limited, and all define their interests narrowly.

Table 3-11. Rank Count and Count Order by Each Interest Group

Interest Group	2016	2016 Rank Count Order	2017	2017 Rank Count Order	2018	2018 Rank Count Order
Politicians and Political Parties	69	3	80	3	56	10
Local Media	113	13	133	12	61	14
Utilities	111	12	135	13	56	10
Universities	88	7	118	10	45	6
Museums, Theaters, Expositions	108	11	122	11	58	12
Professional Sports	113	13	135	13	61	14
Organized Labor	80	6	87	5	54	9
Self-Employed, Retailers, and Other Private Providers	88	7	90	6	51	8
Corporate Capitalists	74	5	108	9	43	5
Public Agencies	56	2	81	4	31	1
Real Estate	113	13	137	15	58	12
Non-Profit and NGOs	55	1	62	2	32	2
Intergovernmental Organizations	104	10	101	8	37	4
Hospitals and Healthcare	100	9	97	7	47	7
Unaffiliated	69	3	53	1	34	3
Number of Bills	21		20		12	

Source: Connecticut General Assembly.

Table 3-11 depicts the further processed result. I ranked each interest group for each bill based on the number of testimonies given. I added up the ranks by interest group for each year, resulting in the rank count figures. I then ranked the count figures, resulting in the rank of the number of testimonies for each interest group. For example, in 2016, corporate capitalists ranked ninth for H.B. No. 5044, first for H.B. 5046, fifth for H.B. 5049, and so forth in the number of testimonies given. All these ranks added up to 74, which was the fifth smallest in the rank order of the counts for interest groups. The ranking of counts illustrate that corporate capitalists are

more involved in civic affairs than many groups, coming in fifth place in 2016, ninth in 2017, and fifth in 2018. Yet, this figure is behind such groups as politicians and political parties, organized labor, public agencies, and nonprofits and NGOs.

In regard to 2016 S.B. No. 464, two actors representing corporate interests give testimonials at the meeting of the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee. First is Kevin A. Dillon, the Executive Director of the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA). Dillon writes:

The CAA is concerned by language in Section 7 of the legislation which outlines a potential strategy of imposing levies on tax-exempt organizations in Hartford. As you know, the CCA owns and operates Brainard Airport in Hartford and the CAA is not required to pay taxes, as per C.G.S. Sec. 15-120rr. This statutory provision was necessary to satisfy Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) revenue diversion rules, which restrict the use of airport funds for non-airport purposes (Dillon 2016).

S.B. No. 464's Section 7 stipulates that Hartford may ignore its charter or related ordinances to negotiate with "the number of the largest tax-exempt organizations in the city" and tax them accordingly (Senate 2016). Dillon conveniently points out that the FAA exerts much power over the operation of Connecticut airports, and that they may withhold funds to the state if a portion of the revenue from Brainard were to be diverted for city uses. The Section 7, however, does not explicitly call for the airport to be taxed. Dillon admits that his letter to the joint standing committee is a strategy to preempt the potential taxation: "the language in the bill is still in an early form, and the CAA wants to ensure that the significant challenges outlined above are clear as this proposal progresses (Dillon)." What is notable about Dillon's testimonial is the restricted range of the expressed interest. Dillon shows no concerns about Hartford's fiscal crisis or whether the state should intervene and act as a steward to the city, certainly not enough to attend the committee meeting in person. Indeed, his only problem is with one section of the legislation that is still being discussed that may tax the corporation he represents. This narrowness of the

expressed interest is a recurring theme in testimonials given by corporate actors from 2016 to 2018.

The second corporate testimonial on S.B. No. 464 comes from the MetroHartford Alliance, Hartford's chamber of commerce. It is the main representative of businesses in Hartford, and Oz Griebel, the then President, wastes no time to articulate this fact, referring to "we the private sector" when he speaks (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 2016:1220). Unlike Dillon, Griebel speaks positively about S.B. No. 464 and adds the Chamber's recommendations to the list of objectives the legislation should achieve. But what is interesting is not the content of the recommendations – duly researched, concrete actionable items that should in theory benefit Hartford as well as the MetroHartford Alliance. Instead, a protracted interaction between Representative Terrie Wood (R-141) and Griebel on the union of city firefighters being left out of the legislative process (see Chapter 5) reveals much about the standing of the MetroHartford Alliance:

REPRESENTATIVE WOOD: The proposal makes sense, but I am concerned that there was not a dialog between Mayor Bronin and the firefighters—I guess before this bill was submitted. [...]

PRESIDENT GRIEBEL: I don't know, representative, what I—I really would defer to the union leaders and to the mayor. [...] [W]e made this clear to the mayor that there needs to be ongoing dialog to go beyond the level of understanding that some of us have so that there really is a, for lack of a better word, internalizing this problem.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOD: Thank you. So back to the point about the firefighters, it was more of a triage step.

PRESIDENT GRIEBEL: That would be my understanding, but I really would defer to the mayor because I don't feel I'm compelled—empowered to speak for him (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1218-1219).

We can infer two facts from this conversation. First, that there is a certain disconnect between the Mayor's Office and the Chamber of Commerce, and second, that the Chamber of Commerce is therefore no longer the organizing center of the development regime that the Bishops utilized. While the Bishops were extant from the 1960s to the 1980s, there was a continuous line of

communication between the City Hall and the Chamber in the form of Nicholas R. Carbone (Giacomo 2015; McEnroe 2015), Arthur J. Lumsden, and Herbert W. Hansen. Carbone was a councilman who could summon five votes out of nine in the City Council and thereby ran the city that had adopted a weak mayor system (The Hartford Courant 2015); as the president of Hartford's Chamber of Commerce from 1956 to 1981, Lumsden enabled corporate leaders to become active in Hartford's civic affairs, and; Hansen continued Lumsden's tradition and brought the city's agenda to the Bishops with regularity (French A32). This successive line of communication does not exist today, and the MetroHartford Alliance can no longer set the city's developmental agenda as it used to in the past. Representative Wood's questions and Griebel's answers that can be characterized as quite unsatisfactory to Wood illustrate this. With the Bishops disbanded and professional managers taking over charitable giving in Hartford, the Chamber of Commerce witnessed diminishing influence over the years.

During the discussion of 2017 H.B. No. 7050, the MetroHartford Alliance once again makes an appearance, but its expressed interests are limited, similar to the CAA. This time, Griebel does not attend the joint committee meeting to provide an in-person testimonial and instead sends a page letter that supports one specific part of Section 19 of the proposed legislation:

Sec. 19. [...] (a) There is established a Municipal Accountability Review Board, which shall be in the Office of Policy and Management for administrative purposes only and which shall be comprised of the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee, who shall be the chairperson of the board, the State Treasurer, or the State Treasurer's designee, who shall be the co-chairperson of the board, four members appointed by the Governor, including one of whom shall be a resident of a tier II, III, or IV municipality, one of whom shall have expertise in finance, *one of whom shall be affiliated with a business located in a designated or certified tier II, III or IV municipality* and one whom shall be a current or former municipal chief executive officer or municipal financial officer (House of Representatives 2017; italics added for emphasis).

The only reason the MetroHartford Alliance sent a supportive letter to the legislature is because the language includes the members of business communities from distressed cities. It mentions nothing of the PILOT and revenue sharing schemes included in the legislation that specifically benefits Hartford. Unlike in the previous year when the Chamber of Commerce provided specific recommendations to be implemented, 2017 H.B. No. 7050 only provides for the foundation of the Municipal Accountability Review Board (MARB) and Griebel does not find it necessary to offer the same recommendations in his letter. Yet again, the MetroHartford Alliance sets its interests narrowly, choosing not to intervene in the legislative process.

Since it is executives from large insurance corporations that formed the backbone of the Bishops and Hartford's development regime in the past, it is worth exploring other legislations that feature testimonials from direct representatives of the insurance industry. Unfortunately, we find only the trade associations and not the corporations themselves appeared to provide testimonies – the American Insurance Association (AIA) and the Insurance Association of Connecticut (IAC). From 2016 to 2018, there are three pieces of legislation that feature their testimonials: 2017 S.B. No. 787 An Act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Governor's Budget; 2018 H.B. No. 5035 An Act Adjusting the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2019, and; 2018 H.B. No. 5205 An Act Concerning the Connecticut Life and Health Insurance Guaranty Association.

Both the AIA and the IAC sent letters of their testimonials in support of S.B. No. 787, but no more. No representatives came to the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee public hearing on March 9, 2017. Out of the two letters, the letter from IAC was more detailed and thorough. As the representative of Connecticut insurers, the IAC pointed out charitable giving and community services offered to Hartford and Connecticut by large insurance corporations like

Aetna, The Hartford, Travelers, Prudential, and the Phoenix in nine bullet points (George 2017). Still, both letters were in support of the premium tax provisions contained in S.B. No. 787, a small subsection¹¹ which would decrease the insurance premium tax rate from 1.75 percent to 1.5 percent. Both insurance associations defined their interests restrictedly and did not stray from it to advance the cause of Hartford's fiscal health, which was tied to S.B. No. 787 with sections on PILOT as much as it was tied to H.B. No. 7050 of the same year.

In subsequent legislation, it is only the IAC that continues to testify. For 2018 H.B. No. 5035, the IAC supports the reallocation of the Connecticut Children's Health Initiatives account from the Insurance Fund to the General Fund, reducing the expenditures from the Insurance Fund (George 2018). For 2018 H.B. No. 5205, the IAC wrote to offer its support for the legislation that would update Connecticut law on long-term care insurance benefits to match the standards of the new Life and Health Insurance Guaranty Association Model Act by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (Bryant 2018). For both pieces of legislation, the IAC only advocates for its own limited interest.

The fact of the matter is that the senior executives of the largest corporations have neither the will nor the ability to intervene in municipal affairs like their predecessors did. When they do intervene, their intervention falls far short of what the city requires. As I previously discussed in Chapter 1, the chief executive officers of three insurance companies – Aetna, The Hartford, and Travelers – came together on March 2, 2017 to praise Mayor Bronin and to offer Hartford \$10 million per year for five years. This fund would go toward the upkeep of the Hartford Public Library, law enforcements, and parks (Bertolini et al.). To put this money into perspective, the

¹¹ Sec. 5. (a).

city projected \$65 million shortfall in 2018 (Haigh), and the executives' present in full would not have been enough to cover it.

In any case, Mark Bertolini, the chief executive officer and the chairman of Aetna, tarnished this gesture of goodwill a little over two months later in May when he announced the relocation of the corporate headquarters (The Hartford Courant; Malloy 2017; Smith 2017). In his statement, Bertolini underlines the need for Aetna to expand its operations over the Internet and acquire more employees versed in the knowledge economy (The Hartford Courant), which would be possible only if the company moved the headquarters. The argument matches that of Florida's, which posits a growing pool of young professionals in world cities provides an attractive prospect for businesses looking to expand in this globalized, digitalized economy. Nevertheless, this potential move came to naught when CVS Health acquired Aetna in December 2017 and kept the headquarters in Hartford.

Here, in considering how economic actors decide to intervene in civic affairs, it is worth comparing Hartford to Cleveland. Specifically, we compare Hartford to Swanstrom's narrative of the clash between Mayor Dennis Kucinich and Cleveland's economic elites and the fallout from the fiscal crisis in 1978. Kucinich came into office as a populist candidate who rejected growth politics, which made him a public enemy to economic elites of the city. Kucinich did not depend on an established governing coalition of political and economic actors for his position and did not owe favors. But this also meant Kucinich could not control the governing coalition already in place, and he also lacked a clear vision for Cleveland's new economic growth (Swanstrom 9, 228, 243). Kucinich eventually came to a standoff against the economic actors represented by bankers, which led the city to a default. Swanstrom contends that given Cleveland's debt profile in 1978 and Kucinich's conservative fiscal policy, the city could have easily avoided the default

had the bankers agreed to roll over the notes (166-167, 230), meaning the default is a result of a political struggle rather than a symbol of economic malaise.

In Cleveland's case, economic actors were present and alert. They went to war with the mayor over the control of the city's growth policies. But in Hartford's case, economic actors were hardly present during the fiscal crisis, which is a great departure from when the Bishops were active. If Hartford's economic actors were invested in averting the disaster, they could have pooled more resources, financial or otherwise, to directly intervene and save the city from the specter of bankruptcy. Yet, they did not. They also could have gone directly to the state to appeal for its help, but they also did not. Whether unwilling or unable, Hartford's economic actors were simply not there when the city sunk into a fiscal crisis. And with them nowhere to be found, the development regime had broken into disparate interest groups. Every testimony given at joint standing committee public hearings is an appeal to niche interest, each group setting clear boundaries on what constitutes vital interests with no overlap in between.

E. Conclusion

In his comparison of France and other western countries, Michel Crozier argues that understanding "the way change is achieved" is more important than measuring the change (Crozier 1964:287). I focused this chapter not just on Hartford but on the double transformation of the national economy and Hartford's development regime to get at the way that change is achieved. More specifically, the way the monumental change in American economy has transformed Hartford's development regime and fractured its growth machine.

The large-scale evolution of the national economy that has taken place since the 1970s is associated with the devolution of Hartford's development regime. The federal government, intent

on reviving the flagging economy suffering from inflationary pressures, relaxed previously tight regulations on businesses and allowed the capital to become footloose. By doing so, the federal government unleashed a trend of deindustrialization and financialization that devastated central cities in the North from where the population migrated to the Sun Belt cities. Meanwhile, the centralization of executive functions in a small contingent of global cities led to the further entrenchment of a hierarchical relationship among cities that disfavor regional centers.

Hartford exemplifies a city that has lost out in this new, post-industrial economy. It boasted a healthy mix of insurance and high-tech manufacturing companies starting out in the 1970s. Over the years, however, forces beyond the city's control sapped away its strength. The continued trend of suburbanization has led to population loss and the concentration of poverty in the 18.05 square miles of Hartford (see Chapter 2, Table 2-1). Furthermore, financialization of the American economy meant it was easier than ever for large corporations to make money through mergers and acquisitions. It was these mergers and acquisitions that took away the headquarters of many insurance and manufacturing corporations. The corporations came to favor perpetual mobility in search of better tax breaks and subsidies as well.

In 1970, Hartford contained within its borders the headquarters of Aetna, Travelers, The Hartford, United Aircraft, and Phoenix Mutual. In its immediate environs were the headquarters of Connecticut Mutual (Cigna). By 2022, only The Hartford Financial Services Group remained as the independent Fortune 500 company in Hartford. With the departure of Fortune 500 companies, so went the city's economic centrality and consequent vitality. These companies may not have numbered in the dozens, but Hartford is small enough of a city that even moves by a handful of corporations can exert a significant negative force in its economy. Also, global cities with young professionals, who Richard Florida has named the Creative Class, attracted

companies like GE away from Connecticut, though there were unpublicized private reasons for the relocation as well.

This change in the city's fortune coincided with the decline of the Bishops, corporate heads who anointed themselves as civic leaders. The Bishops saw their heydays from the 1970s through 1984 when John H. Filer was the chairman and chief executive officer of Aetna. He was at the center of it all, directing money and influence on projects he considered imperative to the city. He along with a dozen white, male top executives of insurance, banking, and manufacturing companies financed the city's revitalization efforts in neighborhoods like Asylum Hills. Yet, Filer's retirement and James T. Lynn's inauguration as the new chairman and chief executive officer in November 1984 signaled the beginning of the end to the Bishops. On January 23, 1983, the Hartford Courant conferred the name *the Bishops* upon these executives. In 1983, fifteen additional editions of the Courant detailed the exploits of the Bishops. The newspaper then wrote comprehensive articles on the Bishops once in 1984, and then once more in 1986, culminating in a pair of self-aware opinion editorials on the disappearance of the Bishops in 1990. The term the Bishops started to pop up again in the 2000s as the members began to pass away from old age.¹²

As the generational change went underway and the Bishops gradually went extinct, professional managers took over. These mid-level managers were often hired specifically to oversee their corporations' relationships with Hartford. At the same time, the development regime held together by the Bishops fragmented, giving way to individual groups of interest that

¹² John K. Armstrong's death was covered by the Hartford Courant on September 15, 2002; John H. Filer's death was covered by the Hartford Courant on September 19, 1994; Harry J. Gray's death was covered by the New York Times on July 9, 2009; Hartzel Z. Lebed's death was covered by the Hartford Courant on November 13, 2001; Worth Loomis's death was covered by the Hartford Courant on July 22, 2017; James T. Lynn's death was covered by the New York Times on December 10, 2010; Denis F. Mullane's death was covered by the Hartford Courant on January 6, 2017; Robert L. Newell's death was covered by the Hartford Courant on January 3, 2001; DeRoy C. Thomas's death was covered by the Hartford Courant on March 24, 2019.

do not overlap as shown by the data on Connecticut General Assembly's joint committee public hearings. Unlike the Bishops, the mid-level managers do not turn up to meetings and public hearings. Safford observes an interesting divergence between Youngstown, OH and Allentown, PA. He finds that the civic network in Allentown remained cohesive and retained participation of many economically important individuals in the city whereas in Youngstown, the civic network fell apart (Safford 127). This resulted in Allentown's economy outperforming Youngstown's (Safford 139-143). Hartford offers a foil to Safford's Allentown and Youngstown, a middle ground case between the two. Through many non-profit and charity organizations as well as industry associations, corporations remain active in the city as the source of community fund and organizing personnel. But the attention to the place Hartford receives today cannot compare to the one it received back when the Bishops were active – only the middle managers are promoting the city's cause, and their stature limits what is possible. The middle managers who are not directly engaged with the firms' core decisions are in turn unlikely to mobilize the city to undertake large scale projects in the same way the Bishops were able to herd politicians, the Chamber of Commerce, money, and influence.

The final point I would like to make in this chapter is that within Hartford's unique political and economic plight is an element of universality. A few – a number that could be counted on one hand – powerful cities and the Sun Belt exert a centripetal force on corporations, people, and resources. Other cities, even those that could rightfully be characterized as global, lose out. San Francisco, which is a global city on its own right and much more diversified than Hartford, bemoaned the merger and the departure of Bank of America for lesser known Charlotte, NC in April 1998 by derisively equating itself to Cleveland and Minneapolis in the number of Fortune 500 companies present (Lewis 1998:A1). In subsequent months, many low-

level employees and mid-level managers located in the Bay Area as well as Dave Coulter, the bank's chief executive officer, lost their jobs (Todd 2000:A21), destabilizing the civic network. Today, San Francisco is waiting to see if Wells Fargo, with its chief executive officer Charlie Scharf ensconced in New York City (Wack 2020) and with a new major corporate campus being built near Dallas (Calvey 2022), is leaving the city. No doubt such a move would disrupt the civic network once again as more important economic actors depart. No place, even a place as storied and dynamic as San Francisco, is immune to economic pressures and incentives, and the contours of municipal politics and economy change along with their ebb and flow. In Hartford's case, it was for the worse as the city's economic actors were absent during its fiscal crisis.

With the Bishops dissolved and the development regime fragmented, the federal polity gains in importance for Hartford because the city becomes ever more financially dependent on the state. Thus, it is imperative we understand the state's role in the resolution of Hartford's fiscal crisis between 2016 and 2018. I transition into analysis of the federal polity in Chapter 4 by looking at the state. Specifically, I focus my analytic efforts on the kind of languages used by state legislators during the General Assembly sessions while discussing the state's own fiscal issues. This draws a parallel between the state's situation and Hartford's fiscal crisis. At the same time, the continuing dominance of the growth imperative in the policy discourse matches the language used by the Bishops.

CHAPTER 4: STATE BUDGET POLITICS, THE GROWTH IMPERATIVE, AND THE LANGUAGES OF LEGISLATION

What do Connecticut and its finances have to do with Hartford's fiscal crisis? This chapter approaches the relationship between Connecticut and Hartford from three angles. First, that Connecticut's fiscal health is inexorably tied to Hartford's fiscal health due to the federal institution that undergirds their interactions. In Chapter 1, I have demonstrated through a correlational analysis that most states are deeply involved in municipal finances. Only those municipalities explicitly authorized by their states to declare bankruptcy go on to file Chapter 9 petition. Other states do not allow such unilateral move by their municipalities. Connecticut is one of the states to have set preconditions to municipalities filing Chapter 9 bankruptcy, thus restricting access to the court system (Kimhi 2010:381-382; Hoffmann 2014:225). At the same time, Hartford derives much of its operating revenues from state grants and payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT). What happens at the state level matters at the municipal level: the deteriorating fiscal conditions of Connecticut can have deleterious effects on Hartford's fiscal conditions (Pacewicz and Robinson 2020:982). Still, Connecticut, like Michigan with Detroit (Bomey 30-42), has the ability to step in and avert disaster at the municipal level, and it did so in fiscal year 2018 as I reveal later.

Second, that there is a parallel between points of conflict at the General Assembly and in the city hall. Both state legislators and municipal political actors invoke public employees' unions as the source of fiscal strains as they battle respective fiscal problems. Most importantly, however, state legislators employ a variety of different languages to contextualize Connecticut's fiscal situation and interact with Hartford's crisis especially in fiscal year 2018. This also loops back to the first angle, which emphasizes the state's role in the resolution of Hartford's fiscal

crisis. What the legislators say has direct and indirect bearings on the state's decision to intervene.

Language is an immediate and ubiquitous tool. It is the primary medium by which we express and disseminate thoughts. Language can be colored by an ideology, "meaning in the service of power" (Thompson 1990:7), to contextualize the environment and society in a way that serves the needs of a particular class. For this reason, it is imperative that we pay attention to the kind of language public actors rely on. A particular type of language may facilitate, obscure, or even hinder the ideological agenda of the speaker depending on how it is used.

We cannot discuss the nuances of today's legislative language without bringing up neoliberalism. Following its birth in the wake of the tumultuous economic conditions of the 1970s and its subsequent propagation following the Washington Consensus, neoliberalism has become a hegemonic ideology. Because of its ubiquity and permeability, however, neoliberalism has also become a catch-all term to denote every ill effect of globalization (Pacewicz 24). Still, it is a term not without substance. At its base theoretical level, neoliberalism denotes a set of political economic norms that promote market superiority. Neoliberal practices assume we may maximize human utility by "liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade (Harvey 2007:2)." In other words, only the condition in which economic forces are allowed to operate unhindered can we guarantee human progress and happiness.

Yet, therein lies a paradox: though neoliberalism advocates for laissez-faire governance through deregulation and privatization, those are actions, not phenomena, to be undertaken by the state. Neoliberalization is not a return to the natural state or the equilibrium for political economy. An interested state must muster the will and invest its political capital to bring about

the changes needed to implement neoliberalism. And one of the ways the state does this is through continuous advocacy for and assertion of neoliberal dominance in policymaking.

In analyzing the language used by Connecticut state officials during legislative sessions, committees, and public hearings, I find an interesting coexistence of contrasting rhetorical devices. Pacewicz speaks of a distinctive division between Keynesian and neoliberal community governance. Those advocating for the former emphasize the labor-business axis of factionalism that translates to partisan politics (Pacewicz 71-79), where politics are embedded in community governance. Every election, every contest, every economic decision is a zero-sum game based on a limited pool of resources each faction may exploit. Those advocating for the latter – neoliberalism – emphasize and value partnership over factionalism, a means to allocate resources in what they consider to be an impartial way based on market solutions (Pacewicz 119-140). Thus, direct parallels can be drawn among these four terms. Keynesianism can be understood as an interchangeable ideology with an adversarial partisanship while neoliberalism is interchangeable with a consensus-driven¹ partnership. Neoliberalism and its partnership are antithetical to Keynesianism and its partisanship (Peck and Tickell 381). I use these four terms in a respectively correspondent manner for the rest of this dissertation.

The newfound importance of partnership in community governance extracts and alienates politicians from the communities they nominally represent since the new generation of partners view overt partisanship with distrust. In two Iowa cities Pacewicz studied, the neoliberal language of the new partners replaces the Keynesian language of the old partisans. But I find that in Connecticut's State Capitol, such transition is neither clear-cut nor complete. State legislators frequently employ two contrasting types of languages – Keynesian and partisan or neoliberal and

¹ Here, a consensus does not necessarily mean a cooperative, collective harmony among competing groups. Rather, it denotes a publicized appearance of harmony possibly from one group dominating over the others.

consensus-seeking – depending on what is expedient at the moment. What does remain consistent through all debates and discussions is the longstanding line of division and conflict between Democrat and Republican legislators on the issue of state budget. Each party has a set of fundamental policies that add up to party ideologies that are expressed in different languages depending on the situation at hand.

Intriguingly, when it comes to budgetary deliberations, it is mostly the Republicans who have a set of clear policy goals and employ both types of languages representing Keynesian and neoliberal ideas. On the rise of a new breed of conservatives in Kansas, Merriman identifies seven main goals of conservatism in state politics. While Connecticut is qualitatively different from Kansas in politics, culture, and demographics, contemporary conservatism is a familiar component of its body politic. Publicly, Connecticut Republicans express support for three out of the Kansan seven:

1. Continuously reduce taxation and government expenditure, preferably by automatic or compulsory mechanisms.
2. Where possible, use private or market means to provide services currently delivered by government; limit the political influence of public sector labor unions.
6. Limit government oversight of commercial activity and the labor market at all levels (Merriman 2019:4).

These goals are all too recognizable staples of American conservatism. What is noteworthy, however, is the way Connecticut Republicans frame the debate. As the minority party in the government, Connecticut Republicans present themselves as the only group invested in the state's fiscal health, yet also the group hampered by a real lack of political capital and electoral power. They adroitly employ both Keynesian language of factionalism and neoliberal language of partnership to emphasize this viewpoint. And four distinct polemical points undergird these languages: (a) Connecticut is in a permanent fiscal crisis; the Democrats controlling the state government are worsening its conditions by (b) going against the logic of the market and (c)

protecting the state employees' union, and; (d) only by adopting the Republican agenda can the state save itself from a death spiral.

In contrast, Connecticut Democrats by and large remain quiet during the sessions I cover in detail. Both legislative and executive branches of the Connecticut government have been dominated by the Democrats since 2011, putting the party in control of the state's agenda. But the slim majority they retain² also means the Democrats are required to produce budgets that work and are forced to compromise on issues that need Republican support. This is the reason why ideological posturing is so common with Republican legislators while Democratic legislators remain mostly silent. The Democrats must rule, and ideological posturing only hurts their efforts to compromise and create a working relationship across the aisle. Altogether, I find only three exceptions to this rule, and they include Senator Edwin A. Gomes (D-23), Representative Joshua Elliott (D-88), and Representative Robyn Porter (D-94) during the discussions surrounding the budget for 2018-19 biennium. Otherwise, many Democratic speeches were rebuttals or reactions to Republican ideological posturing.

This chapter contextualizes the relationship between Connecticut and Hartford from three different angles as I have enumerated above: that the federal polity necessarily makes the state's matter a municipal matter; that both the state and the city view public employees' unions as the source of respective fiscal crises, and; that the languages used by state legislators satisfactorily characterize the state's response to Hartford's fiscal crisis. Additionally, I also assert that the state policy discourse relates to Hartford's fiscal crisis because in both cases, important actors utilize the growth imperative as the principle that motivates actions. I contextualize the state-municipal

² For 2015 and 2016: Senate 21D, 15R; House of Representatives 87D, 64R. A slimmer majority for 2017 and 2018: Senate 18D, 18R, with Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman retaining the power to break the tie; House of Representatives 80D, 71R.

relationship by looking at two distinct sets of data. First, I chronicle the ups and downs of the state's fiscal condition since the 1990s that explains its reticence to help Hartford when it sounded the alarm in 2016. Second, I observe the language employed by the state officials both Republican and Democratic, not only to elucidate the public reason given for its reticence, but also to explicate the rhetorical strategy they use.

A. Connecticut's Position at the Beginning

To comprehend the state officials' initial reluctance to intervene in Hartford's fiscal trouble, we must first understand Connecticut's fiscal position at the time. Following the downturn of the Great Recession between 2007 and 2009, Connecticut experienced several bouts of deficit in its annual budgets. In Figure 4-1, we can see the gross revenues of fiscal years 2009, 2011, and – most importantly – 2015, a year before Hartford's crisis, taking downturns. When standardized using BLS's CPI calculator, it is clear the gross revenue stagnated following a decrease in 2009, only managing to keep up with the inflation. The general fund, a portion of the budget unrestricted by specified purposes and can be used for general operations, recorded a severe deficit in 2009. Figure 4-2 clarifies that nearly a billion out of the \$18.5 billion general fund expenditure had to be paid for by deficit spending³. The General Fund deficit struck again in 2012 and then in a quick succession between 2015 and 2017. The picture is grimmer when we turn to the legislative side of budget making. A simple search of introduced bills shows that following the Great Recession, the executive and legislative branches have overseen some form of deficit mitigation in fiscal years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, and 2017. These views all add up to budgetary health that has been deteriorating for some time.

³ All of Connecticut fiscal data were imported from annual *Connecticut State Budget* books from 1991 to 2023 by the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA).

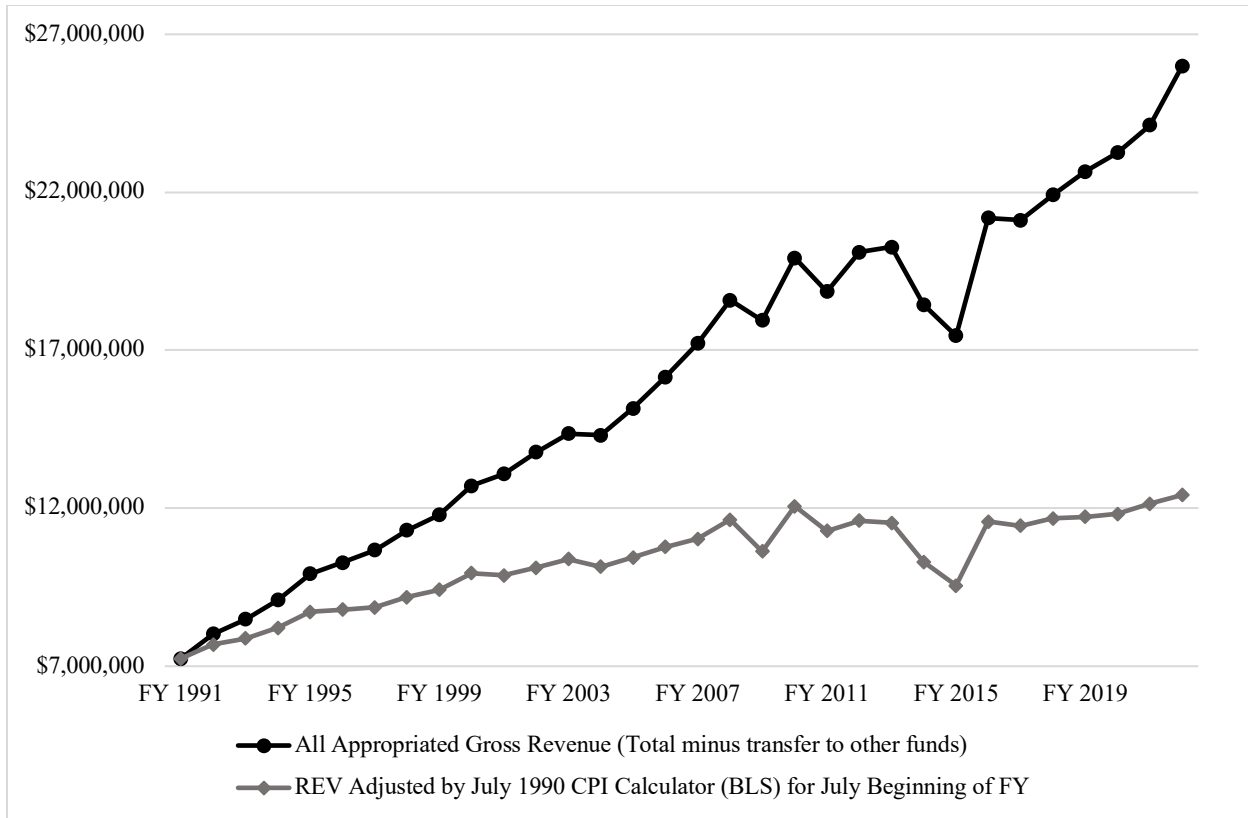


Figure 4-1. Connecticut Gross Revenue and CPI-Adjusted Gross Revenue, 1990-2022

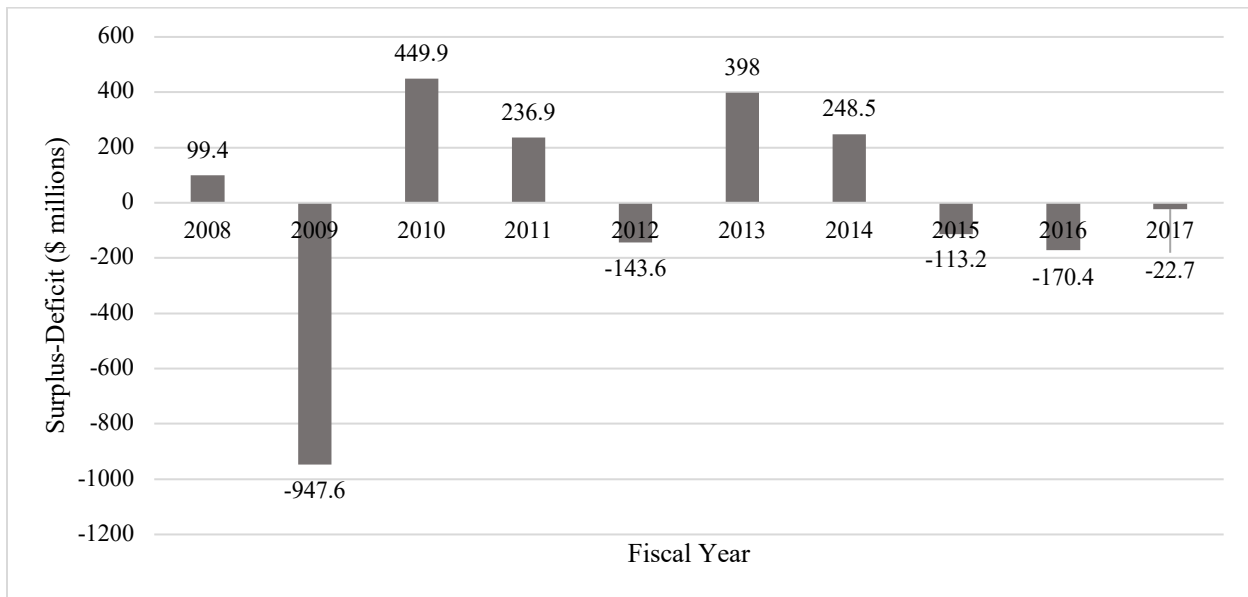


Figure 4-2. General Fund Surplus-Deficit (in \$ millions), FY 2008-2017

Part of the blame lies not with the state but with the federal government. The federal government cut its transfer to Connecticut by a massive amount. In 2007, right before the Great

Recession, the total transfer amounted to \$2.57 billion. It reached a high of \$4.26 billion in 2011 and then declined precipitously to the low of \$1.31 billion in 2018, a nearly 70 percent decrease and only half of the pre-Great Recession figure. And the amount has yet to recover to the pre-2011 level as Figure 4-3 illustrates.

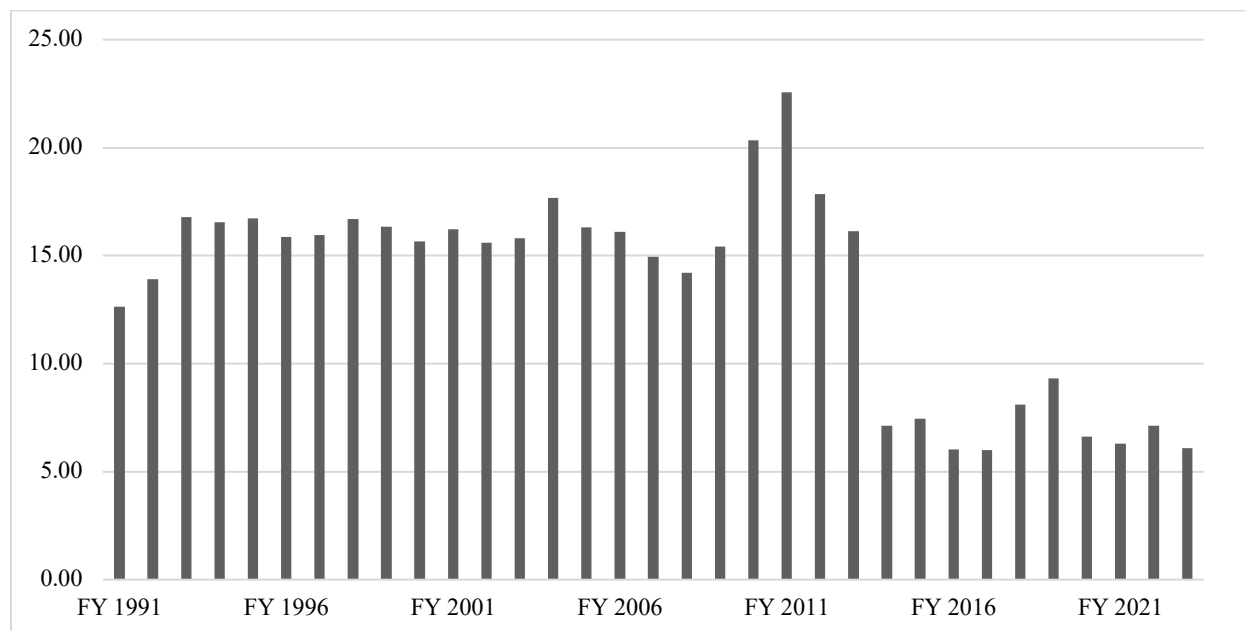


Figure 4-3. The Percentage of Gross Revenue from Federal Grants

At this point, a detailed analysis of the federal grants to Connecticut is warranted. Figure 4-4 shows that much of the year-to-year variation in federal grants is due to the changes in grants-in-aids, which are financial aids directed to specified programs and projects. Thus, the state is not at liberty to decide how to spend them. The sudden dip in 2014 precedes a period of stagnation, which precedes a recovery in 2019. This up-and-down movement closely follows the pattern Figure 4-3 clarifies. The portion of annual federal grants the state is allowed to use freely for general obligations⁴ is minuscule, never exceeding \$90 million in transfers that can add up to over \$4 billion. For comparison, all appropriated gross revenue for 2023 added up to \$26.78 billion, and \$55.65 million of miscellaneous federal aids amounted to 0.21 percent. Figure 4-5

⁴ An addition of miscellaneous federal aids and other uncategorized contributions.

elucidates that over the twelve-year period between 2012 and 2023, the miscellaneous portion did not exceed six percent out of the total federal grant conferred to Connecticut.

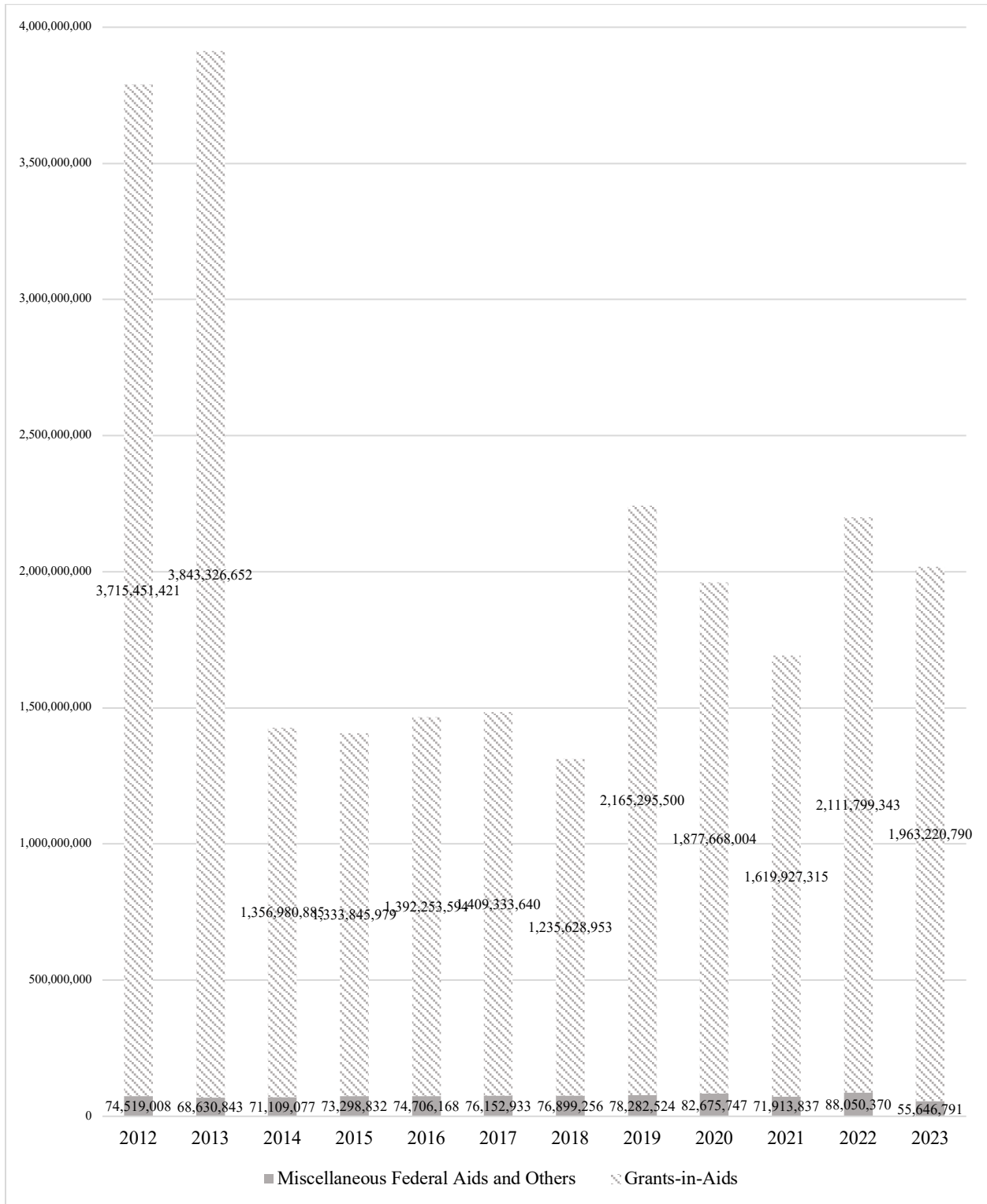


Figure 4-4. Federal Grants to Connecticut by Categories

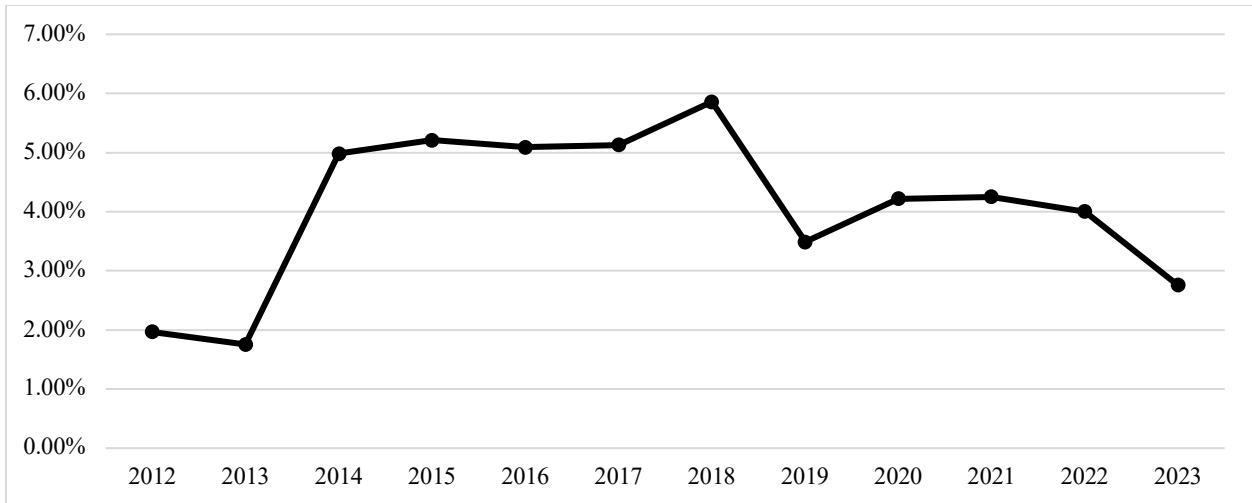


Figure 4-5. Miscellaneous Aid and Others Percentage of Federal Grants to Connecticut

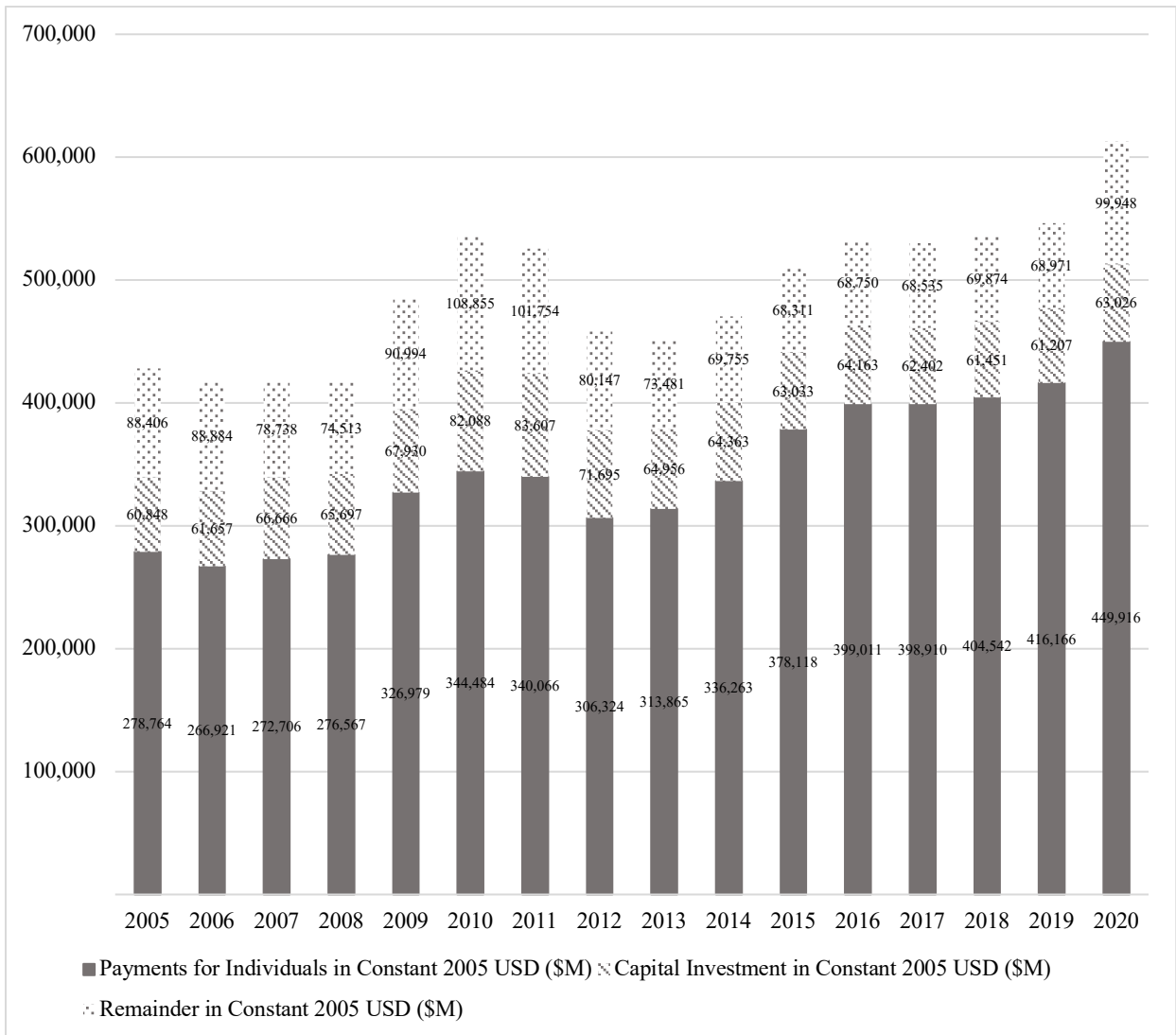


Figure 4-6. Total Outlays for Federal Grants to State and Local Governments by Category

A broader view of the federal grants to all states draws a still more complete picture. In Figure 4-6, we can see payments for individuals increasing over the years whereas capital investments are stagnant. Both items are grants-in-aids. Payments for individuals include such items as funding for Medicaid and Child Nutrition Programs. Capital investments cover grants to projects related to matters including national defense. Some part of the remaining portion of the grants, but not all, can be used by states as they see fit. Even this portion, however, has been decreasing over the years both in absolute dollar amount and in percentage of the total federal grants to states as Figure 4-7 demonstrates. In fact, Figure 4-6 shows that even the portion dedicated to payments for individuals has experienced a sharp reduction from 2011 to 2012. This is tantamount to buck-passing in fiscal politics. The trickle-down aspect of the federal budget necessarily subjugates states and, in extension, municipalities to the political whims of the moment. The cuts in federal transfers in the 2010s affected Connecticut as well as Hartford, as the city relies greatly upon the state’s revenue sharing scheme as I elucidate in the following chapter.

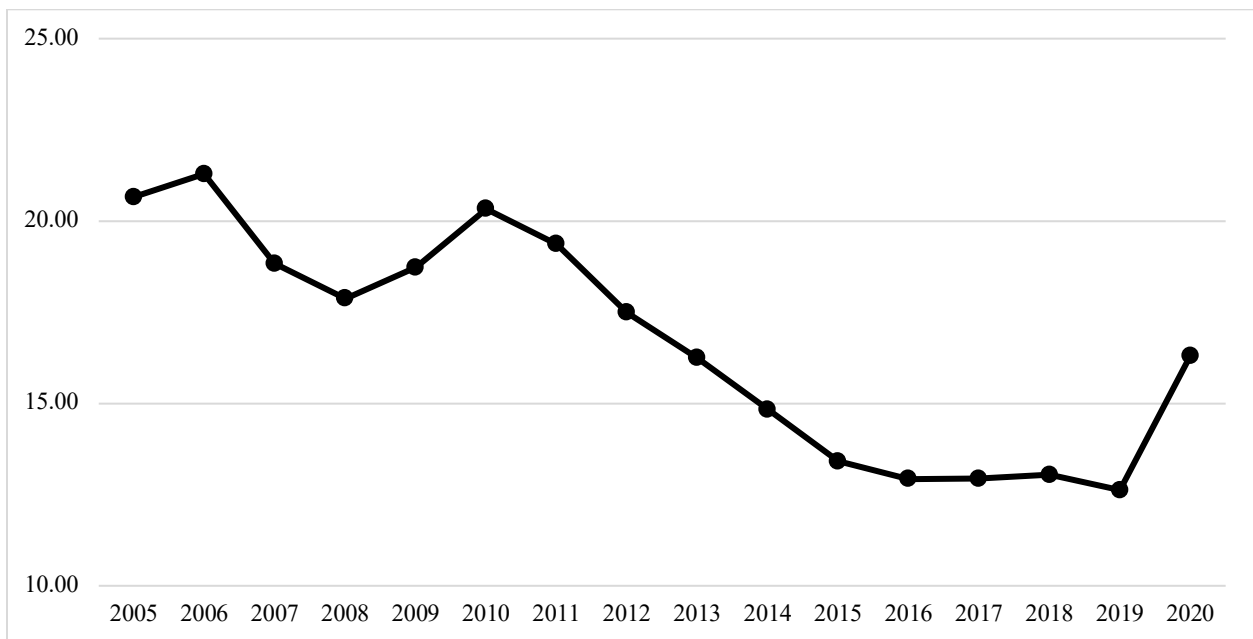


Figure 4-7. Federal Remainder Outlays to State and Local Governments Percentage

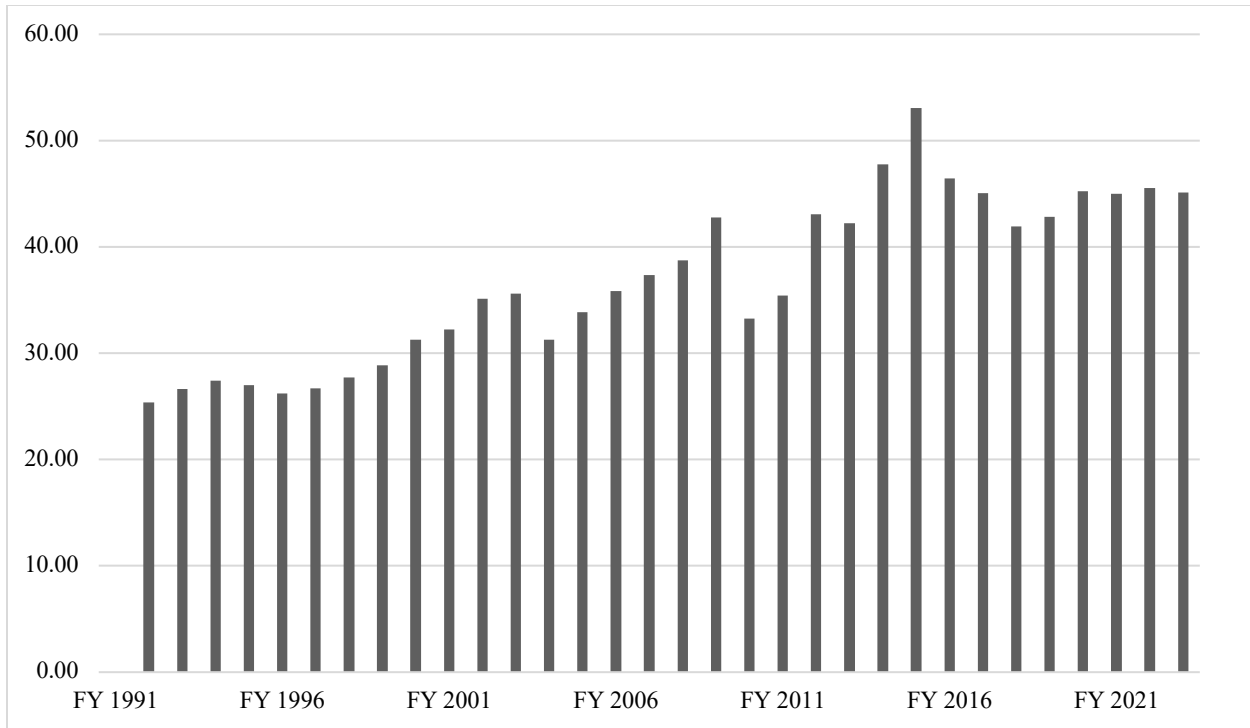


Figure 4-8. The Percentage of Gross Revenue from Personal Income Tax, FY 1991-2023

As noted in Chapter 2, Connecticut implemented income tax in 1991 after an unsuccessful attempt in 1971, thus ending the state’s status as a tax haven for high-income earners from New York. In spite of the short span in which the tax has existed, the state has come to greatly depend on it to fulfill its budgetary needs. In the first year of its implementation in 1992, the state derived 25.35 percent, more than a quarter of its gross revenue from personal income tax payments. The figure increased to 53.07 percent in 2015, 46.43 percent in 2016, 45.09 percent in 2017, and 41.9 percent in 2018 (see Figure 4-8). Implemented to overcome large deficits that opened up in the late 1980s and supplement sales tax, income tax revenue has become a dependable way for Connecticut to raise funds. Income tax revenue, however, can deviate significantly from projections and cause headaches for state officials trying to consolidate a budget for the year (Office of Fiscal Analysis 2014:1). Despite the fact that the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC; Office of the State Comptroller 2023a) and the Office of Policy and Management (OPM; Messner 2023) issue monthly forecasts on the state’s finances,

the actual tax receipts can vary considerably depending on the year. On top of this wide variation, the expiration of some federal tax cuts contributed to a depressed income tax collection as I explain below. For this precise reason, 2015 was another turbulent year for the state's budgetary process, and the political turmoil had fallouts beyond the year.

B. The Reality of Fiscal Year 2015

As Figure 4-2 demonstrates, Connecticut ended fiscal years 2013 and 2014 with large budget surpluses. According to the OFA, through expenditure adjustments and robust revenue performance in the form of income tax collections that were higher than the projected figures, the state's General Fund saw surpluses of \$398 million in 2013 and \$248.5 million in 2014. The law authorizes the state to hold up to 15 percent of net general fund appropriations for the current fiscal year in the Budget Reserve Fund (BRF), i.e. the "rainy day fund," which may be used to pay for deficits in future years and unfunded pension liabilities (Pinho 2020b:1-2). The state deposited \$177.2 million to the BRF in 2013 and the entirety of the General Fund surplus of \$248.5 million in 2014 (Pinho 2). Yet in the following years, the state recorded significant budget deficits.

This is not to say Connecticut's trouble started in 2015. In fact, as Figure 4-1 clarifies, the gross revenue fell sharply in 2014 and the trend continued into 2015. In 2015, Connecticut recorded a shortfall of \$113.2 million in its budget, a dramatic turnaround from 2014's surplus of \$248.5 million (Office of Fiscal Analysis 1). As noted previously, this was due to the income tax revenue being lower than the projected amount. There was an unusual reason for this shortfall.

In an email correspondence, an OPM official revealed the state's official stance:

We believe the drop in collections was attributable to changes in taxpayer behavior that actually occurred in Income Year 2012, which inflated collections in state fiscal year 2013. Since the forecast for state fiscal year 2014 was based off of an elevated base that did not adequately adjust

for this one-time activity, we registered a shortfall. The changes in taxpayer behavior was (*sic*) induced by the partial expiration of certain federal tax cuts, which incentivized taxpayers to recognize more income in Income Year 2012 rather than in Income Year 2013 (Fiore 2023; underlines in the origin).

And this looming deficit forced squabbles over the details of the governor's budget for fiscal year 2016.

C. The Growth Imperative in Policy Discourse

Before this dissertation moves onto the account of budget deliberations in each fiscal year, it is important to explain why analyzing the languages used in state policy discourse matters in understanding Hartford's fiscal crisis beyond the axiom that state affairs relate to local affairs and parallel one another. The relationship between the two discursive topics is not immediately clear. After all, state policy discourse is entirely political whereas Hartford's fiscal crisis is fundamentally a matter of political economy. But I argue the languages of state policy discourse are important because they reveal the assumptions inherent to the growth imperative, which is the common theme that weaves throughout the politics of Connecticut and the political economy of Hartford. We find that the growth imperative, which tethered the actors to Hartford's development regime in the past, dominates all discussions state legislators share. This is especially pertinent to the legislators who employ neoliberal language of partnership, which mirrors the language used by the Bishops in the 1980s to link the fortunes of their companies to that of the city. From formulating policies that would encourage businesses and millionaires to stay in Connecticut to restricting government spending to cutting taxes, the legislators regardless of their party affiliations defended their bills using the ideology that champions economic growth.

But this strict adherence to the growth imperative proves to be largely performative. As I show in subsequent sections, the legislators adeptly code-switch depending on the topic of the moment, alluding to the fact that none of the legislators are true devotees of the growth imperative. Moreover, the previous chapter has demonstrated that the growth imperative is no longer a valid strategy for Connecticut and Hartford, as local actors with economic clout have departed for global cities. The development regime fragmented into individual groups of interest that do not intersect, and no one group has the enough influence and resources to effect citywide let alone statewide changes. The growth imperative only provides Hartford citizens with an empty promise of development that no individual state legislator or municipal actor can deliver.

So why invoke the growth imperative at all if it has no substance as an applicable policy? Because political performance begets real political power and real legitimacy (Apter 2006:223), and components of the ideology can be recycled and reused in political performances. As Mayhew found among members of the U.S. Congress, the possibility of reelection decides most if not all of the legislators' actions (Fenno 1973:1-14; Mayhew 2004[1974]:14-17). Since Connecticut does not maintain term limits for its legislators (Frame 2022:3-4), reelection is a powerful motivator. And the growth imperative remains firmly rooted in public consciousness as the only acceptable policy option.

But the growth imperative obscures real policy agenda. For one, Republican legislators exploit the growth imperative as a pretext for slashing the taxes or keeping them low. There is empirical evidence that voters in developed countries are less likely to reelect politicians when there is a government deficit (Brender and Drazen 2008:2219). Tax cuts during the time of deficit spending like fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018 would not be conducive to reelection bids, but the Republican legislators mitigate this effect by associating their call for tax cuts with

economic development. Whether they can actualize that economic development is irrelevant as they derive political capital from the growth imperative.

It should be noted that the growth imperative is pervasive in all levels of political discourse. I show in Chapter 5 that the municipal actors are not immune to its dominance. In fact, as the half of the development regime that used to exert enormous influence over Hartford, the municipal actors adhere to the tenets of the growth imperative even more closely. This is reflected in the economic style of reasoning employed by Mayor Bronin. We recognize one notable difference, however. At the state level, there is no movement to counter the growth imperative. In contrast, there is an influential directive that counters the growth imperative in the form of the language emphasizing the moral imperative at the city level.

D. Multiple Budget Revisions for Fiscal Year 2016 and the Rhetoric of Deficit Politics

Figure 4-2 illustrates how budget shortfalls became a problem for Connecticut in the latter half of the 2010s. As things go with complex matters such as budget operations of a contemporary American state, many factors contributed to this problem. The most important factor has been the less than stellar record of revenue collection. After experiencing a stochastic decline in gross revenue following the Great Recession, Connecticut saw its state revenue consistently decrease between fiscal year 2013 and fiscal year 2015, first by 9 percent and then by 5.4 percent. It did bounce back by 21 percent in fiscal year 2016, but the inflation-adjusted revenue figures show decline and stagnation (see Figure 4-1).

The State of Connecticut makes annual budgets in biennial sets in odd years, and the new fiscal year starts on July 1. A month later in August, state agencies begin to formulate the new budget for the coming year, and they submit their requests to the OPM, the governor's staff

agency⁵, on September 1. After considering these requests, the OPM submits a tentative state budget to the governor in mid-November. The governor's office then presents a proposed budget for the upcoming two fiscal years to the Connecticut General Assembly, the state's legislative branch, on February 1. It then undergoes an extensive deliberative process in the legislature. While the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA) reviews the budget, the Appropriations and the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committees hold agency and public hearings. Finally, the proposed budget goes in front of the House and the Senate for final approval. Once approved by the legislature, the budget is signed into law or vetoed by the governor. It may then be revised during the following fiscal year depending on the state's situation.

The process takes nearly a year and is therefore cyclical and perpetual, but it is prosaic for the most part. The machinery of the state government hums along according to the established traditions and rules. Yet, the budget for fiscal year 2016, which began on July 1, 2015, went through three different iterations. The first iteration came near the tail end of fiscal year 2015 in June, when the legislature finally approved the governor's budget for the biennium ending in June 30, 2017, which was later than expected. It included a tax hike for corporations that had companies such as General Electric Company (GE) and Aetna Inc. release public statements to complain. The second iteration in December 2015 was prompted by the OFA projecting a \$214 million shortfall. This unforeseen shortfall prompted Governor Dannel Malloy to convene a special session of the legislature on December 4. The order of the day was to close the gap without resorting to raising new taxes or draining the Budget Reserve Fund.

⁵ Connecticut has two state agencies dedicated to assisting the government produce budgets and carry them out: the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA) and the Office of Policy and Management (OPM). The OFA is part of the legislative arm of the state government whereas the OPM is part of the executive branch. The OFA maintains strict nonpartisanship in its operations.

Four days later on December 8, the House and the Senate held their emergency sessions, discussing the proposed changes to the budget and the amendment to the Special Transportation Fund. The sessions began congenially with the representatives and senators announcing varied events and happenings in Connecticut and their lives. Representative Carney (R-23) congratulated two talents Connecticut has produced: Nick Fradiani, a Guilford native, who won his season of American Idol and Braden Sunshine, a resident of Lyme and Carney's constituent, who had advanced in The Voice. Representatives Ferraro (R-117) and Adinolfi (R-103) announced the births of their respective grandchildren.

The session that began with much personal bonhomie soon turned into a forum to air all grievances in which the Republicans decried the state government and its attendant parts as inefficient and unmanageable. This emergency session is important because of the diversity of rhetorical strategies employed by the Republicans. We may first divide these discourses into two groups based on their political languages: (1) a Keynesian one that stresses factionalism along the labor-business axis, and (2) a neoliberal one that stresses partnership and shared goals while commodifying the constituent-representative relationship. The Republicans' four polemical points employ a different mixture of these political languages, the examples of which are given below.

Lockbox Amendment for the Special Transportation Fund

The discussion on the emergency budgetary adjustments started with House Resolution 304 that amends the State Constitution to create a lockbox for the Special Transportation Fund. In 1983, the Mianus River Bridge that carries I-95 near Stamford collapsed due to corrosion, killing three and injuring three. A year later, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) released a

report concluding that “deficiencies in the State of Connecticut’s bridge safety inspection and bridge maintenance program” were the probable cause behind the bridge’s collapse (National Transportation Safety Board 1984:1), which impelled the legislature to create the Special Transportation Fund to fund a statewide infrastructure renewal program (Poole 2019a:1). Senator Boucher (R-26) emphasizes the importance of the Special Transportation Fund thusly:

[W]hat’s the transportation system that will bring our goods and services, our employees back and forth? I have businesses in my district that even talk about employees that they bring in from New York City. And they’re usually young people that wanna stay in New York City because they have a lot more fun and a lot more activities and opportunities they have but they want to work in Connecticut (Senate 2015b:3643-3644).

Senator Linares (R-33) argues:

We are conveniently located between New York City and Boston – two cities that are growing. They have dynamic work force. There’s (*sic*) new innovative companies moving in, hiring workers, and we haven’t been able to compete with them because of our budgets (Senate 3672).

The lawmakers recognize the unique position Connecticut is in straddling New York and Boston and being influenced by both. Investing in infrastructure not only prevents the repeat of the Mianus River Bridge collapse, but it also integrates the state to global cities and serves the interests of businesses and young professional transplants. In other words, legislators like Boucher emphasize the symbiotic relationship between businesses, labor, and the state in infrastructure investments. Yet, until 2015, the Special Transportation Fund had been treated as an extension of the General Fund because even though they are divided up into separate categories, the state may redirect some of the Special Transportation Fund to close the deficits in the General Fund. The Democratic representatives proposed this lockbox amendment to prevent such action in the future by making the Special Transportation Fund a permanent fixture in the state budget and requiring the fund be used only for transportation purposes (Poole 2019b:6).

The Republicans, however, found this lockbox overly permissive. They took an issue with the fact that the term “transportation purposes” can be interpreted in a myriad of different

ways, which they argued would defeat the purpose of having a lockbox (House of Representatives 2015c:8740, 8748). Moreover, by not further refining the term “transportation purposes,” the lockbox would only be effective for two years before a new biennial budget process began and therefore a more expansive definition became the barometer (House of Representatives 8740, 8775). Representative Robert Sampson (R-80)⁶ went so far as to say the lockbox was “a gimmick,” that the legislature will “always have the key” with which they can unlock it (House of Representatives 8754-8755). Sampson goes further:

This is just a symptom of bad leadership. That’s all it is. All it takes is will. If you don’t want to spend the taxpayers’ money unwisely, if you want to actually have a transportation system that is legitimately run in the State of Connecticut, then you do it. You do the hard work. You do what it takes. [...] We’re here because of a Special Session because of our poorly run state budget, another symptom (House of Representatives 8757).

Sampson’s argument is inclusive in its reach, and despite the heavy-handed imagery of disease evoked by the word “symptom,” he does not assign the blame to any particular group either Republican or Democrat. It addresses those in the legislature equally, combined into a collective “you” that may fix all that is wrong with the Special Transportation Fund and in extension the state government by simply willing it so. This goes in hand with what Representative Miner (R-66) added during the discussion:

The fact is, as of today, we’re projecting a \$550 million deficit in 2017, a \$1.7 billion deficit in 2018 and a \$1.8 billion deficit in ‘19. So the reason for this opportunity is that if we can’t hold ourselves accountable, we provide the people of the State of Connecticut that opportunity. [...] We need to give the people of Connecticut the security that we are not going to use some revenue intended for transportation to balance a budget in 2017 (House of Representatives 8771).

It is “we” in the General Assembly who are responsible for the projected deficit, who must hold “ourselves” accountable. In this sense, these are conciliatory statements that seek to build

⁶ Robert Sampson went on to serve as a state senator representing the 16th Senate District in 2019.

partnership regardless of partisan affiliation, a common refrain in neoliberal community governance.

Regardless of the protests, the Republican amendment to the lockbox failed to pass with 63 representative voting yea and 76 representatives voting nay. The attempt to further restrict the General Assembly from diverting the Special Transportation Fund came to naught with the failed vote. The lockbox amendment itself was adopted by the legislature with a unanimous yea vote in the Senate and 100 representatives voting yea and 40 voting nay. With less than three-fourths of representatives supporting the lockbox resolution, however, it failed to advance as a ballot measure on November 8, 2016.⁷

State Spending Cap

The next in the discussion came the failure to properly implement the spending cap, which had been approved as a constitutional amendment by more than 80 percent of Connecticut voters in November 1992 (Pinho 2016:1). If activated, the spending cap amendment would bar the State Assembly from increasing the general budget expenditures⁸ beyond the percentage increase in personal income or inflation. The legislature may circumvent the spending cap by the governor's declaration of an emergency or by the approval of three-fifths or more of each chamber. In fact, the spending cap amendment is actually a balanced budget amendment, the first provision of which stipulates that "general budget expenditures authorized for any fiscal year shall not exceed

⁷ In Connecticut, a bill may advance to a ballot measure in three different ways: (1) 75 percent of the members of both chambers of the General Assembly vote for it; (2) a simple majority in both houses do so in two consecutive legislative sessions, or; (3) hold a constitutional convention. Both houses of the General Assembly approved the Special Transportation Fund lockbox amendment once again during the 2017 legislative session, qualifying it for a ballot measure in 2018.

⁸ General budget expenditures "include all expenditures of the General Fund, other appropriated funds, as well as expenditures for highway and transportation related activities, debt service, bond retirement funds and education activities" (Office of Fiscal Analysis 1999:15). In short, it includes all recorded expenditures.

the estimated amount of revenue for such fiscal year (Furbish).” As explained previously, the second provision that sets out a spending cap actually allows the governor and legislators to sidestep it. Furbish argues that “[t]he General Assembly debate on this resolution barely mentions the balanced budget provision” because the spending cap provision provides legislators with an easy way out if there is a deficit. And as Figure 4-2 on Connecticut’s budget history shows, the legislature has had to go into deficit spending five out of the ten years between 2008 and 2017.

Moreover, the cap had yet to be invoked due to the inaction by the legislature as they had failed to delineate what “increase in personal income,” “increase in inflation,” and “general budget expenditures” mean (Pinho 1; House of Representatives 8758). The Republicans advanced an amendment that would force the legislature’s hand. The spending cap would be defined and activated by March 1, within a month of the governor presenting a new budget and the Appropriations Committee and the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee examining it (Senate 3711; House of Representatives 8822). Furthermore, an annual bond cap of \$1.8 billion would be put on the State Bond Commission (House of Representatives 8830). As

Representative Shaban (R-115) explained:

But at the same time it sends a signal to this Body, and it also sends a signal to the bond market. It also sends a signal to the people who buy or will buy these bonds that we’re serious about what we’re doing. [...] If we pass a constitutional amendment with those kind (*sic*) of holes in it, the bond market’s going to go, come on, just more gobbledygook (House of Representatives 8775).

The spending cap and the bond cap speak to the Republicans’ goal of limiting taxation and expenditures whilst emphasizing the market’s inexorable influence on the state’s budgets. For Connecticut, which has seen its annual revenue slip due to unforeseen changes in taxpayer behavior (Fiore; see also Figure 4-1), the mood of the bond market is an important indicator as to whether the state would be able to finance the budget without emergency measures such as the

ones taken in fiscal year 2016. Nevertheless, with the Democrats constituting the majority in both chambers, the spending cap amendment failed⁹.

The December Special Session, State Employees, and Business Interests

After attendant amendments proposed by the Republicans failed and the Democratic amendment to institute a transportation lockbox passed, the legislature began to debate the main bill of the day. The Emergency Certified Bill 1601 proposed a \$195 million decrease in expenditure and a \$135 million increase in revenue to a total savings of \$331 million in fiscal year 2016, closing the anticipated gap in the budget (House of Representatives 8791-8792). Representative Berger (D-73) described the bill in a positive light as “pro-business, pro-corporation package that primarily and mostly in its context... is bipartisan in nature” (House of Representatives 8793). Still, the discussion surrounding the deficit mitigation bill turned contentious with the Republicans bemoaning the state’s “permanent fiscal crisis” (House of Representatives 2015b:7977) through both Keynesian and neoliberal languages. The Republicans also protested some of the affected items in the budget. They were vocally against cutting funds to local police (House of Representatives 8812; 8841), hospitals (House of Representatives 8841; 8861; 8871), and vocational training schools (House of Representatives 8842-8845).

In spite of the contention surrounding what the Republicans deemed unacceptable in budget cuts, the language of partnership weaves throughout. The Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff (D-25)¹⁰ congratulated the General Assembly when he observed:

⁹ The Democratic majority was not enough to create a supermajority in both chambers. For 2015 and 2016, the party affiliations of state senators and representatives were as follows: Senate 21D, 15R; House of Representatives 87D, 64R.

¹⁰ The Senate Majority Leader from January 7, 2015 to current.

While we may not come to a bipartisan vote on this bill, I do believe that there – this is a bipartisan package from a standpoint of there's (*sic*) many issues that we have agreed to that are in this bill today. Good ideas that came from members of the other side of the aisle (Senate 3707).

Even with the specter of perpetual fiscal crisis looming, Duff remains optimistic, listing the accomplishments of the legislature:

[O]ver the last four or five years we've had the smallest percent increases in our budgets than the previous two administrations. We have less (*sic*) state employees now than we had four or five years ago, and I believe that number's gonna get smaller. We have fully funded our patients and we're taking more steps to fund pensions going forward 'cause we know that we have to address those issues as well. [...] [W]e're also investing in education and transportation. Trying to [...] grow jobs for the long term and grow our economy (Senate 3708).

It is an expected response to Republican polemics to defend the track record of the legislature, and once again, the language is inclusive in its reach, stressing the importance of partnership over partisanship.

But neoliberal language is not limited to the exaltation of partnerships and cooperation. In the middle of his speech against the cuts to the hospitals and vocational training schools, Representative Selim Noujaim (R-74) compares the state government with the Walt Disney Company:

What differentiates [Mickey Mouse] from somebody else, Mr. Speaker, is few words. One of them I would say efficiency in operations, tenacity, cutting of waste, and doing whatever it takes to serve the customers. [...] So while Mickey, Minnie and friends entertain people and achieve positive results, we in the State of Connecticut are essentially betraying our customers. Whether we like it or not, whether we know it or not, whether we admit it or not, we are elected to serve customers, and the citizens of the State of Connecticut essentially are our customers (House of Representatives 8839-8840).

This comparison captures in so many words the heart of neoliberal ideology that views the market as the ideal solution to challenges of service provision. Holborow notes that globalization of the capital and installment of neoliberalism as the dominant ideology around which the world organizes its political, social, and economic orders can be deduced from the re-semanticization of ideological keywords (60-61). The "customer" metaphor is especially relevant in the context of Noujaim's speech. Employment of this metaphor renders complex structures of relationships into

a series of sterile, simplistic customer-service provider relationship, thereby negating the complicated socioeconomic, political, and cultural aspects of the relationships in question. One such relationship is the one between constituents and their representatives.

The complexities of a constituent-representative relationship cannot readily be subsumed under a generalized customer-service provider relationship. For one, the representative does not commodify their labor to sell to the constituent in a direct one-to-one exchange. In a much larger scale, the relationship between constituents and their government also cannot be described as that of a market exchange. But this does not prevent legislators from freely employing such language. According to Noujaim, the Walt Disney Company is a paragon of economic efficacy that Connecticut must aspire to. His employment of “customer” metaphor and the comparison of the state government with the Walt Disney Company construct a worldview in which the act of legislating and budgetary finessing is comparable to the act of commercial service. Such language turns constituents with varied concerns and standings into amorphous, classless, and indivisible customers, and it elevates the importance of governance by partnership over partisan contentions (Pacewicz). In the ideal-typical view of a business as a unitary entity, there are no factions within, only partners and associates who collectively advance the business’s interests.

However, the language of Keynesian partisanship and contention slips in as Representative Noujaim accentuates and denounces the state’s inefficiency using an anecdote about a state employee:

Last year I had surgery on my shoulder, rotator cuff. I had three tears, plus my bicep was totally and completely shredded. [...] I happened to be at the Mall in Waterbury, and I see a gentleman sitting outside and said to me, Mr. Noujaim, I see that you had surgery. I said yes, I did. [...] He said yes, I had surgery, too. I said great, what did you have? I had one tear. Really? How long have you been out of work? He said three months? But why three months? Because [...] I am not cleared yet to go to work, and I asked him who does he work for, and he told me the agency of the State of Connecticut. So one tear, three months out of work. Three tears, bicep totally and completely bicep (*sic*) shredded. You know how long I was out of work, Mr. Speaker? Three

days. Three days out of work because I work for a private enterprise and that gentleman works for the State of Connecticut. Why wasn't he working? (House of Representative 8845-8846).

For context, beside his position as a state representative, Noujaim is also employed as the Executive Vice President for a tool company his family founded and owns in Waterbury, CT. He returned to this job after only three days of recuperation. The details in his story are sparse, making it difficult to gauge its veracity, but it is worth considering the unspoken subtexts Noujaim introduces throughout it. First, Noujaim is suggesting that all state employees are compensated beyond what the market forces would deem appropriate. He assumes that the state paid the employee in question for the months they had avoided working. But it is unclear whether the state employee has indeed been receiving pay for the months they were out sick. If the employee has been, it is likely because they have enrolled and paid their way into disability insurance. The state offers both short-term and long-term options that are fully opt-in, and they replace to a maximum of 70 percent of the gross income (Office of the State Comptroller 2020). Furthermore, disability insurance options with similar fees and benefits exist for private sector employees, which negates Noujaim's assertion that compensations for state employees are exorbitant or unmerited according to the market.

Second, that state bureaucracy is inefficient. The direct contrast between the state employees' three-month-long leave and Noujaim's three days off post-surgery reinforces the idea that the state is slow to act when it comes to its employees. Nonetheless, we must note that it is Noujaim's *personal* decision not to take advantage of Connecticut's generous paid sick leave program (Connecticut Department of Labor 2023). Noujaim's return to work does not speak to the state's efficiency in any way.

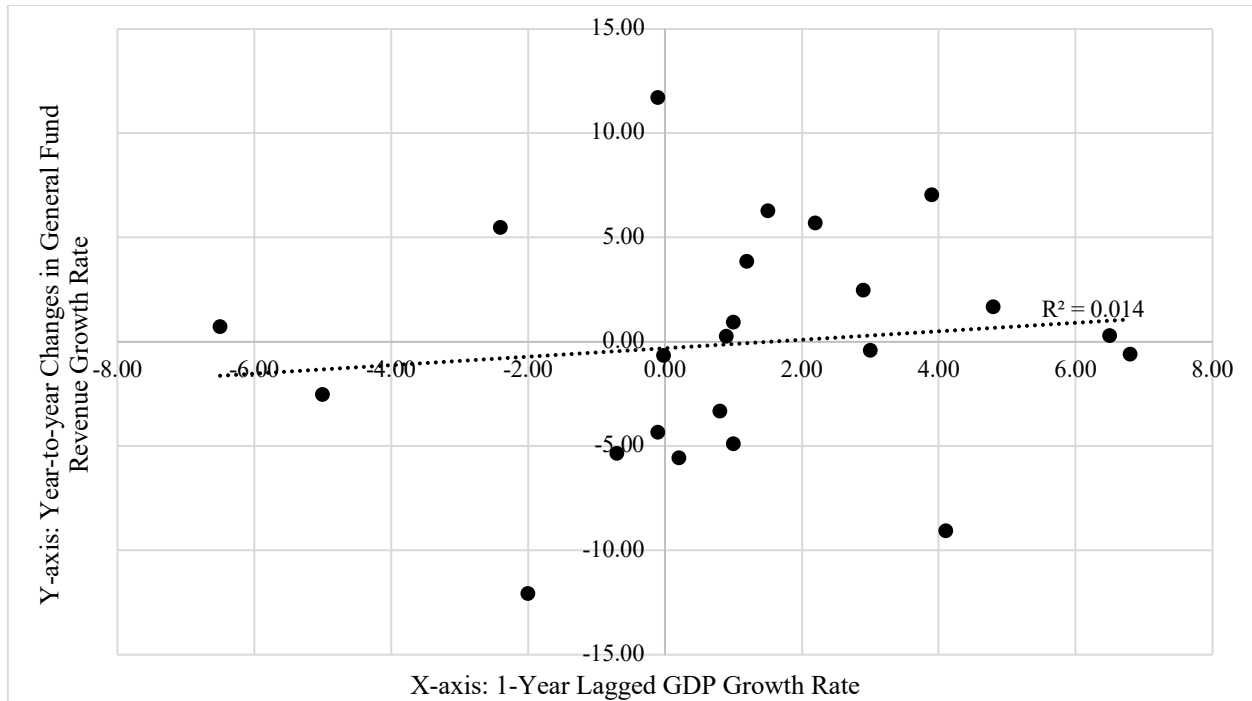


Figure 4-9. Scatterplot of 1-Year Lagged GDP Growth Rate and Changes in General Fund Revenue Growth Rate

In fact, unionized state employees bear the brunt of the Republicans’ vitriol.

Representative Wilms (R-142) notes on June 2, 2015 during the deliberation of H.B. No. 7061, the first round of the state budget implementation:

Since we’re in a state of permanent fiscal crisis, a big part of it is that our economy’s not growing, our revenues are not growing. So if our revenues are flat, if we look at our budget, and then we look at our spending side, 30 percent of what we spend is related to employee union benefits and wages. Those have been growing at double digit rates. [...] [T]he rising costs of the employee union benefits and wages are cannibalizing services that we actually need to perform on behalf of our citizens (House of Representatives 7977).

Wilms’s statement is noteworthy for suggesting a causal relationship between economic growth and revenue growth. However, statistical analysis demonstrates that this observation is spurious.

Running a correlation between a 23-year range of GDP growth rate in Connecticut lagged by a year¹¹ and year-to-year changes in revenue growth rate between 2000 and 2022 (Bureau of Economic Analysis 2023) yields a correlation coefficient of 0.1185; a t-test based on the

¹¹ To account for the lag in the effect of economic growth on revenue collection.

coefficient yields a p-value of 0.5903, which is nowhere near the 0.05 threshold. Therefore, it fails to reject the null hypothesis that there is no association between economic growth and revenue growth. Figure 4-9 portrays no clear pattern of correlation between the GDP growth rate and the changes in revenue growth rate. Adding a trendline results in a low value of coefficient of determination (R^2), providing further proof to the statistical analysis. This speaks to the unpredictability with which Connecticut must enact its budgets.

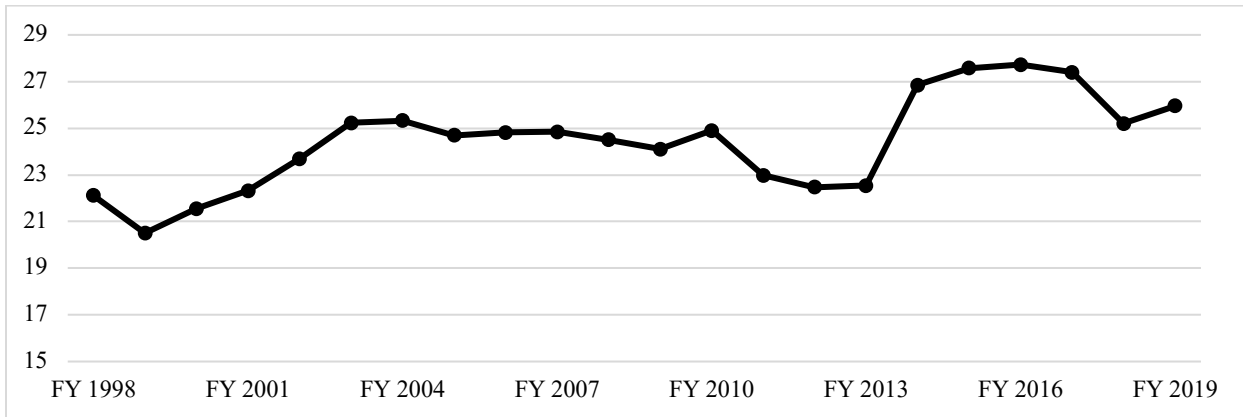


Figure 4-10. Personal Services and Fringe Benefits Added Percentage in General Budget Expenditures

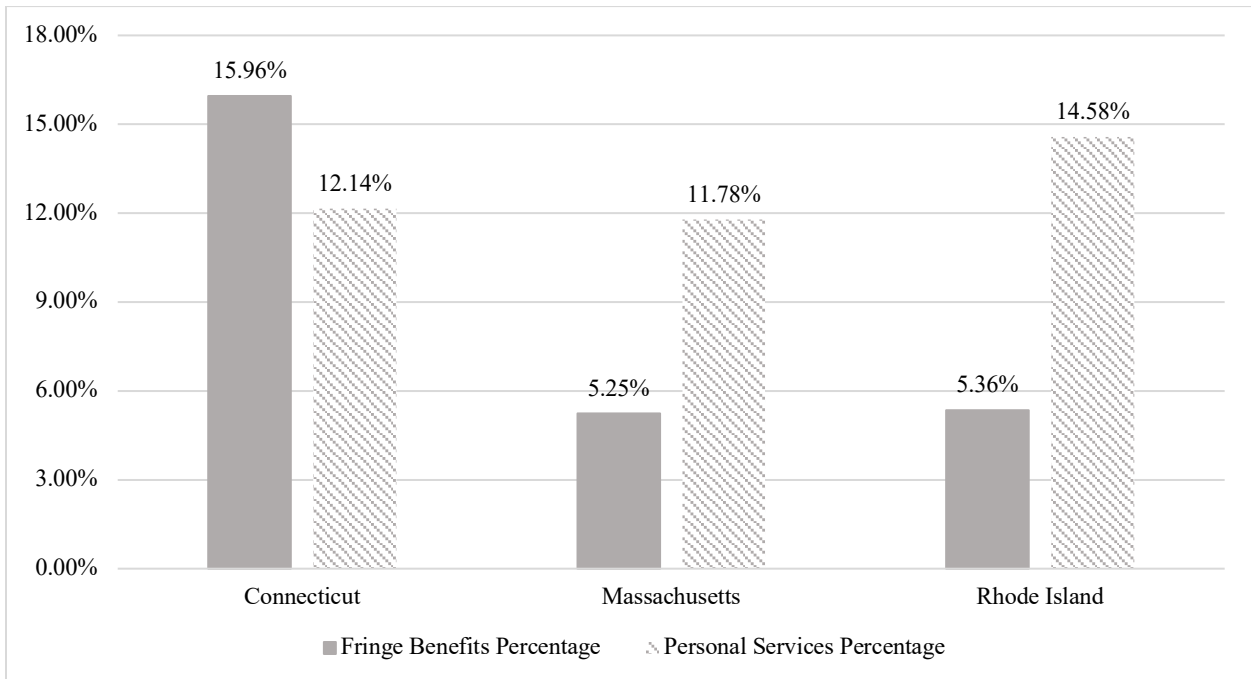


Figure 4-11. 2023 Salaries and Benefits Percentage of General Budget Expenditures by State

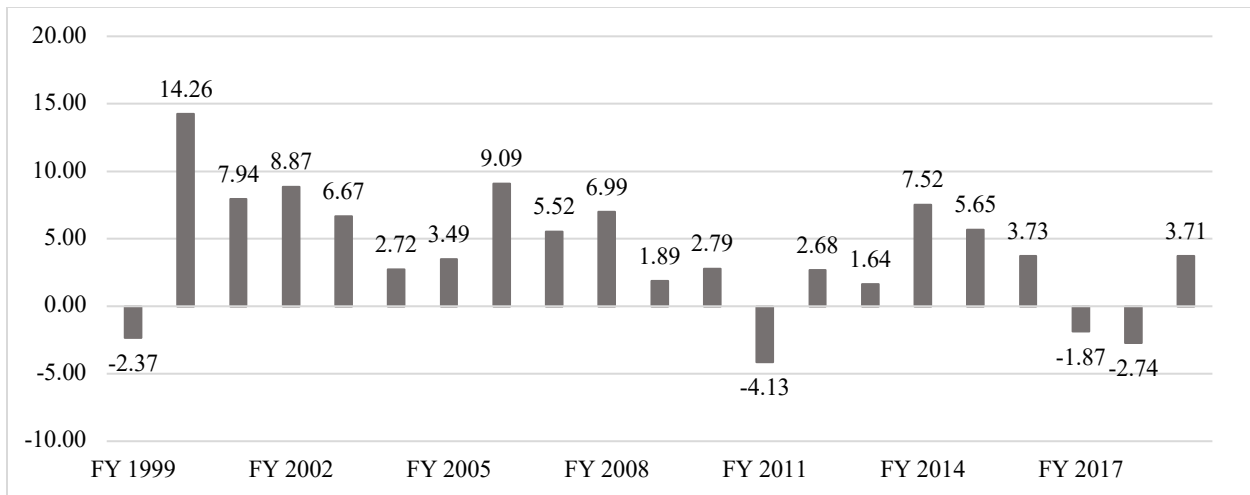


Figure 4-12. Personal Services and Fringe Benefits Growth Rate

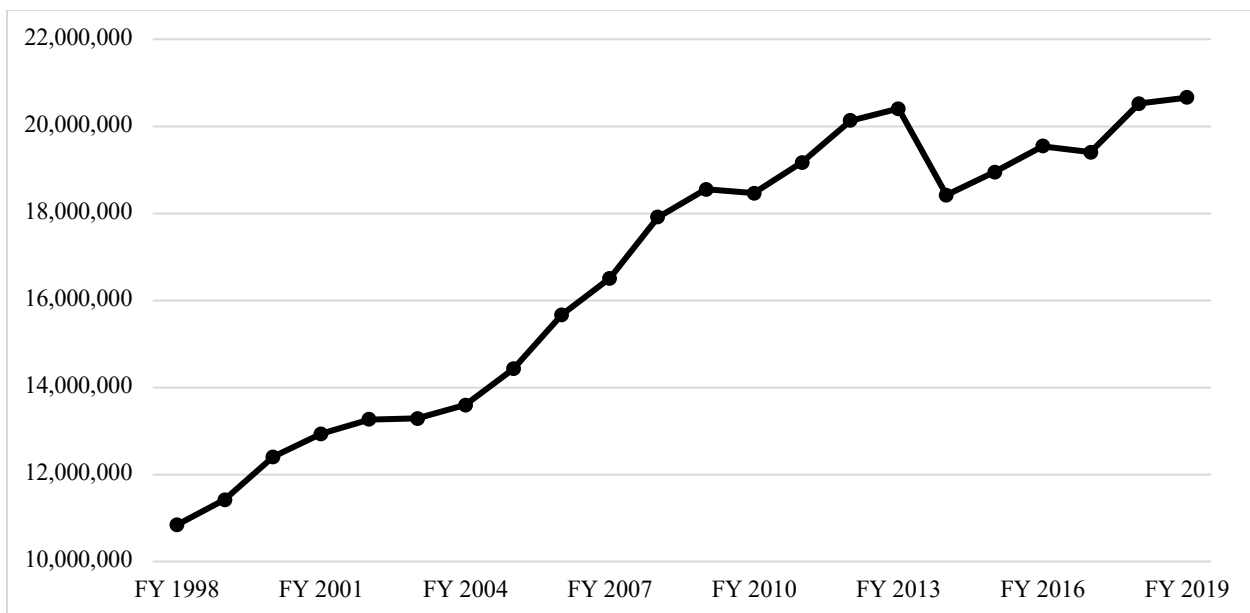


Figure 4-13. Connecticut General Budget Expenditures (in \$1,000)

An in-depth exploratory analysis of the state’s budget also tests the accuracy of Wilms’s statement. The combined percentage of personal services¹² and fringe benefits hovers around 25 percent of the appropriations from 22.54 percent in fiscal year 2013 to 26.85 percent in 2014 and 27.57 percent in 2015 (see Figure 4-10), but it does not come close to 30 percent as Wilms argues. And the reason for the sharp increase is not because appropriations directed to personal

¹² “Actual direct payroll costs” (Office of Fiscal Analysis 2010:419).

services and fringe benefits increased, but because the overall general budget expenditures fell in 2014 and did not recover to the previous level until 2018 as Figure 4-13 illustrates: payrolls and benefits are an inelastic part of government operations, meaning they are not likely to decrease even when the appropriations are cut.

Still, one aspect of employee salaries and benefits Wilms is correct about is the fact that they occupy a larger percentage of the budget in Connecticut than in other states. Figure 4-11 clearly displays this trend. In 2023, the combined percentage of employee salaries and benefits amounted to 28.10 percent of the general budget expenditures, closer to the 30 percent threshold than before, whereas the figures are much lower in neighboring New England states. In Rhode Island, the combined percentage of employee salaries and benefits in 2023 is 19.94 percent. The numbers are even lower in Massachusetts, with the combined percentage amounting to 17.03 percent of the general budget expenditures. But Figure 4-12 further clarifies that, unlike Wilms's assertion, between fiscal years 1998 and 2019, the growth rate of personal services and fringe benefits reached double digits only in fiscal year 2000 and tapered off thereafter. All in all, the public sector union is only partially to blame for "cannibalizing services that [the state] actually need[s] to perform" when we look at the reality of budget trends.

Nonetheless, the Republican legislators continue to rely on Keynesian adversarial language to assign blame to state employees for the structural issues Connecticut faces while advancing the interests of businesses that contribute to the tax base. Representative Brenda Kupchick (R-132) hails from Fairfield, CT, which at the time contained the headquarters of GE. When speaking about the June 2 state budget that included new taxes on corporate headquarters and drew public ire from GE, Aetna, Travelers, and Boehringer Ingelheim, a multinational

pharmaceutical conglomerate (House of Representatives 7803), Kupchick manages to defend business interests and attack state employees in one fell swoop:

GE said over and over that they didn't want a special deal. They weren't happy about these tax changes, but they didn't want a special deal, and what they're most notably concerned about was the fact that the state had a lot of structural problems, that we had pension issues and liabilities and retiree liabilities, and that our state wasn't on sure footing. [...] [T]hese contracts, these salaries are paid with taxpayer dollars, taxpayer dollars that people work so hard to earn, and we don't even want to review the contracts? We don't want to even see if we can make some changes? (House of Representatives 8869-8870)

The anemic growth and subsequent stagnation of revenues have been the main driver of the deficits and not employee payrolls and fringe benefits. Nevertheless, payrolls and benefits altogether represent a quarter of the state budget and is a conspicuous target for cuts. Kupchick is emphasizing the zero-sum quality of taxation by directly connecting the issue of state employee unions with suffering business interests. An important part of this partisan effort is to paint corporate interests in a positive light. Representative Laura Devlin (R-134) criticizes the deficit mitigation efforts while representing GE executives as a fair-minded, reasonable group concerned for Connecticut:

But it doesn't go far enough. In talking to executives at GE, other business leaders, they're not looking for special deals. [...] What they want is sustainable, predictable business policy so they can actually plan and they can grow their businesses here. Unfortunately [...] [t]hey've lost trust in the leadership of this government. A deal today is a deal taken away tomorrow, and that's about the only thing predictable that comes out of here (House of Representatives 8896-8897).

Yet, GE executives are the same people who protested the tax hike and threatened to relocate the headquarters from Fairfield unless their demands were met (General Electric Company 2015).

Senator McLachlan (R-24) conveys the surprise with which the General Assembly greeted the news:

And it reminded me of a Finance Committee meeting where Representative John Frey from Ridgefield [...] took the microphone to tell us about General Electric planning to leave Connecticut. That was an earth-shattering day, I think, for a lot of people in the State Capitol Building (Senate 3667).

Thus is the Republicans' dilemma: how to portray corporations whose interests do not necessarily align with those of the state as genuine stakeholders. The strategy they choose is to remain consistent in their messaging by employing adversarial Keynesian language and disparage the state employee union, which in turn elevates corporate interests as valid and righteous.

Corporate interests are not the only business interests represented by the Republicans in the legislature. They also speak for the bond market and the wealthy, specifically in the context of Connecticut's higher-than-average taxation rates.¹³ Senator L. Scott Frantz (R-36) speaks out:

Mr. Anecdote [A] [...] left the state with about \$4.6 billion in net worth. Mr. Anecdote B and his girlfriend left the state within that same period of time with a 14 and change billion dollar net worth. [...] I know the whole notion of raising taxes will not come up this session. [...] but it will again in the future. [...] So again, we gotta get [the deficit mitigation and taxation] right. Otherwise, we're gonna be, as a group, facing some people we're not gonna wanna face, and that's an angry Mr. Market who says no more GO bonds for the State of Connecticut (Senate 3661-3662).

Two instances of anecdotal evidence do not amount to a definitive trend, yet it is clear who the Republicans speak out for. And as mentioned previously, the mood of the bond market is important for Connecticut as its revenues stagnate, for the bond market allows the state to supplement its budget with general obligation bonds¹⁴. Senator Antonietta Boucher (R-26) stresses this point when she criticizes the state's relationship with its employee union:

Many of our businesses and friends work for bond – municipal bond companies. And they'll e-mail me and say, what is the matter with you guys? Don't you know what people are talking about out there in the marketplace? (Senate 3664)

Boucher continues by excoriating the state employees' fringe benefits, rhetoric predetermined by her party's stance:

¹³ According to the Tax Foundation, Connecticut ranks forty-ninth among states in 2022 in terms of state-local effective tax rate at 15.40 percent compared to the national average of 11.60 percent (York and Walczak 2022:8-9).

¹⁴ General obligation bonds only have the municipality's credits and taxing power as their backing, no collateral.

I'm particularly distressed at the fact that we have fringe benefits [...] that were pointed out by our good Secretary of OPM and OFA, that our fringe benefit costs were some of the biggest drivers in the predicament that we are in. That at one time, the fringe cost of a state employee was about 50 percent of the salary, and we're reaching over 75 percent right now in just a few years. Nearly 80 percent. [...] [W]e all want everyone to get what they've earned in the way of good pension and benefits to secure them and their families. But if it is headed for a deep fall, they need to know that in front, and they would cooperatively get together and make some structural changes that would then not bring us to the same spot again (Senate 3665).

Boucher's assessment of the situation is incorrect. Figure 4-14 elucidates how much salaries and benefits extend within general expenditures. To Boucher's credit, her description of the trend is accurate in that fringe benefits have been increasing and began to exceed personal services in total amount after 2013. What she fails to acknowledge, however, is that salaries have been taking up a decreasing percentage of the expenditures since 2003 and the rate of decrease has accelerated since 2010. As Figure 4-10 demonstrates, the percentage of general expenditures occupied by fringe benefits and personal services altogether amount to approximately a quarter of the total budget.

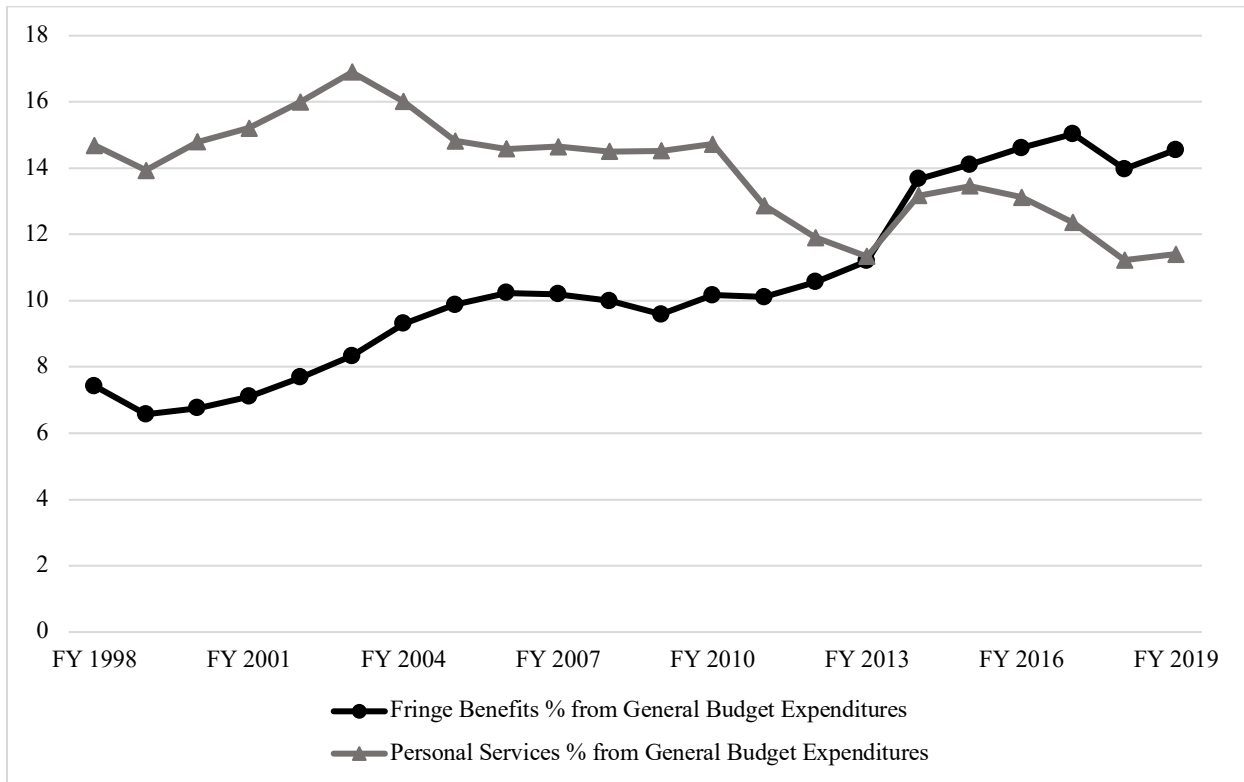


Figure 4-14. Personal Services and Fringe Benefits Percentage from General Expenditures

Boucher’s assessment may be phrased in assertive Keynesian rhetoric that pits state employee union against businesses and the state, and some parts are inaccurate. But her claim is due some consideration. If we broaden the view and analyze the case of pension liabilities for both the state and municipalities, we find that Connecticut is highly leveraged and underfunded. Figure 4-15 below illustrates state and local pension funding statuses combined¹⁵. At its most underfunded in 2016, state and local pension liabilities outweigh assets by \$75.8 billion, converted to 180.6 percent of state and local revenues combined. In the same year, the U.S. average is underfunded by 124.1 percent of the state and local combined revenues.

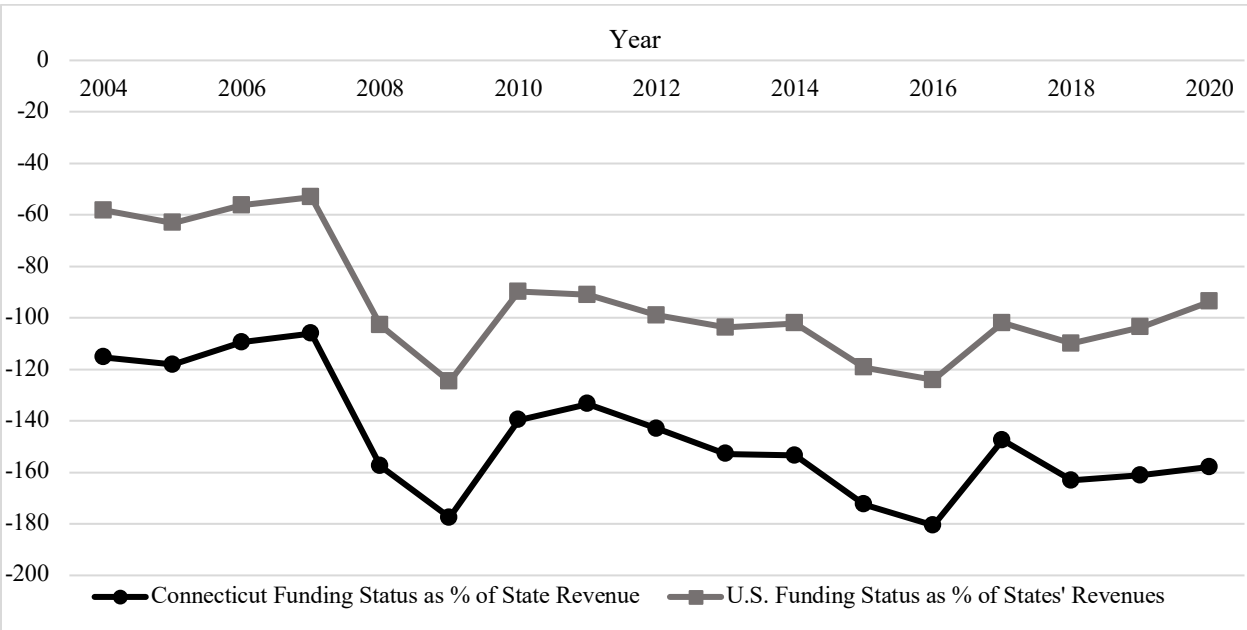


Figure 4-15. State and Local Pension Funding Status as Percent of State Revenue

For the Republicans, pension liabilities represent yet another focal point on which they can direct their polemics against the state employee union. And they are indeed a conspicuous target as the Senate Minority Leader Len Fasano (R-34)¹⁶ explains:

¹⁵ The funding status is calculated as assets minus liabilities. Negative values indicate underfunding of pension plans. Data were imported from the Federal Reserve System in 2023.

¹⁶ The Senate Minority Leader from January 7, 2015 to January 6, 2021.

The second part that was brought up was the fact that pensions for 2022 will not be a part of a contract for SEBAC. Why is that important? It's important because we are the only state in New England, including New York, that has pensions as part of that contract negotiation. We're one of only three states, I believe, in the country that has pensions that are protected that way. Because when you put the pensions in the SEBAC agreement, you give it constitutional protection.

SEBAC stands for State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition, composed of 15 public sector unions representing the majority of state employees¹⁷ and formed in 1986 to negotiate with the state on healthcare and pension benefits. As of 2015, the last round of major negotiations with SEBAC took place in 1997, which culminated in a twenty-year contract. The state and SEBAC opened the contract for renegotiation in 2011, extending the 1997 contract until 2022. Lee R. Hansen, a legislative analyst in the General Assembly, observes “[n]one of the benefit levels, access requirements, including to doctors and hospitals, or basic plan structures are modified by” the 2011 agreement (2012). And yet, Fasano continues on to make an erroneous claim that the General Assembly missed the opportunity to act decisively through the 2011 agreement and cut benefits:

In 2011, this body voted on a bill that said we need to change the pensions. 2011. This body voted in favor of it. It said we're not gonna put in sick days. We're not gonna put in overtime. We're gonna exclude some other items. And this body said we need to do it now because 2017, at that time, the SEBAC agreement was gonna be renegotiated, so [...] we approved it in this body, so that there was five years in which state employees could negotiate and understand what's going on and have opportunity to move. [...] It was a structural change we need to do for the future. So we stuck it in our proposal. For some reason it's not good now. From 2011 to 2017 it was okay. From 2016 to 2022, which is the new contract, it's not okay. I don't understand the difference. I thought we were all gonna try to work to do structural changes (Senate 3711).

The Republicans tout the idea of structural reform of the state's pension liabilities as something of a panacea to fiscal struggles. Senator Linares (R-33) strikes all pertinent points in his speech:

¹⁷ Administrative and Residual Employees Union/AFT Local 4200, AFT Connecticut, American Association of University Professors (Connecticut State University), American Association of University Professors (UConn), American Association of University Professors (UConn Health Center), American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (Council 4), Connecticut Federation of School Administrators Local 61, Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges/SEIU Local 1973, Connecticut Association of Prosecutors, Connecticut Employees Union Independent/SEIU Local 511, Connecticut Police and Fire Union/IAFF-IUPA, CSEA SEIU Local 2001, International Brotherhood of Police Officers/SEIU Local 731, Judicial Professional Employees Union, New England Healthcare Employees Union, District 1199/SEIU.

We have to have pension reform. We have to have constitutional changes, and we have to be able to make the hard decisions now before we can't make them later. We ought to consider 401(k)s and defined contribution plans for new hires. We're not doing that. We have to hold people accountable for doing their jobs in this state. The fact that people cannot do their job and not lose their job – it would make normal people all across the state mad. Most people don't know that. I think we ought to have – we ought. To vote on all union contracts. We ought to be part of that negotiating process. We ought to have a constitutional spending cap we adhere to. We have to be more flexible with prevailing wage to allow businesses and the economy to grow (Senate 3670-3671).

What Linares advocates for amounts to a wholesale transmission of risks from the state to its employees. First, the pension system operates with a defined benefit plan, meaning however much the state employees contribute, they can expect a certain level of remuneration once they retire. Moreover, the pensions are inflation indexed (Fitch 2021b), which means the state guarantees cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) so that they do not lose value over the years. However, the 2017 SEBAC agreement eliminated minimum annual COLA of two percent for those retiring after July 1, 2022 (Livingston and Egan 2017:5; Moran and Naples 2020:2), which caused a wave of retirements across state agencies leading up to the date of change (Buchner 2022). Incremental changes toward a private retirement account system are afoot. Unlike the pension system, 401(k)s operate with a defined contribution plan. There is no guaranteed remuneration for retired state employees, and the market forces determine how well individuals perform in their retirement savings. Thus, the transition from the pension system to a series of 401(k)s is essentially commodifying retirement plans to minimize risks of loss by the state. Second, Linares rehashes Noujaim's argument that state employees are unfairly compensated for work they do not do, which he cites as a reason for renegotiating the union contract. But it is not just the union Linares goes after. He tackles all issues related to the state's spending, most notably the spending cap amendment discussed previously and the practice of paying the local prevailing wage to state employees, which I explain further below.

According to the Republicans, the state employees' union and the businesses are locked in a zero-sum struggle for resources, and biennial budgets are where they fight for dominance. The Democrats are on the side of the unions whereas the Republicans are on the side of the businesses as they call for lower taxes. But there is another interest at play, which is that of the legislators themselves. The pro-business policies at the same time advance the interests of the Republican legislators. For instance, there have been calls to consolidate decision-making power for pension fund investments under the legislators' purview. Senator McLachlan (R-24) observes that as of 2015, the Retirement Commission, the trustees of which are union representatives, and the Office of the State Treasurer control investment decisions for portions of the pension funds. Within the Office of the State Treasurer is the Investment Advisory Council, the members of which are appointed by the Governor and legislative leadership. McLachlan argues for streamlining the investment decision-making under the Investment Advisory Council rather than the Retirement Commission:

And we also have in State Government the Investment Advisory Council under the Office of the State Treasury. That entity establishes the assumed rate of return and has professional members from the investment community. We believe, in the Republican Caucus, that those advisory decisions should come from the Investment Advisory Council who we believe are better served and more appropriately, professionally certified to help us make those very important decisions (Senate 3697-3698).

It is true that members of the Investment Advisory Council are required by state law to be "experienced in matters relating to investments (Office of Treasurer 2023)." This knowledge and expertise in investment practices is a cudgel with which the Republican legislators can call for consolidation of power under members appointed by them. However, McLachlan fails to mention the possible conflict of interest arising from such consolidation of power being decided by the legislators themselves. In fact, the way he presents this possibility for streamlining is casual.

This section has so far focused on the state employee union, its benefits, and the fight over the control of the pension funds. But government regulations from the Keynesian era are also part of historical legacy that the Republicans expend much effort to condemn. For example, Boucher (R-26) brings up the prevailing wage statute and derides it as outdated and counterproductive. The Davis-Bacon Act of 1931, Public Law 71–798, 411 U.S. Statutes at Large 46 established the federal government’s practice of paying local prevailing wages to laborers on public works projects that exceed \$5,000. Connecticut followed suit soon after, and under the current iteration of the statute, the state is required to pay federally determined prevailing wages on any public works that exceed \$1 million for new constructions or \$100,000 for renovations (Hansen 2020:1). The U.S. Department of Labor distributes surveys to contractors and other relevant persons and calculates prevailing wages based on their answers (Hansen 2013). Union wages and benefits are likely to set the prevailing wages. Boucher observes:

Connecticut’s prevailing wage statutes [...] further constrains [Connecticut towns’] budgets and leading to higher taxes for our town residents. [...] In order to change this, we should be pursuing some solutions that could give our towns a freer hand in allocating funds.

But the prevailing wage means exactly that – the level of wage and benefits that is standard in a given locale. In general, entities seeking to hire contractors for projects would be expected to pay the average. And Connecticut is not unique in having a statute mandating the prevailing wage, as thirty-two states¹⁸ have some form of them. According to Hansen, Connecticut’s prevailing wage rates are lower than the neighboring states of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New York. He notes that in 2013 “Connecticut’s rates are \$12.64 to \$18.01 per hour lower than the highest rates

¹⁸ These states include a myriad of political landscapes – Alaska, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

paid to a particular occupation (usually in New York's bordering counties)." Recall one of the goals of modern conservatives: they seek to limit "government oversight of commercial activity and the labor market at all levels (Merriman 4)." Prevailing wages statute violates the implementation of the unfettered market on the American economy like any other laws that manipulate wages.

Not only does the statute impede the state's effort to liberalize the market, but its long history is also itself a contributing reason for the necessity for its demise according to Boucher:

We have to remember that this prevailing wage law was put into effect many, many, many years ago – in the early 1930s. [...] At its inception, the law was proposed because union workers were supposedly getting shortchanged on long-term construction projects. For example, if a contract was assigned for a five-year construction job, workers were receiving the same wage at the end of the five years as they were at the very beginning because of contractual wage agreements. This prevailing wage statute was touted as one that would impose fairness and provide wage increases throughout the life of a contract; however, those that oppose this law have argued that the act certainly today has outlived its usefulness (Senate 3693-3694).

The historicity is indicative of a Keynesian past in which the rivalry of unions and business interests shaped policies. In the Republicans' eyes, such historicity makes the statute obsolete in a neoliberal present in which partnership reigns supreme.

The stated desire to cut the connection between the Keynesian past and the neoliberal present only highlights how the Republicans utilize both Keynesian and neoliberal languages in their advocacy of specific budgetary and governing policies that meet the goals of modern conservatives. But it is worth scrutinizing their speeches during the legislative sessions and committee hearings for a larger narrative the Republican legislators impart to the public. In short, they position themselves as a beleaguered minority party protecting business and middle-class interests against the Democratic majority and the unionized state employees. They argue that the Republican Party is the party of fiscal responsibility and its call for the structural reform of Connecticut's spending to be more in line with the market forces is the answer to the perpetual

state of fiscal crisis. The House Minority Leader Themis Klarides's (R-114)¹⁹ statement on June 2 regarding the new budget (H.B. No. 7061) neatly outlines these points:

Republicans represent over 40 percent of the citizens of the State of Connecticut, but not one conversation was had, although we were told time after time after time after time, write your ideas down on paper. I'll get back to ya. [...] Today, we're now facing a \$1.5 billion tax increase, and that's across the board. I think one of my colleagues mentioned, it's an equal opportunity tax increase. It's on corporations, the exact people who give us jobs in this state, who help people go to work and feed their families and have a home and have a car, on hospitals, the places we all go when we're sick to take care of ourselves and our loved ones, and of course, the middle class, the people that can afford it the least (House of Representatives 2015a:788-789).

As the House Minority Leader, Klarides's statement cements the Republican Party's self-proclaimed status as the protector of middle-class and business interests while at the same time blaming the Democrats for the tax increase. Nonetheless, there are some notable instances in which the Republican legislators do employ neoliberal partnership languages in their messaging. Senator Fasano (R-34) speaks:

Ninety-seven percent of the bills we pass, we pass by bipartisan agreement. We get to this budget, there's this wall that goes up and we don't get around it. [...] I would suggest to this body and those downstairs in the House, and to the Governor's Office, this is the way we should do things. We've done bills that have been controversial in both Chambers like same-sex marriage, civil unions, gun bills, jobs bills, deficit mitigation. We've done that as a group! Only when the conversation happens and even in these rooms it's cathartic to get things off your chest, and everybody did that as well (Senate 3709-3710).

His speech is reminiscent of the jovial bonhomie with which the legislative sessions opened.

There are, however, many more instances of Keynesian adversarial languages by other Republican legislators that affirm the narrative of the Republicans as the struggling minority party. Senator Kevin Witkos (R-8)²⁰ sums up the 2015 legislative session as follows:

And as you know, the Republican Party had been pleading for a long time to participate in budget negotiations. And it's funny that all throughout the session, it was Republicans and Democrats working together to pass great pieces of legislation, whether it be in committee or on the very floor of the Senate Chamber, except when it came to the budget. And that's where the divide occurred (Senate 3705).

¹⁹ The House Minority Leader from January 7, 2015 to January 6, 2021.

²⁰ The Senate Minority Leader Pro Tempore from January 7, 2015 to January 2, 2017 (McQuaid 2014).

And while this “divide” is obvious, and the Republicans paint their efforts as the best solution for the state’s fiscal trouble, they do not offer tangible options other than cutting employee benefits and pensions. Indeed, part of the structural reform they call for is a plan to weaken public sector unions similar to what was done successfully in purple or red states such as Wisconsin (Cramer 2016:1-2, 111-144). At the same time, it is a plan to cut taxes and a plan to stem the regulatory power of the state government. Witkos refers to this as part of the Republican demand for budgetary negotiations:

And then Governor Malloy took the leadership position and said I want everybody in the room because this is a problem that must be addressed by all that represent all in the State of Connecticut. And so the Republican leadership had three basic demands in order to meet in closed, confined chambers. [...] So the three rules that the Republican leaders had was number one, we have to agree on the size of the budget deficit. Number two, we have to make that known so the general public knows the difficulty that we as a body will have in solving this problem. And number three, the final one, we must make *structural changes* in the future (Senate 3705; italics added for emphasis).

Meanwhile, Representative Christopher Davis (R-57) denounces the tax increases that came with the original budget in a rambling speech:

What was particularly surprising to me was that when we received the call from the Governor calling us into Special Session [...] there was a line within that proclamation that said, whereas, changes to our business tax structure to encourage businesses to test new ventures and expand are necessary as we continue the state’s progress in creating new jobs and further growing our economy. [...] [T]his sounds like something I might have said a few months ago [...] that the tax structure and the ideas that we passed in these last few months were actually harming our economy rather than improving them. And in fact, I was very surprised to see that language in here because we were being told by many in legislative leadership and elsewhere throughout the state, that the tax changes that we passed in May and June actually had no impact. In fact there was an infamous quote that said the boardroom of one of these businesses that was directly impacted by these changes, that the boardroom makes their decisions not based on the tax environment in the State of Connecticut, inferring that there was some other reason they were making their decision to leave [...] Connecticut perhaps, but taxes weren’t that reason. But then we see here in this Call to the Special Session when it was delivered by His Excellency the Governor, that we, in fact, need to make these changes here today because those changes that we did a few months ago have negatively impacted our economy, and have actually stopped growth in our state. (House of Representatives 8857-8858).

The message remains consistent with the narrative, which is that the Republican legislators are anti-tax, pro-business, and pro-economy whereas the Democrats are the opposite.

In the end, the December deficit mitigation emergency certified bill prevailed over the Republican opposition. In the House of Representatives, it passed with 75 yeas votes, just over the threshold of the 71 necessary for passage. In the Senate, it passed with 20 yeas votes along the party line as well. Unfortunately, while the December bill cut the deficit, it failed to close the gap completely. With the end of the fiscal year fast approaching and with the state in the red, four Democratic assemblymen introduced a bill that would further cut \$35 million to account for unexpected changes in revenue projections and implement the governor's revised budget. H.B. No. 5043 was referred to the Appropriations Committee on February 4, 2016, and the committee held a public hearing on March 18.

During the hearing, the issue of how the OPM's figure of \$35 million in deficit differs from the OFA's projection of \$39.3 million in deficit came to the fore. Representative Melissa Ziobron (R-34) exchanged terse words with Benjamin Barnes, the then Secretary of the OPM²¹, and chastised Barnes. After explaining that the difference came from the divergences in calculations for the bond premium, Barnes replied in a remarkably sarcastic manner:

It's very difficult to project market activity in the future. If any of us could do so, we would be getting rich on Wall Street and not slogging away in the trenches of state government (Appropriations Committee 2016:4298).

To Barnes's answers, Ziobron retorted:

I appreciate that answer and the length of that answer and what I took away from that is after my caucus has produced three budgets in the last year, you're finally reading one and that's a good news because, you know, we do work hard, even though we have absolutely no direct, you know, mandate to produce those budgets, but we do so because we're trying to be helpful, in part, of a solution for the taxpayers of the state. So, I'm glad you acknowledged that they're actually getting read before they end up in the garbage can (Appropriations Committee 4299).

Again, the message is consistent. The Republican legislators portray themselves as the wronged party of the General Assembly. Due to their minority status, their opinions and their budget

²¹ The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) is partisan since it is an executive agency.

proposals are shunted aside. Despite their best efforts, the state keeps raising taxes on wealthy individuals and businesses, meddling in the market, while leaving the public sector union and its benefits as they are. They paint the budgetary politics as a zero-sum game, emphasizing Keynesian factionalism even as they occasionally employ neoliberal languages praising rare instances of bipartisanship.

Overall, the Republican narrative of the budget process for fiscal year 2016 leans heavily into Keynesian dichotomies: Republicans versus Democrats, businesses versus unions, tax cuts versus tax hikes, and middle-class interests versus state employee union interests. The responsible versus the irresponsible, as Senator Fasano would say:

It was argued the reason why [we] wanna vote on contracts is because [we] don't like unions. Malarky! Garbage! Ridiculous! Not even a thought process. [...] We're responsible. We're fiduciaries for the state. And what do we do? We let the contract sit on the calendar. We don't vote on it. [...] Where's the courage? (Senate 3710).

In the process of propagating this simplistic narrative, the complexities of the state's budget get lost. Barnes points out:

I suspect that we're going to have deficiency meetings every year. It's very difficult to project spending in all of the many lines of spending in the budget and this is a normal part of reconciling our budget but, to your point, we are engaged in, in negotiations with our employees around wages and, you know, work rules. (Appropriations Committee Public Hearing 4309).

As I have demonstrated earlier, Connecticut's fiscal situation is convoluted and difficult to describe in one word let alone a phrase. While revenues stagnate, the federal government has dramatically reduced transfers, forcing the state to rely on income tax payments that did not exist until 1991. This stagnation of revenues has coincided with increasing expenditures, which has led to sizable deficits from 2015. The payrolls and fringe benefits to state employees regularly occupy a quarter of the state's total expenditures, yet Connecticut's state and local pensions are highly underfunded especially when compared to the U.S. average. The state is in trouble to be

sure, but it is not in freefall. This ambiguous state of continuing fiscal malaise has contributed to the state's reticence to assist Hartford in its own financial straits.

Moreover, there is a parallel to be found between the situation the state faces and the situation Hartford finds itself in. In both instances, public employees' unions were invoked as the source of fiscal strains and were asked to contribute to the resolution of the problem. The chief difference, as I explicate in Chapter 5, is that while state employees were vilified by Republican legislators at the General Assembly, municipal employees were lauded by those who are looking to cut their salaries and benefits. Part of this is because local political actors had to work in close proximity to municipal employee unions. In fact, union leaders were present at the committee hearings that local political actors testified in.

E. Revisions for Fiscal Year 2017 Budget and Neoliberal Partnership of the Democrats

The deficit politics continued into fiscal year 2017. The special session of the Senate on May 12, 2016 began with a prayer led by Rabbi Philip Lazowski that asked for wisdom, courage, and integrity comparable to those of Abraham Lincoln, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Walt Whitman. But unlike the special session of the House in December of the previous year, the Senate dove into the agenda at hand without congenial words exchanged by the lawmakers. This year, I observe instances in which both parties utilize Keynesian and neoliberal languages to make their points, but what stands out more is the dialectics between the legislators toeing each of their party's line.

Democratic senators Martin M. Looney (D-11)²² and Bob Duff (D-25), and Democratic representatives J. Brendan Sharkey (D-88)²³ and Joe Aresimowicz (D-30)²⁴ introduced S.B. No. 501 that would revise Connecticut's budget for fiscal year 2017. The bill would result in a \$140.2 million increase in General Fund net revenue and put the state's total budget at \$40.3 million in surplus (Office of Fiscal Analysis 2016:2-3, 451). And the General Assembly would implement these changes in a way that would satisfy the Republican demands in fiscal year 2016. As Senator Bye (D-5) says:

We are not raising taxes. We are not borrowing money. We are not using a rainy day fund. We are reducing the size of the state work force. We maintain investments in local property tax relief and in transportation infrastructure. We protect hospital funding and we do all of this while continuing to provide a broad array of social services, educational investments, and economic investments. Perhaps that's why this budget has been endorsed by the Connecticut in Business and Industry Association and by several local chambers of commerce (Senate 2016b:3124).

To reiterate the stated goals of Connecticut Republicans from fiscal year 2016: (1) reduce taxation and government spending; (2) reduce the size and the influence of state employee union, and; (3) strip away regulatory powers of the state government. The bill would achieve the first and the second goal within what the SEBAC agreement would allow. Meanwhile, demarcating and protecting the Special Transportation Fund and preserving hospital funding were issues the Republicans pushed in 2015 as well. S.B. No. 501 would fulfill these objectives of the Republicans' goals, the "structural changes" (Senate 3118) they had been calling for. In fact, Senator Bye concludes that the legislature is "reduc[ing] the state spending back to 2011 levels,"

²² President pro tempore of the Connecticut Senate since January 7, 2015. Senator Bob Duff (D-25), the new Senate Majority Leader, nominated Looney, which was seconded by Senator Len Fasano (R-34), the new Senate Minority Leader (Senate 2015a:7-9). Having been elected to his Senate office in 1992 (Office of the Secretary of the State 2023) and having won the office of president pro tempore with a Republican nomination, it is reasonable to evaluate Looney as a centrist Democrat who espouses neoliberal values. This is further proven in a later section when I quote Looney speaking about the bond market.

²³ The Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives from January 9, 2013 to January 2, 2017.

²⁴ The House Majority Leader from January 9, 2013 to January 2, 2017; Aresimowicz would go on to be elected as the Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives from January 3, 2017 to January 6, 2021.

calling it “a big *structural change*” (Senate 3122; italics added for emphasis). These changes come at a time of continuously stagnant revenues. Senator Bye depicts Connecticut as a state still suffering from the effects of the Great Recession:

We are currently a community under stress. We’re still recovering from a financial services recession in a financial services state [...] We heard this week some data from the Office of Fiscal Analysis that the top 50 taxpayers in the state had \$3 Billion less in profits, resulting in \$217 million less in taxes, but they’re still billionaires (Senate 3123).

Yet, the Democrat majority in the legislature has co-opted and adopted some of the Republican goals in their bill,²⁵ a gesture that is meant to evoke neoliberal partnership based on shared goals.

The Republican minority’s response to the inclusion of their demands, however, is underwhelming. Consider that the Republicans’ primary demand during the debates surrounding fiscal year 2016 budget was to cut state expenditures on fringe benefits and personal payrolls.

Instead, Senator Kane (R-32) queries:

[M]y understanding in the underlying bill, there is personal services reductions in the total of \$255 Million along with reductions to fringe benefits of \$70 Million and reductions to the reserve for salary adjustment account for \$67 Million. So, I know I’ve got a flyer here from some of the state employees talking about the rape crises counselors, probation officers, corrections officers, nurses, medical examiners, physical therapists, teachers, youth service officers, and I just want to understand from the good chair what this cut to this particular line item means in the—in the form of layoffs? How many, where are they, and what’s going to take place with the employees of our great state? (Senate 3126-3127)

Kane’s concern is the diametric opposite of what the Republicans espoused less than six months prior. Still, we can attempt to contextualize such a dramatic change in stance: the Republicans appear to be *reacting* to the Democratic proposals with an emotional appeal for those directly affected. It is hard to argue that the professionals such as “the rape crises counselors... nurses, medical examiners... [and] teachers (Senate 3126)” invoked by Kane do not provide valuable services to the state, and it is certainly hard to argue against their pay and fringe benefits. But

²⁵ Senator Bye explains that the Democrat-sponsored bill “reflects priorities that [the Democrats] thought were important to support” (Senate 3122).

once we frame this reactive reversal of their original stance within the context of the adversarial nature of Keynesian factionalism, we can see the Republicans remain consistent in their actions.

Contrasting Kane's question, Senator Bye's response is matter-of-fact:

It is not up to the legislature to decide how those personal services savings are assigned. There are retirements. There are people who leave state service every year. Hundreds and then there are negotiations ongoing between the governor and the SEBAC who represents the state employees, so the number of layoffs, some of them will depend on those negotiations and how those go, but we have made difficult reductions (Senate 3127).

It is interesting to note here that the Democrats, in the few instances they do speak out to defend their position, have assumed languages steeped in neoliberal ideals. Commodification of the constituent-representative relationship intensifies as Senator Bye observes:

I see it and though I don't see the State of Connecticut government as a business because we have to take care of people with disabilities and mental health needs and we have to educate children, and you don't make profits on that, I do see that the Governor is a chief officer. The CEO of the State of Connecticut and much like Boards, corporate boards, give guidance to their chief officer about meeting certain guidelines, they also have to give flexibility because a \$20 billion budget has many changes and shifts so we have to give some flexibility to that chief officer. (Senate 3129-3130)

While acknowledging that the state government is unlike a business operating in the private market, Bye also likens the governor to a chief executive officer. Essentially, she is acknowledging that under the current regime of neoliberal market economy, in which every entity undergoes structural isomorphism to meet the constraints of the market, even governments are expected to operate in the same way private enterprises do. Though according to Representative Noujaim, the Connecticut state government falls far short in comparison with the Walt Disney Company in its efficacy, Noujaim's and Bye's words across the aisle are achieving the same effect of commodification of the constituent-representative relationship. The act of providing vital services such as education, healthcare, and social benefits through tested budgets is equated to providing commercial services. Senator Kane continues the partisan dialectics when he points out the contradiction in Bye's statement:

I find it a bit contradictory though in—in one breath you say that we’re not a business and we have to provide services but in another breath, you’re calling the Governor a CEO and treating him as if he were the chief elected or chief executive officer of that business so I—I don’t know if you can have it both ways in that argument (Senate 3130).

Kane’s critique of Bye clearly illustrates the dialectical, reactive nature of the discourse between the Republicans and the Democrats. Bye’s CEO statement is comparable to Noujaim’s customer metaphor, and it is due to Bye’s affiliation to the Democrats that Kane is compelled to critically respond to her.

Indeed, Kane eventually reverts to the original Republican position that Connecticut is undergoing a permanent fiscal crisis and that the state overly taxes and regulates the market to its detriment. In one fell swoop, Kane manages to criticize the Democrat-led government while defending business interests:

It’s been a bad years (*sic*) not just a bad year – plural. For the last six years, we have seen nothing but deficits based on a philosophy, a policy of over-taxation, over-regulation, and over-burdens... You know, we should have figured that out last year when GE decided they were gonna’ leave. And the reason GE left and talk about probably the most known company in America – and the reason they left is ‘cause we don’t have our fiscal house in order (Senate 3135).

I discussed GE’s departure for Boston in detail in the previous chapter, and it bears repeating that despite the surface displeasure with the state’s tax policies (General Electric Company), it is in fact internal politics. The fallout of a failed federal defense contract bid soured the company’s relationship with Governor Malloy, which led to the relocation of its headquarters (Gryta and Mann 239). Overall, Connecticut’s fiscal health had little to do with the company’s decision. Still, taxation policies and fiscal situation of the state make for an easy target as the Republicans return to their original message that they have relied on since the tax revolt of the 1970s (Martin 2-5). More specifically, in spite of the promised tax cuts and the expenditure reductions slated in the budget for 2017, the Republican legislators revert to the narrative that the state is predatory in

its tax policies and that the wealthy taxpayers bear the brunt of the state's wrongfooted policies.

Senator Frantz (R-36) argues:

[W]e lost three families, \$21.5 billion in adjusted gross income, pretty – you know, pretty soon – the anecdote becomes the data because those numbers are so large and the three or four families that left, there are actually four – left and – and they are no longer part of the top 50 taxpayers. They're replaced by people who earn a whole lot less. These three, actually four families are brilliant investors. They'll make 20-25 percent on their net worth every year and if you apply the simple math to it, at 6.99 percent, we're talking about close to \$300 Million. [...] [T]hey will never come back to the state. Even our former governor just announced that she's leaving her beloved State of Connecticut for Florida. Jeff Immelt, CEO of General Electric put his house on the market yesterday, if anybody's looking (Senate 3149-3150).

Frantz's speech is obvious in its goal: to align the Republicans with the wealthy and to portray those wealthy individuals as the wronged in the budgetary politics. But Bye (D-5) refutes this view with statistics:

First of all, I think it's easy to have anecdotes about talking to people who maybe are leaving Connecticut or what's happening with millionaires, but then there's data and what the data shows is that from 2009 to 2015, the number of millionaires in Connecticut actually grew 22 percent up from 83,000 to 101,000 according to Phoenix Marketing International. And according to the New York Times, in 2006, Connecticut have (*sic*) the fourth most millionaires per residents and in 2015, we now have the second most millionaires per resident (Senate 3152).

Again, the dialectics between the parties is obvious. Other than the neoliberal languages that stress partnership over partisanship, it is not entirely transparent in this year's speeches what concrete entities or policies the Democrats stand for. Indeed, the only transparent objective is that the Democrats are for rebuttal of the Republican narrative. Bye adds in the next instance:

[F]inally, on the tax side, every budget that the Republicans have offered has spent every penny of the two largest tax increases in state history. Neither of them have (*sic*) cut taxes. They've used every penny of the revenue that was available and like the Democrats, they funded many important services for residents because they believe in the power of those services for this state (Senate 3152-3153).

As mentioned in the previous section, the Republicans in the General Assembly prepare their own budgets in response to the Democrats'. But Bye negates the narrative that the Republicans are the fiscally responsible party of the two.

Fiscal year 2017 was surprisingly unremarkable in the saga of Hartford's fiscal crisis in regard to the actions the General Assembly took, which amounted to nothing. In fact, Hartford was not even mentioned by the legislators during budget deliberations. On the other hand, it showcased various neoliberal languages by the Democrats and the dialectics between the two major parties. In any case, these debates would not halt the Democrats from passing their version of the budget like the year before. With 21 out of 36 senators voting yea and 74 out of 144 representatives voting yea, the bill to adjust the state budget for fiscal year 2017 ultimately passed both chambers.

F. The Tumult Surrounding Fiscal Year 2018 Budget, Bipartisan Partnership, and Hartford

As shown previously, Connecticut's budget politics became turbulent as revenues fell short of projections and deficits occurred every fiscal year since 2015. Indeed, the discussions surrounding the budget for 2018-19 biennium turned contentious enough to drag on past the end of the 2017 legislative session on June 7. Without a working budget at the beginning of the fiscal year, Governor Malloy resorted to issuing executive orders to keep the state running at the cost of municipal transfers and social services (Altimari and Keating 2017a). The conflict between Governor Malloy and the General Assembly, between the Democrats and the Republicans stemmed from many issues. The most important were proposed tax increases to close the deficit and a concession by the state employee union that the Republicans opposed. If passed in June, the provisional budget would have included a \$850 million tax hike (Altimari and Keating) and a deal with the state union to save \$1.57 billion over the 2018-19 biennium in exchange for extending the SEBAC agreement into 2027 (Phaneuf 2017).

Malloy pushed for a 90-day temporary budget in order to earn some time, but the Democrat legislators were divided between the moderates who balked at the idea of tax increases and the liberals who demanded safeguarding social services (Keating 2017). The state drifted without a budget until September when the Republicans proposed their own version of the budget to which some Democrats defected, making it viable in the legislature. Governor Malloy, however, vetoed the Republican budget, citing the pension benefit cuts and \$6.8 million cut in state support to Hartford as the reason (Russ 2017; Phaneuf and Pazniokas 2017). By late October, Connecticut had operated without a budget for 123 days, the longest budget impasse in the state's history (Senate 2017b:00:11:12), and had led to an examination of twenty-six municipalities and three school districts by Moody's in preparation for downgrades in bond ratings (Blair and Gosselin 2017). Finally, the Democrats and the Republicans developed the October budget after extensive negotiations that excluded the Governor. The Senate convened on October 25 and the House convened on October 26 to discuss this new budget. In the following section, I demonstrate that in these sessions, the overarching theme was bipartisan partnership expressed in neoliberal languages with notable exceptions of partisanship. Because the Democrats conceded on many points despite maintaining the majority status in both chambers²⁶, Democratic representatives were more likely to speak out whether for or against the October budget than in previous fiscal years, which I explicate alongside Republican objections. I also discuss how these politicians viewed Hartford and its fiscal situation given the state's own fiscal problems.

²⁶ The Democratic majority became even slimmer in 2017 and 2018, advancing the Republicans' negotiating position. The party affiliations of state senators and representatives were as follows: Senate 18D, 18R, with Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman retaining the power to break the tie; House of Representatives 80D, 71R.

The Partners and the Partisans of the October Budget

The Senate session began with a chaplain's words that well encapsulate the bipartisan partnership that created the budget: "Please give us the patience to understand those who disagree with us... and the prudence to make decisions that work towards the common good" (Senate 00:00:39). Throughout the legislative sessions in both chambers were neoliberal languages of partners congratulating each other for the bipartisan bill. Themis Klarides (R-114), the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, speaks with pride:

When we talk about all those changes that we made, I have to say that the spending cap, and I'm embarrassed to say the state of Connecticut told us to put one in place in 1992. It's 2017. We finally got that. And just as important as what we got accomplished [...] in this budget, what we got stopped is just as important. There is no sales tax increase, there is no income tax increase, there is no business tax increase, there is no real estate tax increase. There is no cell phone tax increase and there is no restaurant tax increase. There are no tolls and there are no marijuana in this book (House of Representatives 2017b:02:26:32).

The Republicans especially were happy since they were able to tamp down the tax increase, which remains the party's primary goal, and institute the spending cap. Regardless of the party of the legislators, however, the speeches they made tend to minimize partisan identity in favor of more neutral, encompassing labels like the members of the General Assembly or Connecticuters. In fact, Senator Witkos (R-8) explicitly states:

So after negotiating for good portion of the, the fall season, it was determined that we'll meet in the House Democrat caucus room [...]. And there were no labels, ladies and gentlemen. There were no Rs, there were no Ds, there was no scorecard that was taken. [...] We put the policies of the state of Connecticut before our own personal interests (Senate 02:23:54).

Witkos implicitly equates partisan loyalty to personal interests that hampers legislative efforts. The partners view overtly partisan words and actions as something to be avoided in order to accentuate public consensus (Pacewicz 166-169). Cross-aisle negotiations are good, but identifying one's interest narrowly within partisan bounds is bad. Of course, the definition of

what constitutes the best interest of Connecticut is likely to be different depending on the person's partisan affiliation as well as other pertinent factors. In that case, the conflicts are smoothed over during negotiations, and at least in public, the consensus prevails. As

Representative Jason Rojas (D-9) argues:

Um, and that's really the beauty of being able to get together and work together on a bipartisan basis. Uh, working on a bipartisan basis isn't something that's happened in the last month. Uh, I don't think we give ourselves enough credit from year to year when we do our work here in this chamber. A lot of the work that comes out of this chamber is bipartisan and certainly the significant issues on which we disagree on, um, they're very real (House of Representatives 00:22:42).

As he addresses Senator Steve Cassano (D-4) next to him, Senator Timothy Larson (D-3) underlines a crucial truth about the partners: they want to minimize the evidence of public discord and maximize the veneer of consensus (Pacewicz 175-180). Such effort extends to the private sphere of the legislators' lives as Larson recalls the actions of Michael P. Peters, the Mayor of Hartford between 1993 and 2001:

I have the mass card from my favorite Hartford mayor, Mike Peters. And I remember, Steve, you remember back in the day, Mike would take us all down to the Whaler's²⁷ game regardless of your party affiliation. We got to know each other as individuals. We respected each other, we cared for each other. You got to know each other's family. And I saw that develop over the last several months. And I think that that's who we are as the Connecticut Senate. And I think that that's how I hope that people remember us (Senate 02:11:30).

For partners, an important facet of the October budget is that the compromises from the Democrats were strictly speaking not necessary given that both the legislative and the executive branches of the state government are controlled by the Democrats. Unlike many states, Connecticut only requires a majority in both chambers rather than a supermajority to pass budget bills. Indeed, given more time, Governor Malloy and the General Assembly Democrats are likely

²⁷ Hartford Whalers, a professional ice hockey team, moved to North Carolina in 1997 to become Carolina Hurricanes.

to have conjured up a workable solution to the budget impasse, though this assumption ignores the time-sensitive nature of the 2018-19 biennium budget. Additionally, Governor Malloy could have declared an emergency that allows him to resort to deficit spending as I explained regarding the balanced budget amendment and the spending cap provision. In any case, because of the Democratic dominance, partners do not hesitate to publicly celebrate these compromises. Senator Paul Doyle (D-9) extols the virtue of the bipartisan legislators involved in the making of the October budget:

I think there's a distinct difference between the other bipartisan budgets of recent history than today, the other budgets, you have to remember, it was divided government. We had [...] a Republican governor and then we had Democratic legislature. And by um, those budgets, it was basically forced to be a bipartisan budget. Today [...] [t]he Democrats control the executive branch and the legislative branch. So, the fact that we have today achieved a bipartisan budget is a significant historic event (Senate 02:10:11).

Indeed, until Dannel Malloy in 2011, Connecticut's last Democratic governor was William A. O'Neill who served from 1980 to 1991. On the other hand, the Democrats have controlled the House from 1987 and the Senate from 1997. From 1991 to 1994, and again from 1997 to 2010, Connecticut's executive and legislative branches were controlled by different parties. Themis Klarides (R-114) puts this perspective in a language that emphasizes the partnership in spite of the Democratic control:

We have a Democratic governor, and we have Democratic controlled House and the Senate. I don't say that to be critical. I say that to put the reality out there. Sticking our heads in the sand, digging our heels in and saying, I'm taking my toys and going home doesn't do anybody that's watching us today any good because that will guarantee education cuts, municipal cuts and just as importantly, no structural change that will move this state forward. This begins the process of getting our house in order (House of Representatives 02:25:47).

For these partners, the term "partisan" is a dirty word denoting selfishness and intractability that contradicts the values of community governance. Senator Boucher (R-26) excoriates Governor Malloy by calling him partisan for his veto:

You know, the budget impasse that we've been experiencing went on for an unnecessarily long time, and it's unfortunate because it didn't have to be, we could have settled this in September. [...] We had a Republican budget that actually passed with Democratic support here in the Senate and then again in the house. And all that was needed was a governor's signature. But instead of accepting the people's will, the administration vetoed it in almost a partisan fashion (Senate 00:43:51).

The October budget indeed had many items the Republicans pushed for and the Democrats compromised on. It would cut municipal aid despite providing \$40 million relief to Hartford, the University of Connecticut funds, and tax credits for the lower income families (Altimari and Keating). Furthermore, property tax credits would no longer apply to homeowners unless they were seniors or could claim dependents (House of Representatives 00:54:41). Most importantly, it finally established a hard spending cap with terms "Increase in personal income," "Increase in inflation," and "General budget expenditures" defined (Senate 2017a:S.B. 1502, Sec. 705 and Sec. 709) as well as a bonding cap (Senate S.B. 1502, Sec. 712).

Because the legislators highlighted bipartisan partnership with which they achieved the October budget, the division between the partners and the partisans became pronounced beyond what was seen during previous years. Simply put, partisans were those who opposed the budget against the partners. The conservative Republicans who opposed the budget were unanimous in their disapproval of the small tax and fee increases such as 45-cent increase in cigarette tax that would enable the state to close part of the \$3.5 billion deficit. Their resolute partisanship aligns well with what Pacewicz found among a new generation of politicians in Iowa. They are "partisan activists" (195-197) who trade in neither old-fashioned Keynesian labor-union factionalism nor new neoliberal partnership. Instead, they are concerned with hot-button partisan issues (Pacewicz 281-282). In the context of Connecticut's budget politics, any tax increase, however minuscule, has become a hot-button issue for the Republicans looking to differentiate the party from the Democratic majority. They are therefore unwilling to compromise on the

matter. Still, these activists utilize familiar languages of Keynesian factionalism and neoliberal partnership to justify their categorically partisan decision to vote against the October budget.

Since the disintegration of the economic system based on Keynesianism in the 1970s and the inception of the Reagan administration, fiscal conservatism and concomitant tax cuts have become one of the ideological pillars of the Republican Party (Krippner 2011:93-94; Martin 15). This is especially relevant to Connecticut Republicans who argue that the residents of the state suffer from tax burdens heavier than the U.S. average. Senator Joe Markley (R-16) appeals to this when he speaks out against the budget:

I might say that I have what I could call a traditional reasons [...] for voting against it, if not to anyone else, traditional to me. And I would say the first of them is [...] I would not vote for a dime in new taxes, newer increased taxes, and by my reckoning [...] I would say there's something like 380 million in the biennium [...] in increased taxes and fees (Senate 00:53:05).

In other words, any tax increase, no matter what it accomplishes, is undesirable. This inflexible, dogmatic attitude toward specific policy points extends to what the Republicans in the past have explicitly called for. Twenty-six years after the referendum that mandated the General Assembly devise and implement a constitutional spending cap, the parties managed to not only implement the spending cap but also a bonding cap. What is more, the state employee union made major concessions that saved the state billions. Yet, to Markley, none of this is enough:

I have limited faith in those structural reforms. I'm not convinced that the caps we're creating, uh, the spending cap, the bonding cap or the voting on the union contracts is necessarily going to make that much of a difference. [...] I feel like there's always a way to get out of honoring something if you don't want to do it. If all these things are aimed at binding future legislators rather than doing here and now. What we can do, what we must do to put the state on the right track (Senate 00:55:54).

The dilemma that partisan activists pose to their parties is that it is unclear what solutions their parties could suggest that would satisfy their need for orthodoxy. If the structural reforms the Republicans called for in the past cannot sate the partisan activists like Markley, what could?

Total abolitions of income taxes and the state employee union could be within the Republican grasp in red states like Kansas (Merriman), but it is an unattainable goal in a state dominated by the Democrats in a region that votes blue more often than not. Indeed, in a long speech that follows the quote above, Markley fails to provide any meaningful policies that would steer the state to the course he would judge as successful. Instead, partisan activists emphasize partisanship beyond what the partners would allow. Senator Len Suzio (R-13) demonstrates this plainly when he blasts Governor Malloy for the delay in budget implementation:

[W]e all know that one of the motivating factors [for passing this budget] is not that this budget's the answer to anything. It's out and out fear about the disaster that's being wreaked on our cities and towns by the governor's executive order. An order in which he's cut totally, a hundred percent all the funding for 85 towns and took most of the funding for another 54 towns. [...] I want [...] to remind everyone that we have already passed a budget through this chamber and the State Senate, and as of today, there's only one reason why we don't have a state budget in place, and that is because Governor Malloy rejected a perfectly legitimate bipartisan budget and instructed us to go back and work on it again because he did not like it (Senate 01:20:11).

Two points to consider. First, the reason why the funds to municipalities were cut is because there was no budget to allow for the mundane operation of the state. The governor was doling out money through executive orders, restricting the state's spending to bare minimum. Since the General Assembly is responsible for approving and implementing budgets, it is just as responsible for funds cut to municipalities. Second, the reason why Governor Malloy vetoed the September budget written by the Republicans was because there were changes like cuts to the pension or cuts to the City of Hartford that were simply unacceptable to any Democrat whether partner or partisan.

On the other hand, there are partisan activists who rely on neoliberal language that the partners in the General Assembly would find familiar and appealing. Representative Robert Sampson (R-80) stands up to explain his vote against the October budget, but he reasons using terms the partners would find familiar:

Will businesses both in our state and outside [...] see this budget as a change in direction that is going to make Connecticut a better place, more attractive to do business, to maybe come here and start a business? Will the changes contained in this budget be enough to cause any of our friends and neighbors that are considering moving out of our state to change their minds and stay? I don't think so. [...] So what is wrong with this state? [...] Why is Connecticut known to be hostile to the business in uh, industry? [...] There are too many taxes, energy costs too much. And many of our friends and neighbors are indeed asking themselves, can they afford to live here any longer? Businesses say it's too expensive. I have even heard them say that they fear us (House of Representatives 00:46:16).

At its core, Sampson's main motive for voting against the budget match that of other partisan activists like Markley: it raises taxes. Nonetheless, he cites business leaders and the middle class as the primary groups disaffected with the decision to raise taxes. In this way, he adroitly sidesteps partisan orthodoxy while speaking directly to the partners about the concerns they have. And he states that the budget contains "structural changes" that the Republicans called for (House of Representatives 00:49:30). In the end, however, he reveals that the pull of partisan orthodoxy is too strong and that he must vote against the budget:

Someone last night during the senate debate said that the spending increases are 3.6% in the first year and [...] 5.01% in the second year. Without going any further, Madam Speaker, that is an automatic no vote for me. Aside from promising this session to only vote for a budget that would not raise taxes and fully fund my towns, I have also, since I first ran for office, made a promise to do Republican things, cut spending, cut taxes, allow the economy to grow (House of Representatives 00:52:24).

The debate surrounding the 2018-19 biennium budget was the ground on which the clear lines were drawn between the partners and the partisan activists. But this does not mean partisan activists did not exist in the legislature before. Rather, it means the conditions of the legislature deviated significantly from the preceding years. In fiscal years 2016 and 2017, the Democrat majority in both chambers and the Democratic governor were able to pass and implement the budgets as a unified group, and the Republican minority was only able to offer token resistance. In fiscal year 2018, the break between the legislature and the executive opened the room for the Republicans to intervene in the process, negotiate with the Democrats, and pass a budget they

approve of. But it is this Republican success that actually highlighted the division between the partners and the partisan activists – Republican partners who used to side with the partisan activists all broke ranks to support the October budget while the activists moved the goalpost to justify their entrenched position against the budget.

The Democrats Old and New

Intriguingly, the Democrats who deviate from the moderates and plan to vote against the budget are less overtly partisan than their Republican counterparts. These are the Democrats who do not belong to the group of moderates that is in control of the party at the General Assembly. In fact, some of them lean into the languages of partners. However, Senator Edwin A. Gomes (D-23) provides an archetypical example of a Keynesian partisan. Gomes's career spanned decades as a union steelworker, a union negotiator, and a local and state politician from Bridgeport (Dixon and Mayko 2020). He is a personage who fits the descriptor of a labor leader (Pacewicz 75). He speaks bluntly in support of the state employee union while voting for the budget:

I rise to support this [...] budget [...] [b]ut the real reason I'm rising here is to mention and pay tribute to something that has never been mentioned here. Whether it was in any of the four budgets, \$1.5 billion by the SEBAC agreement of unions. Nobody has mentioned them except to malign them in certain areas and to say [...] they didn't give enough. Or you have structural changes to prevent what they get. You gotta remember one thing, these benefits that they chose to give up are theirs that they've won in other union negotiations. It belongs to them (Senate 02:03:43).

The Republicans, regardless of their affiliation as partners or partisans are the ones who have criticized the labor for the intransigent refusal to relinquish pension benefits and pays in the past years as I have shown. Yet, during the SEBAC negotiations in 2017, the state employee union

did concede. They conceded enough to save the state \$24.1 billion over the next twenty years²⁸

(Phaneuf). Gomes acknowledges this and praises the union for its generosity toward non-members:

And why would they sacrifice [the benefits] as of now? Was it the threat of the governor to say that he would lay off people if they didn't? That was partially it because union members [...] could have voted it down and say, lay off the rest of them. I give a damn less about 'em when union members protect each other. I know I've been through many strikes and this sort of thing has happened and they protect each other. They says (*sic*), I'll take less so my brothers and sisters can work. And in turn, they saved this state a whole lot of heartache by giving up that money (Senate 02:04:38).

Gomes maintains a traditionally Keynesian perspective that locates the primary point of conflict within the labor-business axis of factionalism. He is an ideal-typical partisan.

But there emerges a new breed of Democrats whose progressive viewpoints stem from the socioeconomic class division between the haves and the have-nots and the inequitable division of resources. Despite the partisan rhetoric with which they protest the October budget, they are more aligned to partnership than meets the eye. Representative Joshua Elliott (D-88) is one such Democrat. An owner of two grocery stores, he won his seat in 2016 and represents Hamden, a small college town in the outskirts of New Haven. He explains his opposition to the October budget as thus:

[The budget] is antithetical to everything that I believe in. If we talk about the problem of the tax structure in Connecticut, let's look at the facts of the tax structure in Connecticut. DRS²⁹ put a report out about two years ago looking at how the different income quintiles pay into the system, looking at both state and local property and local taxes. And what you look and find [...] when you see this is that for earners who make \$75,000 or less, they are paying at minimum 14% of

²⁸ This appears to be based on a simple calculation of outlays twenty years into the future and does not have bearings on how long a SEBAC agreement may last. As I have mentioned previously, the 1997 SEBAC agreement was a twenty-year deal, but the Malloy administration opted to renegotiate the contract in 2011 as well as 2017 to help close budget deficits (Fitch 2021a). The state and SEBAC agreed to extend the 2017 agreement to June 30, 2027 (Livingston and Egan), which the Lamont administration opted to cut short and renegotiate in 2022 (Livingston and Krayeski 2022:1-2).

²⁹ Connecticut Department of Revenue Services

their income to state and local taxes. And for those earners who make \$165,000 or more, they pay no more than 8% (House of Representatives 01:00:59).

Given these numbers, he directs his polemics at the Republican talking point that the wealthy are leaving Connecticut to avoid high taxes and that the state needs to cut taxes to appeal to them. Just as Senator Bye (D-5) refuted Senator Frantz's (R-36) assertion that connected two instances of the wealthy taxpayers leaving the state to a definitive trend in 2016, Elliott points out the fallacy in "this anecdotal evidence" to "paint broad strokes across the board and say this is the problem" (House of Representatives 01:01:52). According to him, the budget and the system it represents disproportionately favor the wealthy, and he argues it is not a natural state of equilibrium for the economy:

In the past 30 years, the top 1% of income earners in Connecticut have gained 84% of all income gains accessible. [...] Capitalism isn't a natural phenomenon. [...] [I]t takes our natural tendencies to be greedy and to hoard. And it turns us into, uh, entrepreneurs and it turns us into, uh, heads of companies where we are using the methodologies of accruing more money as a way to invest and create new jobs [...] and invest in research and development and create new technologies. And that's great and that's wonderful. But to ignore the downsides and aftermath effects and [...] various parts of [...] economic [...] inefficiencies would be to basically say that it's okay for the power brokers and for the ultra-wealthy to maintain their class status indefinitely (House of Representatives 01:04:18).

Elliott does not appear to accept the Keynesian view of dichotomous entities locked in zero-sum struggles. After all, he owns businesses of his own as well. The labor-business axis is not where he finds his constituents. Indeed, while the wealthy and the poor are two discrete socioeconomic groups, it is the government and its budget policies that skew the distribution of the resources generated by the market. But the resources are not limited: the market with its creative powers can generate more resources as needed. In effect, by arguing for a more equitable distribution of resources within the larger frame of the capitalist economic order, the core of Elliott's progressive politics lean more toward neoliberal partnership than Keynesian partisanship.

Representative Robyn Porter (D-94), who assumed office in 2014, provides another example of a progressive Democrat who disagrees with the October budget and speaks out:

When you have people like you, me, middle class, working class that are paying an exorbitant amount of taxes every year [...] to the federal government. And I am not middle class, I am working class, but I have millionaires and billionaires in this state that pay little to no tax. I have corporations that are getting breaks, and these are the things that we don't want to talk about. [...] I think when we taught bipartisanship and we're talking about compromise and we're talking about concessions, that this should be equal across the board. It should be fair, and it should be equitable. And I'm not feeling a whole lot of fairness and equitability in this budget right now (House of Representatives 01:12:19).

The Democratic leadership indeed compromised in specific policies that target the wealthy such as the new moratorium on the gift tax and estate tax increase. In addition, there are no income or sales tax increases to close the \$3.5 billion gap. The budget instead targets those who are arguably less privileged. To progressive Democrats like Representative Porter, this represents an unacceptable transfer of wealth from the bottom to the top. Yet, even as she is critical of the budget and what it accomplishes, she does not bring Keynesian rhetoric that pits the labor against the business. In fact, the next part of her speech can even be described as pro-business:

My daughter's in graduate school and she's telling me, mommy, when I'm done, I'm outta here because I can't afford to live in Connecticut. What are we doing to help those people, the graduates? Where's the workforce development gonna be? How are we gonna compete with the likes of Boston and New York where our businesses are moving to because we don't have what they need here in this state. [...] How does this budget help move us in that direction? (House of Representatives 01:15:47).

Porter is cognizant of the disadvantages of the state that finds itself wedged between Boston and New York, two of the most important global cities in the Northeast, and actively calls for policies that would aid businesses to establish themselves in the state. This appeal to the growth imperative evokes the language of the partners more than the language of the partisans in a way that clearly differentiates the progressives like Porter from the Keynesians like Gomes. In fact, Porter's comment corresponds with Representative Sampson (R-80)'s pro-business rhetoric,

though both of their comments lack the specific guidelines for policies that could be realized to encourage businesses in Connecticut. In any case, if the budget sharply contrasted Republican partisan activists from their partner counterparts, for the Democrats, it accentuated the gulf between old Keynesian partisans and the progressives who lean into neoliberal languages.

Hartford on Their Minds

Another noteworthy aspect of the debate surrounding the budget for the 2018-19 biennium is that this is the first and the only time during the entirety of Hartford's fiscal crisis the General Assembly openly discussed the city's situation during the legislative sessions. So far, state legislators have proven to be consistent in their focus. They care about matters relating to the operation of the state, not the municipalities. Thus, there are only a handful of significant instances in which Hartford is discussed as the central topic, no instances in which other large cities like Bridgeport and New Haven are discussed. But the legislators deviated from this pattern in fiscal year 2018.

The Democratic partners were united in their support of the budget vis-à-vis the municipalities' credit ratings including Hartford's. For example, Senator Martin Looney (D-11) explains:

[T]he lack of [...] an enacted budget for additional time would, of course, I think, as we all know, would imperil our state's credit rating. [A]nd by extension, those of municipalities in this state would already receive notice in some cases from, uh, from Moody's that they were being downgraded because of the, the climate created by the long impasse (Senate 02:53:16).

By emphasizing the importance of credit ratings for Connecticut's indebted municipalities including Hartford, the Democrats are yet again reminding the need to compromise and pass the October budget. In other words, helping the municipalities weather the vagaries of the bond market and draw in necessary funds for economic development is an important part of what the

legislature can achieve through neoliberal partnership. Representative Matthew Ritter (D-1)³⁰ elevates this necessity for consensus to a moral imperative:

We had municipalities, municipalities with a plural on the verge of insolvency. There's a moral obligation up here to not allow that to happen. And it's happened to Democratic and Republican towns in the past and we have always stepped up for them. No matter who was in charge in the governor's office or in the legislature (House of Representatives 00:08:29).

Ritter stresses that helping the imperiled municipalities is not only a bipartisan issue but a moral one as well. In a roundabout way, Ritter's statement is criticizing the holdouts, those who are intransigent partisan activists since Hartford is likely to file for Chapter 9 bankruptcy to discharge its debts if not for the assistance from the budget.

On the other side of the aisle, the Republican partners tend to focus on the responsibilities of the indebted municipalities rather than what the state owes them. Senator Len Fasano (R-34) bristles at Hartford's current predicament and credits businesses, albeit an amorphous and ill-defined entity, for their support of the city:

[W]e may be upset the way Hartford's been run, but Hartford's capital city, we're gonna give it another shot. Get it right because we're watching. [...] We're not gonna hang you out to dry. You know why? Because businesspeople called us up and said, who we trust, who we want to invest in the state and said, help Hartford. Give them a shot. Let them have their own destiny. We will stick with you. We in fact will donate our time, effort, and money to come to Connecticut. [...] But don't let Hartford go bankrupt. Give them a shot. So, we created a scheme in which we're gonna give 'em a shot and we're gonna watch 'em. Hartford's gotta know, this is their shot. Don't screw it up. This is your shot, and we're gonna stick with them because those business leaders who have [...] promised to help Connecticut, we said, we heard you. We want you to stay (Senate 02:45:32).

Fasano's advocacy for the businesses of Connecticut is an impassioned call for the passage of the October budget to help Hartford. But what follows is Representative Gary Byron's (R-27) objection against Hartford. Byron's district encompasses Newington, a suburban town just a few miles southwest of Hartford's downtown and has been a swing district represented by both the

³⁰ The Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives from January 6, 2021 on.

Democrats and the Republicans in the 2010s. The fact that Byron, a partisan activist, represents such district underscores the detachment of community governance from community politics and subsequent polarization among grassroots politicians as Pacewicz describes with much aplomb (195-225). Indeed, despite Newington being part of the Capital Planning Region and therefore dependent on the central city for services and jobs, Byron denigrates the move to help Hartford as untenable:

But there is one very big element of this budget that prevents me from supporting it. And that is the nearly \$900,000 cut in municipal aid to the town of Newington. While the city of Hartford sees huge increases, increases to compensate for poor financial management. And make no mistake, a vibrant and thriving capital city is important for the state and especially to the surrounding suburbs. I want to see our capital city succeed, but what I don't see today is the plan that puts the City of Hartford on the path to solvency. All I can see is the city coming back year after year, seeking more financial aid (House of Representatives 02:14:17).

The \$40 million Hartford receives does come with strings, which is the oversight committee that I explore in Chapter 5. The \$900,000 cut Byron mentions is in reference to the decrease of \$986,415 from fiscal year 2018 to 2019 in total municipal aid. While it is in the best interest of his constituency to protest such decision, the town is set to lose \$18 million in 2018 and \$17 million in 2019 without the budget. Thus, Byron's vote against the budget further accentuates the zero-sum nature of the activist worldview: Hartford's gain is Newington's loss, and there shall be no brooking Newington's loss. Howard Koenig, a resident of Cheshire, CT, expressed this sentiment in much more unambiguous terms when he wrote a letter to the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee in regard to S.B. No. 415 An Act Increasing the Property Tax Credit under the Personal Income Tax for a Primary Residence or Motor Vehicle:

This bill is good for those of us legal citizens that pull the wagon. We need more tax relief not less. The governor needs to curb his spending and stop giving our hard earned money away or diverting funding to cities that have not used good past judgment and punishing those that have sacrificed to be in the good position they are in (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 2017:630).

This zero-sum understanding of budgetary politics played a significant role in Hartford's quest to secure help from the state, which we see in Chapter 5. In the end, despite their protests, the partisan activists were not able to surmount the partners in both chambers. S.B. 1502, the October budget passed with 33 senators voting yea and 3 voting nay. In the House of Representatives, it passed with 126 yeas and 23 nays.

G. Conclusion

In this chapter, I approached the relationship between Connecticut and Hartford in three separate angles. Firstly, that because of the federal structure, the state is necessarily involved in the resolution of Hartford's situation whether state legislators approve of it or not. State matters, therefore, are municipal matters. Secondly, that both the State Capitol and the city hall saw public employees' unions as the enemy to be undercut. But I dedicated the majority of this chapter to understand how state legislators interacted with the budgets, one of which would help subsidize Hartford's deficit by the magnitude of \$40 million in exchange for installing an oversight committee. I accomplished this by looking at the languages the legislators utilized during the debates in the General Assembly.

Every two years, the Connecticut General Assembly gathers to examine the biennial budget proposed by the governor and either pass or reject it. Each year, the planned budget is amended and implemented. In the years Hartford suffered from a protracted period of fiscal distress, Connecticut likewise underwent similar problems with its biennial budgets. The state's fiscal problem is deeply rooted. In fact, the implementation of the income taxes in 1991 was to combat the ballooning deficits. But the issues the state has faced recently stem from the Great

Recession and the stagnating revenue collection over the years. These issues made the state hesitant to step in and resolve Hartford's fiscal crisis as it would under normal circumstances.

Within this larger picture resides the continuous conflict between the Republicans and the Democrats, each seeking to implement their party's vision of what the state's budget should look like. Though there is a caveat: since the Democrats are in control of the General Assembly and the governorship, they are put into position of having to provide and pass a budget that works. They must compromise as they do not have the luxury of insisting on orthodoxy. In contrast, the Republicans are free to espouse ideologically orthodox views or even stonewall if they so choose. In this way, the Republicans have more leverage in budget talks than what they initially appear to have.

In fiscal year 2016, the changing revenue projections forced the state to revise its budgets many times. In the legislative sessions discussing the proposed changes, the Republicans maneuvered to pass its own amendments that further restrict the state government's role in the market, cut spendings, and cut down the power of the state employee union. The Republicans depended on Keynesian partisan language to signal their displeasure with the Democratic majority, accentuating the dichotomies of businesses versus unions, tax cuts versus tax hikes, and middle-class interests versus state employee union interests. Surprisingly, while they could have cited more traditional welfare spending as a source of budgetary strains and a counter to business interests, they decidedly did not demonize welfare recipients. At the same time, they also utilized neoliberal partner language in appropriate instances to correspond to the Democrats using the same conciliatory language. This way, no Republican legislator cited regarding fiscal year 2016 was a true partisan, someone who counters the partners in hot-button issues no matter how controversial their stance may be.

The budget deliberations in fiscal year 2017 presents us with a different aspect of partisanship, of a dialectical discourse between the Democrats and the Republicans. The Democrats were consistent in their messaging, that the budget is a deliberative, cooperative process requiring partnership over partisanship. The Republicans responded by taking reactive stances to the Democrats' proposals, which once again proves that political expediency and not genuine political partisanship determines the kind of languages the legislators use.

If Hartford's fiscal crisis was not worth mentioning in relation to the state's budget in fiscal year 2016, things had clearly changed by fiscal year 2017. The state government was unable to create a working budget for four months after the fiscal year started, which affected municipalities as their fundings were cut. Thus, the Democrats argued that it was a moral imperative to compromise and pass the budget as quickly as possible. The Republicans, on the other hand, emphasized the responsibilities of the municipalities in fiscal distress – the state may provide aid, but Hartford must chart its own course and help itself out.

Another important divergence from previous years was the clear division between the partners and the partisan activists. In preceding fiscal years, the Democratic majority, which has held the executive and the legislative branches of Connecticut government, was able to consolidate power and pass the budgets in the manner the governor saw fit. But the squabble between the governor and the legislature on various issues such as tax increases allowed the Republicans to fill the power vacuum left by the split. The Republican partners in the General Assembly negotiated with their Democratic counterparts and were able to pass a budget they deemed satisfactory that included the constitutional spending cap, bonding cap, and estate tax relief. This Republican advancement revealed a fracture between the partners and the partisan activists as the partners joined the Democrats to pass the October budget. The partisan activists,

confronted by a budget that included objectives the Republicans had endorsed for many legislative sessions, simply moved the goal line and further fixed themselves into their contrarian positions, vowing to oppose the budget. This opposition extended to the \$40 million relief for Hartford too as suburban representatives viewed this as an unfair reallocation of funds, underscoring the zero-sum mindset of these partisan activists.

But we observe that even in a political arena such as the General Assembly, polarization is not the norm, and the presence of partisan activists is sparse. In Iowa, Pacewicz finds that the swelling ranks of grassroots activists who are unaffiliated with traditional community organizations has led to a spike in partisanship in local political parties, which then led to polemical polarization of American politics at all levels (207-225). In California, Masket finds the same, that partisanship in local parties filtered through to state politics (2009:3). Such partisanship extends to Congress as well. And the partisan activists have come to wield a great influence in these cases. Yet, Connecticut apparently defies the national experience. True partisan activists whose attachment to party orthodoxy appear to be rare and far in between, and they do not hold much sway over the legislative processes. However, it is inexplicable why this is the case for Connecticut: California is a state dominated by the Democrats as well, but Masket elucidates the sharp partisan turn of the Republicans. Two factors may explain this bucking of the trend: (1) the continuous Democratic majority and (2) the firm control of Connecticut Republican Party by the partners rather than partisan activists prevent overt polarization.

The languages utilized by state legislators reveal that the growth imperative is a crucial and common theme unifying the discussions surrounding the Bishops and the state political actors. As the Bishops discussed urban policies in terms of encouraging economic growth, the contemporary legislators discuss state business policies. Yet, I have demonstrated that the

Republican state legislators do not envision the growth imperative as a realistic set of implementable policies. As local economic actors with a sizable financial means depart Connecticut for global cities, growth for Hartford and the state becomes ever more elusive. Instead, the legislators' frequent code-switching implies that the growth imperative is exploited mainly as a means to derive political power from performance. Indeed, the legislators' adherence to the growth imperative in their speech primarily through neoliberal language of partnership signals their suitability as serious political candidates and advances their reelection bids.

This chapter established the background for the state's restraint in its dealings with Hartford. It reveals the flagging fiscal position the state found itself in in the late 2010s, which has led to a fierce debate among state legislators on what the state budget should be spent on. At the same time, I analyzed the rhetorical devices state legislators used in order to clarify their public ideological stances while identifying the growth imperative as a unifying theme between the Bishops and state legislators. In the next chapter, I explore the City of Hartford's response to its fiscal crisis. There are some overlaps with this chapter in that Chapter 5 looks at municipal representatives testifying for the survival of the city in the General Assembly, but the languages they utilize somewhat differ. The primary field of analysis is the discussions surrounding two bills: 2016 S.B. No. 464 An Act Establishing the Hartford Financial Sustainability Commission, and; 2017 H.B. 7050 An Act Establishing the Municipal accountability Review Board and Designated Tiers. Both bills brought out intense arguments among interested actors, asking what would be the most economically efficient way to rectify Hartford's fiscal shortfalls and what the state owes Hartford.

CHAPTER 5: CLASHING MUNICIPAL ACTORS AND THE PURSUIT OF ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY VERSUS MORAL IMPERATIVE

Pressed on by Mayor Luke Bronin, 2016 S.B. No. 464¹ garnered much attention from Hartford residents for what it does. That is, it would weaken the municipal decision-making authority in return for the ability to renegotiate contracts with the city employees' unions. Ostensibly, the passage of the bill would enable the city to escape an acute fiscal crisis. There was effort put into making the commission represent important groups of Hartford, and it would include members appointed by both the mayor and the city council. But some Hartford residents bristled at what the bill represented.

On March 28, 2016, the General Assembly's Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee held a public hearing on S.B. No. 464. At the tail end of the six and a half hour hearing came Ms. Alyssa Peterson, one of the irate Hartford citizens ready to make a splash. She began with her forehead creased, and her eyes focused on a prepared speech behind a pair of wide rimmed glasses:

I'm personally embarrassed by the manner in which our rookie mayor and his rookie staff immediately sought a power – a naked power grab beyond what our charter grants. While a truly likeable and smart guy, Luke Bronin does not have the actual voters of Hartford behind him [...]. Mayor Bronin can't have it both ways. He just asked our council to issue more stadium bonds using our city's A+ or A ratings while he's also running between town hall meetings crying that the sky is falling, and a category 5 financial storm is coming (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1297).

After berating Bronin for the apparent inconsistency in his words, Peterson went on to criticize Senator John Fonfara (D-1), the Co-Chair of the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee, for referring the bill to the committee. This resulted in a verbal sparring match with Representative Jeffrey J. Berger (D-73), causing a dramatic scene in an otherwise placid proceeding:

ALYSSA PETERSON: Which politician is telling the truth? And truthfully, Senator Fonfara, you're the last person to be raising this bill because of the privilege of your chairmanship. This

¹ An Act Establishing the Hartford Financial Sustainability Commission.

legislation wrongly targets union and minority lives. Black lives, Hispanic lives, blue lives – all lives you have used to keep yourself in office.

REPRESENTATIVE BERGER (D-73): I'm sorry, Ms.–Ms.–Ms.–Ms.

ALYSSA PETERSON: They endorsed and voted for you, gave you donations–

REPRESENTATIVE BERGER: Ms. Peterson! I would encourage you not to direct your comment to a member of this committee, please. You are to focus your conversation on the bill that is before us, not in a personal attack, ma'am, please.

ALYSSA PETERSON: It's not a personal attack–

REPRESENTATIVE BERGER: It is. It is– (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1298-1299)

The quarrel led to a sullen conclusion. While Berger cut Peterson short and attempted to end the hearing, Peterson shot back, mumbling a sarcastic retort:

REPRESENTATIVE BERGER: Thank you, Ms. Peterson. That concludes this–

ALYSSA PETERSON: Thanks for the interruption (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1299).

Alyssa Peterson was by far the most combative, but the opposition to the bill was strong and numerous. And with S.B. No. 464 dying on the vine², the General Assembly had to suffer through another round of tetchy testimonials from an angry public when it introduced H.B. No. 7050 An Act Establishing the Municipal Accountability Review Board and Designated Tiers.

The scope of S.B. No. 464 was limited to Hartford. With many Hartford municipal actors such as the city council and union leaders signaling their disapproval of the bill to state legislators, it failed to move out of the joint standing committee. Meanwhile, H.B. No. 7050, a copy of S.B. No. 464 in its consequences, was part of the governor's budget proposal, and its scope included all 169 Connecticut towns and cities including 25 municipalities officially designated by the state as Distressed (Connecticut Department of Economic and Community

² In the Connecticut General Assembly, the joint standing committees have much power over the bills as they are referred to them to be voted on first. After holding public hearings over the proposed bills, the committee may report the bill favorably, defeat the bill, or issue no report and fail the bill. In this case, the committee issued no report.

Development 2022)³. These factors allowed the General Assembly to pass H.B. No. 7050.

During this period between 2016 and 2018 when the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee discussed and debated the merits of S.B. No. 464 and H.B. No. 7050, Hartford experienced a protracted period of fiscal issues.

At the core of these public hearing back and forths is the question of what is owed to the various interest groups of Hartford. What is their fair share? Indeed, the moral imperative of *what ought to be* and the talk of economic efficiency are two strong and conflicting undercurrents running in these hearings. And it is these two conflicting languages that we turn our attention to in relation to the discussion and debate surrounding Hartford's fiscal crisis.

Thus, even though this chapter follows the previous chapter closely in form, the organizing principle is somewhat different. The central point of Chapter 4 is how Republican and Democratic legislators express their agenda through ritualized sets of rhetorical devices centered on the dichotomy of Keynesian partisanship and neoliberal partnership within the context of the budget making process and Hartford's fiscal crisis. This chapter is about how varied municipal actors express their agenda of moral imperative against the dominant economic style of reasoning favored by the mayor of Hartford and state legislators within the context of the city's fiscal crisis. These incompatible visions dominate the discussions of where Hartford should head.

But first, we must understand what constitutes the economic style of reasoning. Elizabeth Popp Berman speaks of the economic style of reasoning that has come to dominate political discussions as the Keynesian state unraveled and gave way to neoliberalism in the late 1970s (5-6). Hallett and Gougherty argue that contemporary graduate degrees such as Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Public Affairs and Public Administration (MPA), and Master

³ This is determined from tax base, personal income of residents, and the residents' need for public services (Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development 2023).

of Public Policy (MPP) impress upon their students the predominance of “quantitative methods to strategically plan, measure, and analyze organizational practices and policies, usually with an instrumental, economic sensibility (2018:153).” And these students, taught by economics PhDs (Berman 6), go on to managerial positions across various levels and branches of government, engraining this economic sensibility on American public policy discourse. This is the primary method by which the economic style of reasoning spread.

Members of American political ruling class, especially those on the center-left, enthusiastically embraced the economic style of reasoning because they perceived evaluating public policies through the lens of economic efficiency as neutral (Berman 20). They viewed it as the most effective way to gauge a policy’s success or failure. At this point, it has been nearly a half century since the economic style of reasoning has become “the conventional wisdom” and the dominant form of expression among elected officials (Berman 14). It has affected not only the way we talk about and engage with policies, but also which policies are chosen as the right answers to the problems of our society. To accurately characterize the motivations of competing political actors, it is important to distinguish between the economic style of reasoning and what lies at the opposite end of the spectrum: the language of moral imperative, of equity and justice (Berman 4).

I find the economic style of reasoning and the language of moral imperative dominate the public hearings on S.B. No. 464 and H.B. No. 7050. At a first glance, the fact that the language of moral imperative provides an alternative worldview from the economic style of reasoning deviates from what Berman finds in her historical study of the federal government. After all, the economic style of reasoning has achieved a hegemonic status within the federal government. Yet, Berman also finds that even as the economic style of reasoning became the dominant barometer

for all policy arenas, conservative Republicans were more flexible in its application unlike their center-left counterpart. They utilized the economic style of reasoning when convenient for their goals and ignored when inconvenient (Berman 18). For instance, Berman states Reagan “slashed support for economic analysis in social policy areas, where the president expected it to prop up the welfare state, while expanding it in areas like antitrust and environmental policy, where he thought it would support his preference for less regulation (Berman 17-18),” proving that while dominant, the economic style of reasoning has not displaced all other alternative ideas of policymaking. Hegemony does not necessarily equate to being the only option. The fact that the language of moral imperative provides a definitive alternative to the economic style of reasoning for Hartford is another such exception. As I demonstrate, leftist politicians and union leaders continue to struggle against the hegemony of the economic style of reasoning, though not successfully in this instance.

As I explicated in the previous chapter, the growth imperative dominates discussions on the state budget and Hartford’s fiscal condition. Mayor Luke Bronin proves to be a champion of the growth imperative through the economic style of reasoning. Meanwhile, there are municipal actors who oppose the mayor and the growth imperative using the language of moral imperative.

In this chapter, there are four main groups of relevant actors to consider: (a) Mayor Luke Bronin, (b) the state legislators, (c) Hartford Court of Common Council, and (d) the local union leaders. The mayor and the state legislators utilize the economic style of reasoning primarily to defend bills. For them, the bills are the most convenient means to force a public consensus for austerity and fiscal discipline on the suffering city. It is also a means to justify the redistribution of resources to close the fiscal gap. Meanwhile, the representatives of Hartford Court of Common Council and local union leaders utilize the language of moral imperative to dispute the

need for such bills. To them, the bills are an unnecessary overreach of power by the General Assembly and the rookie mayor. The conflict exhibited at the public hearings boil down to two discrete points of contention: (1) the undemocratic nature of an oversight board implemented by the state that wields power over extant city institutions and weaken collective bargaining rights, and (2) the moral imperative of protecting what is owed to Hartford and its employees.

As this chapter unfolds, it is important to note the erosion of local democratic institutions from fiscal pressures. Many component parts of the U.S. federal polity suffer from endemic fiscal issues. Tax increases have become all but an unachievable goal for political actors following the tax revolt of the 1970s (Martin 2-5) while service provisions continue to rise. The conflict between the economic style of reasoning and the moral imperative derives its source from this trend. Municipal governments become progressively more incapable of solving the issue of constant fiscal crisis as ideological clashes intensify, and state governments must intervene. This state government intervention steps on local democratic institutions and rules. The issue becomes larger than local economic actors vacating their privileged position from civic affairs; it affects how we organize and legitimize basic units of governance in our society.

As in Chapter 4, this chapter looks at two distinct sets of evidence. First, it analyzes the state of Hartford's finances through a series of descriptive statistics, assessing whether it truly suffered from a structural deficit as Mayor Bronin claimed. Second, the chapter examines the languages used by multiple municipal actors in the context of public hearings at the state legislature to better comprehend the publicized conflict. The mayor, the state legislators, the city council, and union leaders acted from incompatible motivations expressed in different languages. And these different languages highlight the clash of divergent strands of thoughts on urban

governance and power distribution. The clash in turn has larger implications for democratic institutions that undergird the federal polity in the United States.

A. Hartford’s Fiscal Trend vis-à-vis Connecticut

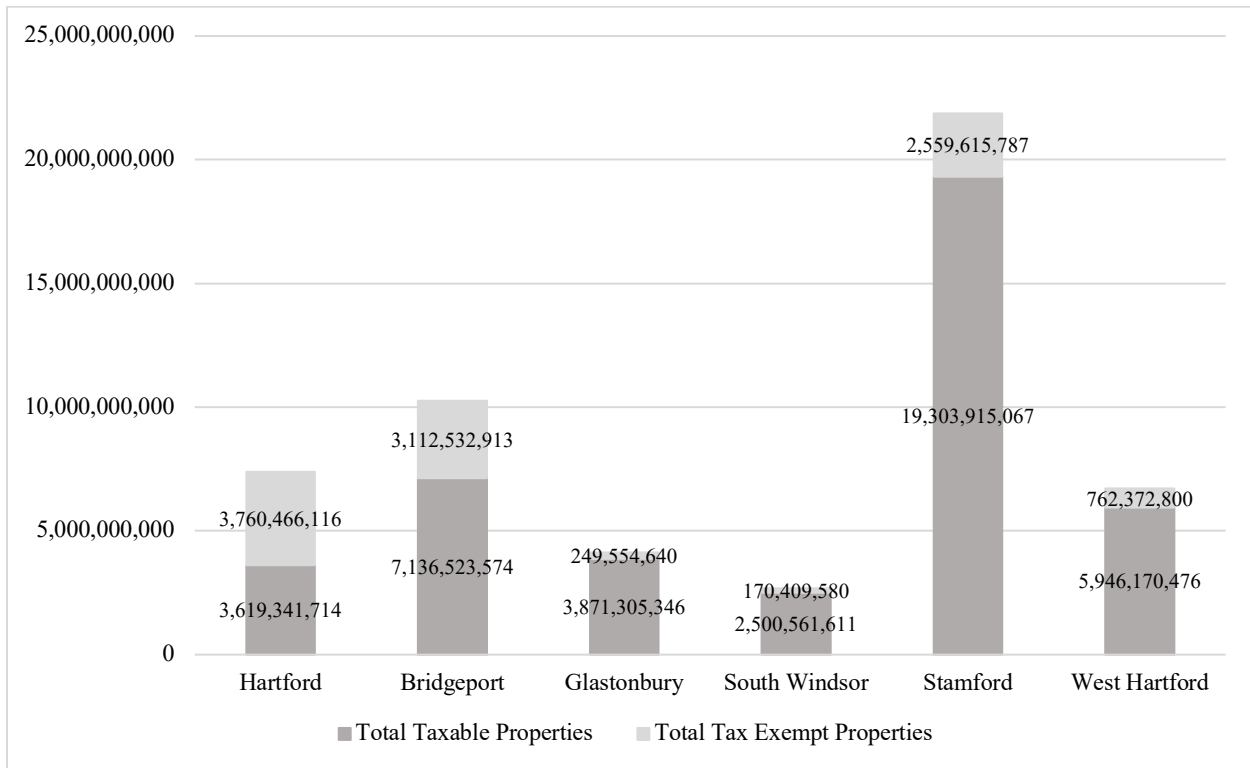


Figure 5-1. Comparison of 2014 Grand List Composition of Relevant Connecticut Municipalities

The City of Hartford has a large, poor government. Its population of 121,054 places Hartford in the fourth place among Connecticut’s largest municipalities as Table 5-1 clarifies.

Yet, the amount of revenue the City of Hartford⁴ can extract from its taxable properties falls far below that of its peers. Each Connecticut town has an official assessor who evaluates the fair market value of all real estate and motor vehicle properties by October 1 of every year, the

⁴ West Hartford and East Hartford are suburban towns separate from the City of Hartford and are always treated as such.

results of which the state compiles to create the Grand List. Each municipality levies local property tax based on the Grand List from two years prior.

Table 5-1. 2020 Population of Largest Connecticut Cities

<u>Connecticut Municipalities</u>	<u>2020 Decennial Census Place Population</u>
Bridgeport City	148,654
Stamford City	135,470
New Haven City	134,023
Hartford City	121,054
Waterbury City	114,403

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The figure above of the processed 2014 Grand List data used for fiscal year 2016 tax levies clearly demonstrates Hartford’s problem. Hartford’s total taxable properties is assessed at half that of Bridgeport and less than a fifth of Stamford’s \$19 billion. On the other hand, more than half of the properties in Hartford are exempt from taxation as Figure 5-2 illustrates. Between 2006 and 2013, the ratio of tax-exempt properties in Hartford increased by 15 percentage points, stabilizing at half the Grand List thereafter (see Figure 5-3). Bridgeport, which has a comparable amount of tax-exempt properties in raw value, finds itself with more means to maneuver with 70 percent of the Grand List categorized as taxable. Things become even direr when we compare Hartford to its wealthier suburbs. West Hartford, with half the population of Hartford, boasts nearly \$6 billion taxable properties to Hartford’s \$3.6 billion. Glastonbury, the population of which is less than a third of Hartford, surpasses Hartford in taxable properties value. Tax-exempt properties in Glastonbury only account for 6 percent of its Grand List.

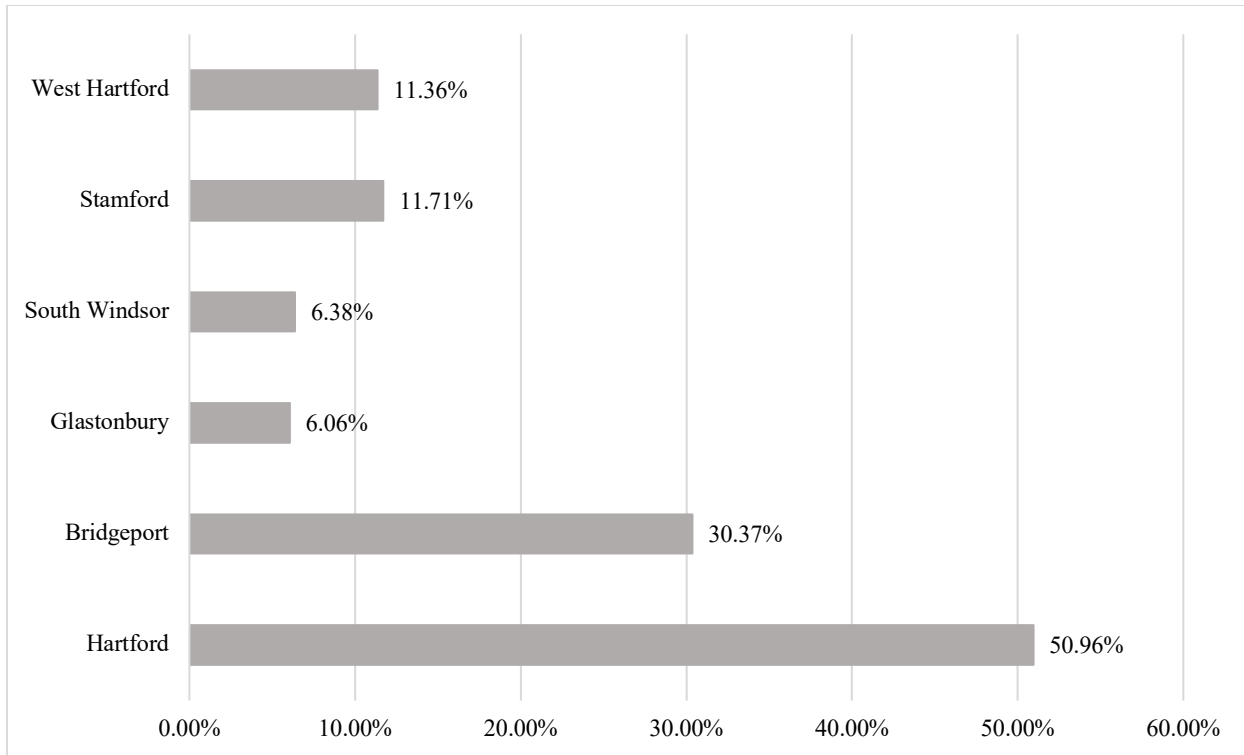


Figure 5-2. 2014 Tax-Exempt Properties Percentage

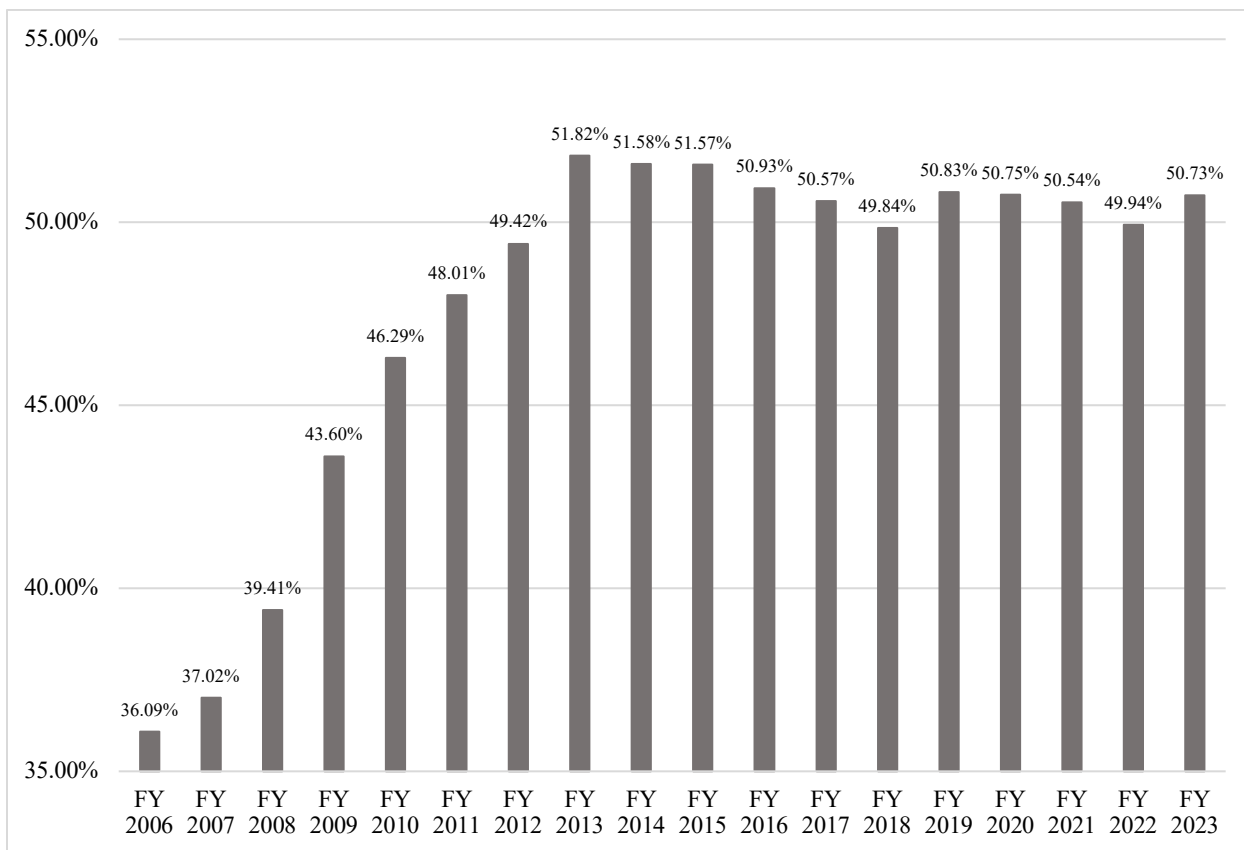


Figure 5-3. Tax-Exempt Properties Percentage in Hartford

At the same time, the taxable portion of Hartford’s Grand List has been shrinking or stagnating over the years as Figure 5-4 elucidates. John Philip, Hartford’s City Assessor, explained in an email correspondence that the 250 percent jump in the taxable Grand List after 1988 is due to a revaluation in the city’s properties in 1989 when the office market was at its highest (Philip 2023). The early 1990s recession resulted in the office market crash, which is reflected in the 1999 revaluation when the inflated figures returned to the level under \$4 billion. Figure 5-5 presents the fine-grained view of the decrease and the stagnation following the 1999 revaluation. It shows a series of smaller drops in the taxable properties’ values following the revaluations in 2006 and 2011, though the revaluation in 2016 resulted in a small increase. Still, the overall trend is that of diminution or stagnation. Lower assessment of taxable values directly leads to lower property taxes, which hits the city hard.

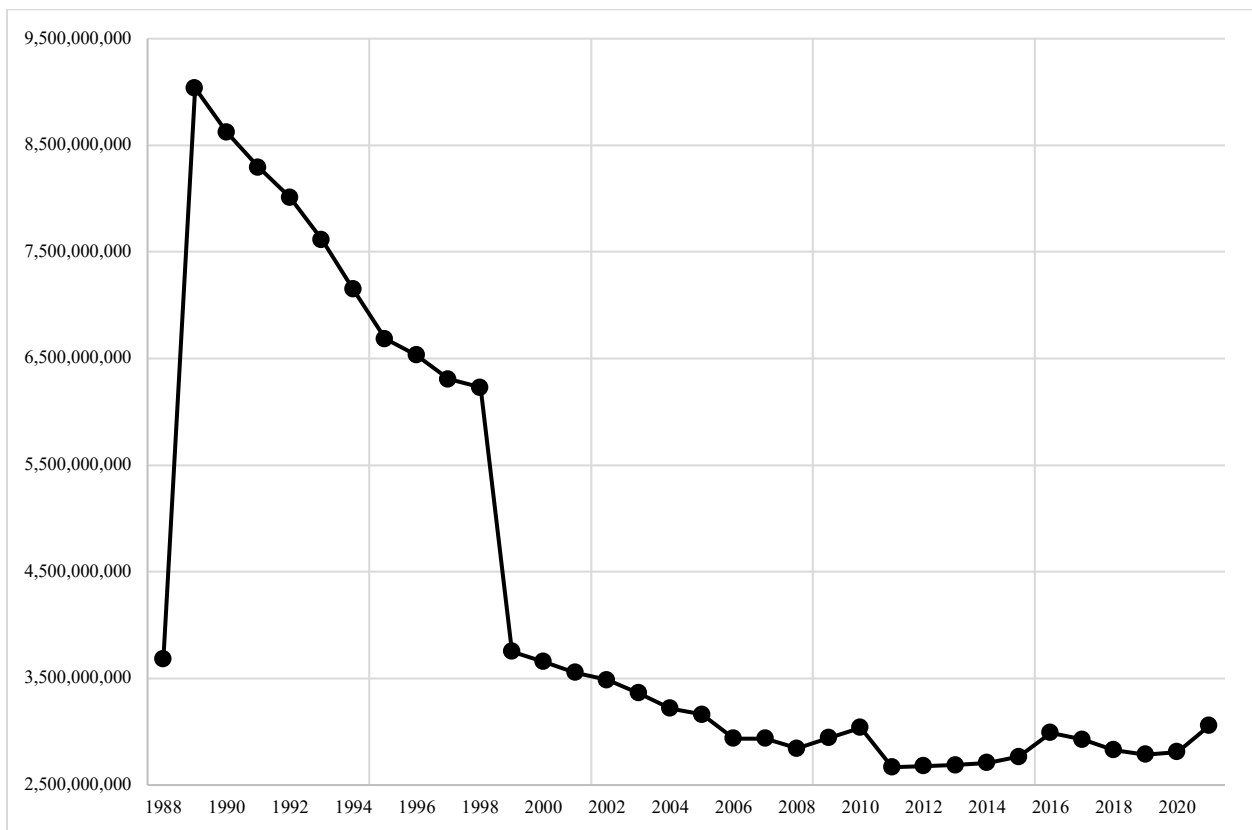


Figure 5-4. Net Taxable Grand List of Hartford in Constant 2001 U.S. Dollars, 1988-2021

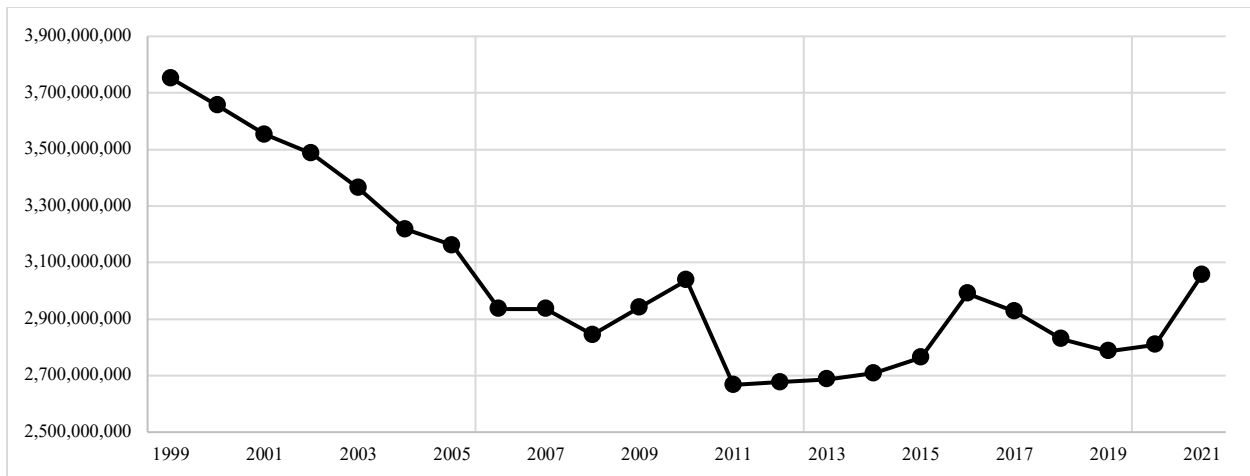


Figure 5-5. Net Taxable Grand List of Hartford in Constant 2001 U.S. Dollars, 1999-2021

This lower assessment of taxable properties is directly correlated with Hartford’s limited geographical scope. With less than 18 square miles of land area on top of many tax-exempt properties, the city simply does not have enough values to extract from the properties within its borders. The comparison of Hartford to other state capitals further accentuates this problem. Table 5-2 clarifies that Hartford is unique in its small size among capitals of comparable population size, though Providence, RI also has a highly concentrated core within a small geographical area. But this is to be expected in New England where central cities were not able to annex their surrounding suburbs. Approximately the same number of people reside in Columbia, SC yet the city exceeds Hartford’s geographical reach by nearly eight times and it has a lower poverty rate too. In 2019, Hartford’s Grand List, which includes both real estate and other types of properties, was \$4.08 billion and tax-exempt properties were valued at \$4.22 billion, which amounted to 50.83 percent of the total. In comparison, Columbia’s 2019 taxable real estate property value was assessed at \$10.59 billion and tax-exempt real estate properties were assessed at \$3.44 billion, which amounted to 24.51 percent of the total (Acuitas Economics LLC 2020:39).

Table 5-2. Geographical and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Select State Capitals

Name	Population (2020)	Land Area (sq mi)	Water Area (sq mi)	Total Area (sq mi)	Poverty Rate
Hartford, CT	121,054	17.38	0.68	18.06	28.43%
Boston, MA	675,647	48.34	41.27	89.61	17.61%
Providence, RI	190,934	18.41	2.18	20.59	21.50%
Springfield, IL	114,394	61.16	6.33	67.49	18.45%
Topeka, KS	126,587	61.62	1.32	62.94	15.24%
Columbia, SC	136,632	137.81	2.87	140.68	24.29%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

This is where the city's mill rate factors in. A mill rate is the amount of tax a property owner owes to their local government per \$1,000 of their property's assessed value. The calculation of a municipality's total property tax for year is thus: the added value of total taxable properties in the Grand List multiplied by the mill rate divided by 1,000. A local government sets the mill rate with the net value of assessed taxable properties and the expected expenditures in mind, which means if there are fewer taxable properties, the government must raise its mill rate. The higher the mill rate, the more acute the fiscal situation of the municipality is. Municipalities assess properties according to their types, which means some cities, including Hartford, maintain differentiated mill rates for motor vehicle properties and real estate properties.

The figure below illustrates Hartford's real estate property mill rate increase through the years. Bridgeport experienced a fiscal crisis, which resulted in a bankruptcy filing in 1991 (Judson 1991:B2), thereby explaining the high mill rate that decreased precipitously in the early 2000s with improving conditions. Glastonbury has comparatively fewer tax-exempt properties, which allows the town to maintain low mill rates through the years, hovering in and around the thirties. Hartford, however, hit its lowest mill rate in 1998 at 29.50 only for it to more than double in six years. It hit a level unseen among other Connecticut municipalities in 2011 when it

reached 74.29 and sustained it until 2020. This means Hartford is trapped in a feedback cycle. The higher mill rate to compensate for the population loss leads to further population loss.

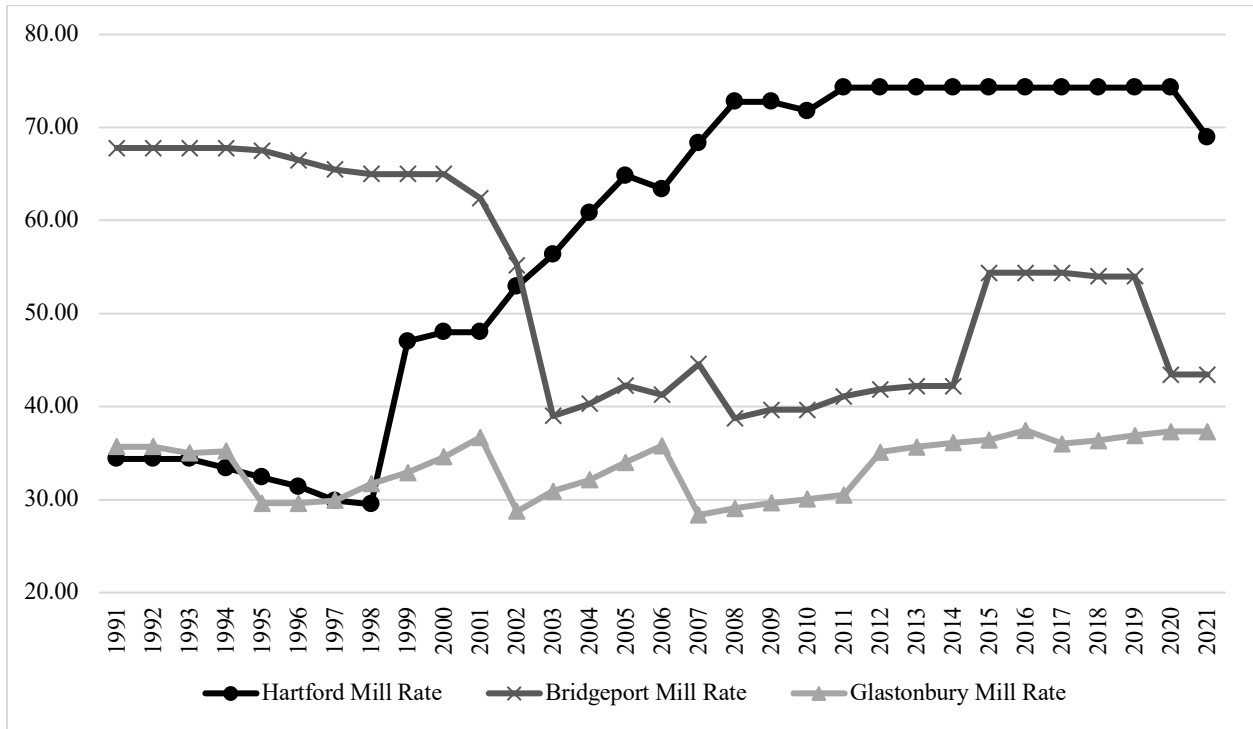


Figure 5-6. Mill Rate: Hartford, Bridgeport, Glastonbury, 1991-2021

One way of mitigating the high ratio of tax-exempt properties and alleviate the fiscal scarcity is through transfers from the state government. Just as the state is dependent on the federal government transfers, the municipal governments in Connecticut are highly dependent on the state to fill their budget gaps. The state, however, has been unreliable and inconsistent in its grants in recent years. Figure 5-7 shows the total amount of payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) the state confers on municipalities, which includes reimbursements for loss of taxes on state property, reimbursements for private tax-exempt properties, and the Municipal Revenue Sharing Fund (MRSF). The MRSF is a supplemental payment established by the state’s fiscal year 2017

budget,⁵ and in subsequent years since 2017, the General Assembly appropriated MRSF from the state's General Fund (Pinho 2020a:7).

The Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) maintains and annually updates a list of Distressed Municipalities that receive targeted funds. The DECD has deemed Hartford a Distressed Municipality since before 2010 (Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development). Though these grants to the Distressed Municipalities are technically excluded from PILOT, I have decided to include them as they can be understood as part of the revenue sharing scheme in regard to Hartford.

Although there is a set formula to calculate PILOT based on each municipality's annual Grand List, the amount disbursed tends to be ad hoc based on the legislature's decision for the year as the creation and maintenance of the MRSF proves: it did not exist until 2017, and the General Assembly filled the fund from different sources each year. The raw figures for total PILOT are much more consistent at around \$190 million, yet when standardized in constant dollar amount, they become much more variable as Figure 5-7 demonstrates. And the overall trend is that of a decrease following the Great Recession with a few exceptions in between. The beginning of the graph in 2002 portrays the maximum at \$168.40 million, and the minimum is in 2018 with less than \$130 million. The marked decrease in 2018 is because the state underfunded college and hospital PILOT and state, municipal, and tribal property PILOT by \$30 million (Pinho 7).

⁵ Public Act 15-244.

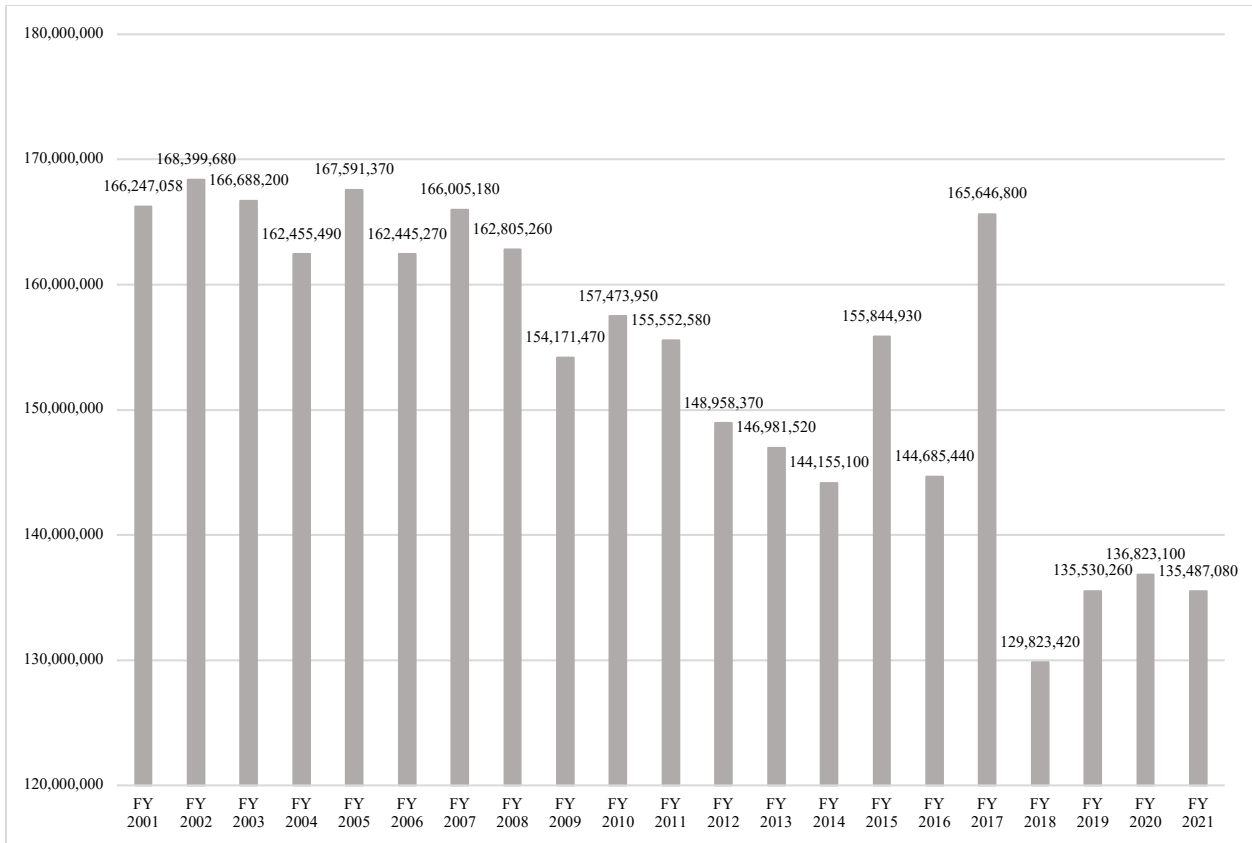


Figure 5-7. Total Reimbursements from the State in Constant 2001 U.S. Dollars

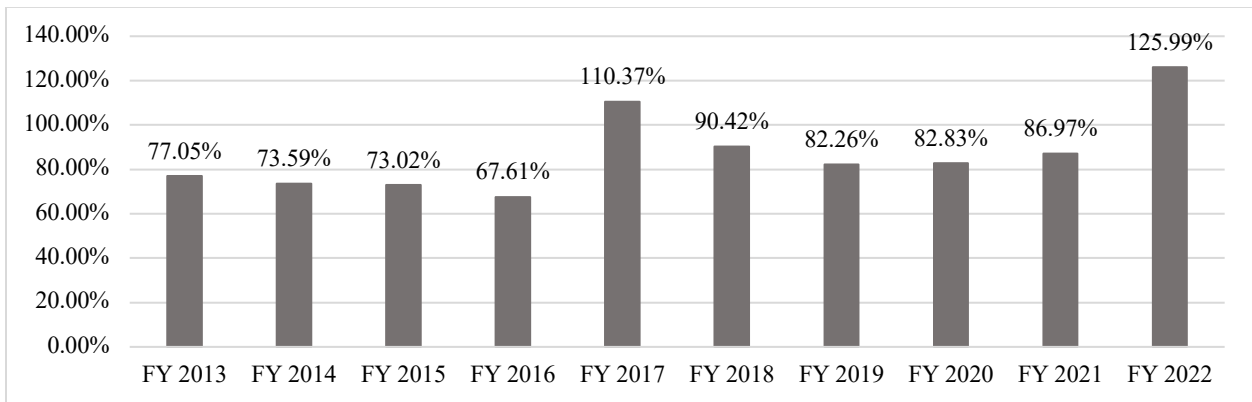


Figure 5-8. Hartford PILOT Funded Percentage

On Hartford’s side, inconsistency is the defining feature of PILOT and other transfers as well. When we calculate the amount of PILOT Connecticut owes to Hartford using the Grand

List and the city's mill rate and compare the resulting numbers to the actual⁶ PILOT Hartford received, we find the state is also irregular in the amount it pays. Figure 5-8 illustrates how Connecticut went from paying only two-thirds of the owed PILOT in fiscal year 2016 to over 110 percent of the owed PILOT in the following year. If we are to identify a thread of constancy, it is that Connecticut underpays Hartford's PILOT. For instance, had the state paid Hartford its full PILOT of \$62.68 million instead of the actual \$42.38 million in fiscal year 2016, the city would have had a surplus and not the \$7.61 million deficit in its General Fund. This became a flashpoint of contention during the public hearings for the bills to create oversight boards as I elucidate in later sections.

While PILOT is part of the state's revenue sharing plan and Hartford is unconstrained on the specific terms of its use, Hartford also receives many grants-in-aid that come with firm program parameters. These, for example, include payments for education cost sharing, transportation and public works funds, and various social services (City of Hartford 2017:6-12). In fact, Figure 5-9 demonstrates that the vast majority of the intergovernmental revenue Hartford receives comes from grants-in-aid, which consistently constitutes over 80 percent with the exceptions of fiscal years 2017 and 2018.

The less than stable relationship of Connecticut and Hartford closely mirrors the experience of Michigan and Detroit leading up to and following July 18, 2013, the day of Detroit's bankruptcy. At that time, Michigan had its own fiscal crisis, and between 2000 and 2010, the state government cut grants to towns and cities by \$4 billion or by 31 percent (Bomey 2016:13). Detroit had a revenue-sharing plan with the state in place agreed upon in 1998 by

⁶ Actual budget for the year follows forecasted, adopted, and revised budgets and is finalized two fiscal years after the fact. For example, the actual budget for fiscal year 2016 would be reported with the adopted budget for fiscal year 2018.

Republican governor John Engler and Democratic Detroit mayor Dennis Archer. Michigan would provide grants to Detroit in exchange for Detroit reducing its income tax rate. The state, however, backtracked from its promise during the 2000s (Bomey 13).

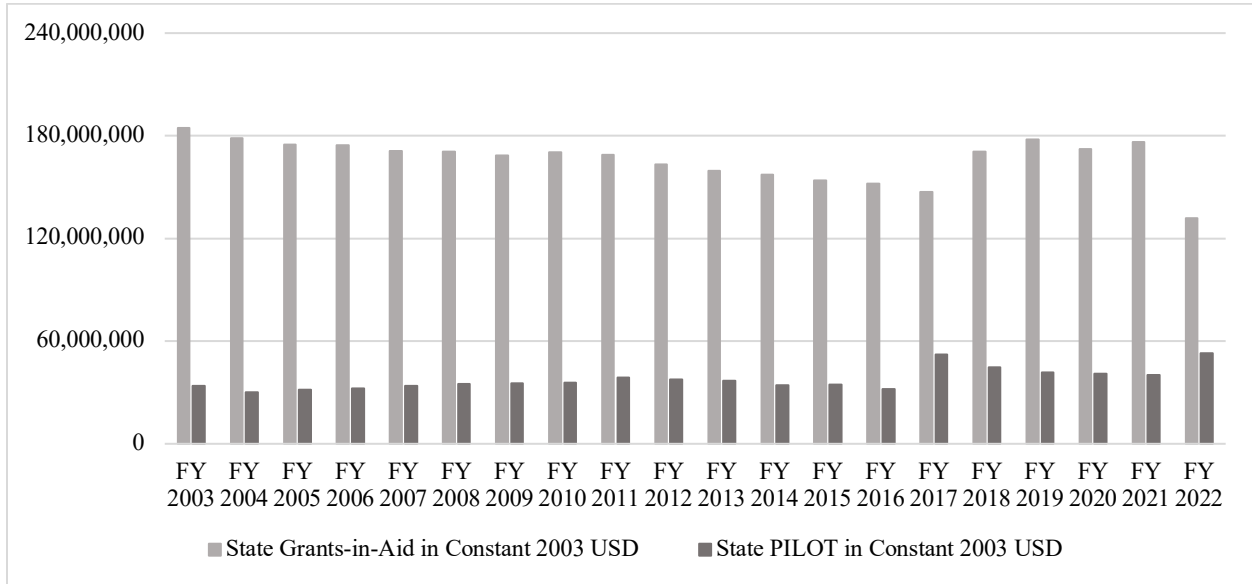


Figure 5-9. State Grants to Hartford by Category

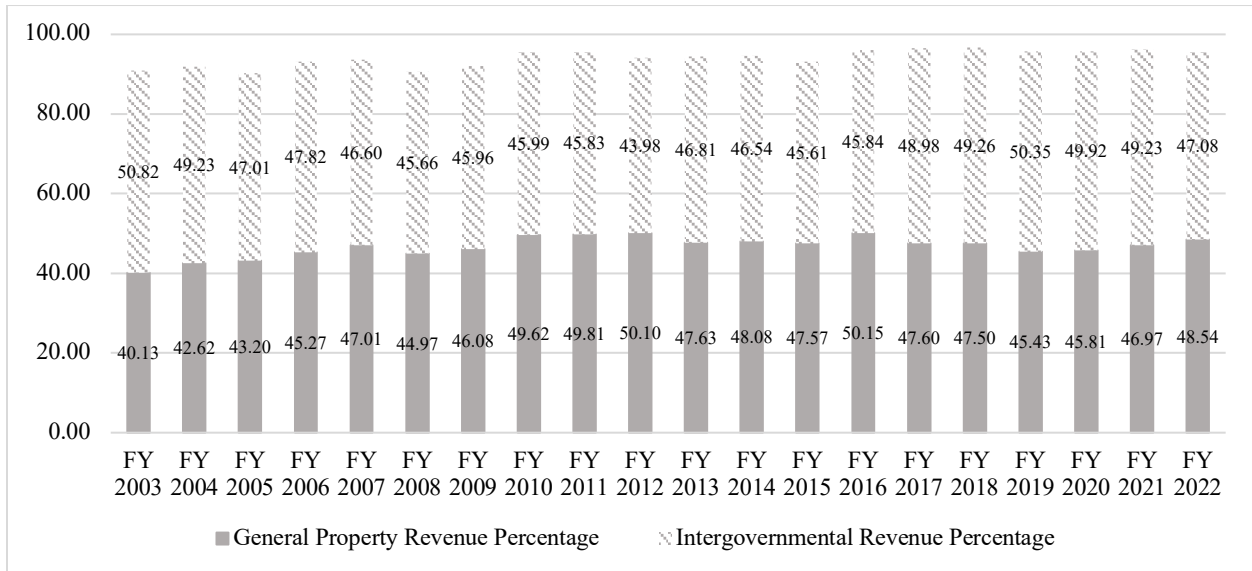


Figure 5-10. Hartford General Fund Revenues from Two Largest Sources by Percentage

The big picture of Hartford’s General Fund revenues is striking as the figure above clarifies. As the figure above shows, the two largest sources of revenues amount to over 90 percent of the General Fund in all years between fiscal year 2003 and fiscal year 2022: property

taxes and intergovernmental transfers. Hartford does not levy sales taxes and income taxes even though the state does. This fact neatly encapsulates Hartford's problem as an independent municipality. First, the city relies heavily on property taxes and intergovernmental transfers. Second, the reliance on property taxes is problematic when coupled with decreasing or stagnating net Grand List and the proliferation of tax-exempt properties. The city is forced to respond by raising the mill rate, which the economic style of reasoning would argue renders it uncompetitive. Third, the reliance on intergovernmental transfers is problematic when we consider the fact that the state has not been responsive to Hartford's needs. PILOT and grants-in-aid, though large in sums, have fluctuated much over the years, making it that much harder for Hartford to make the budgets. So far, I have expounded upon the various revenues Hartford obtains, which presents only half of the complete story of the city's budgets. In the next section, I further explicate Hartford's fiscal situation within the context of its expenditures, elucidating how the fiscal crisis came to be between 2016 and 2018.

B. Hartford's Fiscal Situation during through Segarra and Bronin Administrations

Hartford follows Connecticut's fiscal year, which means Mayor Luke Bronin's first budget in office was the one adopted for fiscal year 2017, beginning on July 1, 2016. In his first budget message, Bronin states the city faced a \$48.5 million deficit as it produced its adopted budget, blaming the previous Segarra administration for borrowing heavily (City of Hartford 2-1). He goes on to say that the fiscal year 2017 budget "makes drastic cuts in city departments... and substantially reduces or eliminates funding for a wide range of programs and services," saving the city \$18.6 million (City of Hartford 2-1). Bronin adds that without successfully renegotiating union contracts, the city will end the year with a deficit of \$16.5 million. This doom and gloom

contrasts with the optimistic tone of the fiscal year 2016 budget message in which Mayor Pedro Segarra listed major achievements in bullet points: “A General Fund Expense Appropriation [...] decrease of \$18.2 million from the FY2015 Adopted Budget; No Mill Rate increase; No reduction in essential city services; No layoffs in any department (City of Hartford 2015:2-1).” So, who is right? Who paints a more accurate picture?

Looking at the General Fund balance of the actual budgets in Figure 5-11, we see Hartford’s budget reflects the uncertainty of revenue projections. It widely fluctuates year to year, from a \$634,441 deficit in fiscal year 2013 to a deep trough of a \$13.6 million deficit in fiscal year 2014 to a \$7.6 million surplus in 2015. In short, both Segarra and Bronin are correct in their assessment of the city’s fiscal health: it differs each year. It is, however, hard to take Bronin’s gloomy words at face value when we standardize the General Fund balance for comparison. Figure 5-12 shows that even at its worst in fiscal year 2014, the deficit amounts to 2.55 percent of the revenue. The City of Hartford is not comparable to the U.S. federal government in the amount of fiscal leverage it can wield, but in 2014, the federal government recorded a deficit of 2.76 percent of the entire national GDP (U.S. Office of Management and Budget and Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis 2023).

Bronin may argue that the deficit of 1.43 percent of the revenue in fiscal year 2016 is the mitigated figure from many cuts and a successful round of negotiations with the city’s labor unions. Had there been no efforts to alleviate the problem from the city hall, the deficit would certainly have been larger. In fact, he makes an argument for state assistance for fiscal year 2017 by putting the initial amount of deficit into a new perspective:

Let me begin by saying this – the city of Hartford faces a full-blown fiscal crisis. After getting under the hood and testing every budget number, we currently project a fiscal year 2017 deficit of \$48.5 million. That’s almost 20% of our non-education budget (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1088).

In his words, the deficit is “massive and catastrophic (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1088).” Moreover, Bronin may point to the continuous decrease in the real value of the General Fund revenue from 2011 to 2016 as Figure 5-13 demonstrates. In this, Hartford once again mirrors Detroit, which saw “a slow bleed” that “gradually drain[ed] more and more of the city’s finances” over a longer stretch of time (Bomey 18). The city’s General Fund revenue standardized in 2003 U.S. dollars managed to recover and grow in real value in 2018, but it has yet to surpass the high point of 2011 to this day. In this sense, the deficits in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 were certainly not advantageous to the city government in making its budgets work. Fiscal crisis it was, but the question is whether this was something that warranted a special oversight board to manage the city’s financial affairs as municipal and state actors deliberate in next two sections.

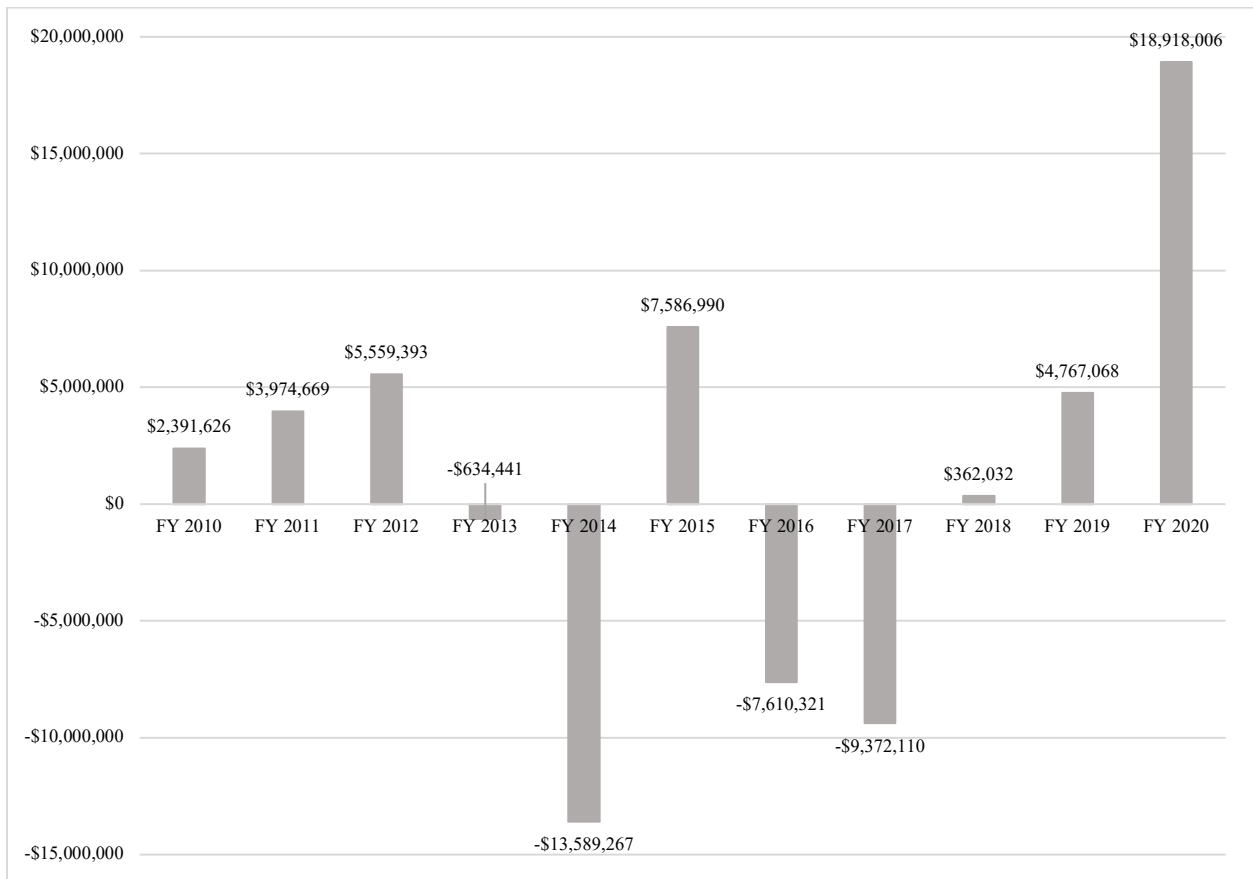


Figure 5-11. Hartford General Fund Balance

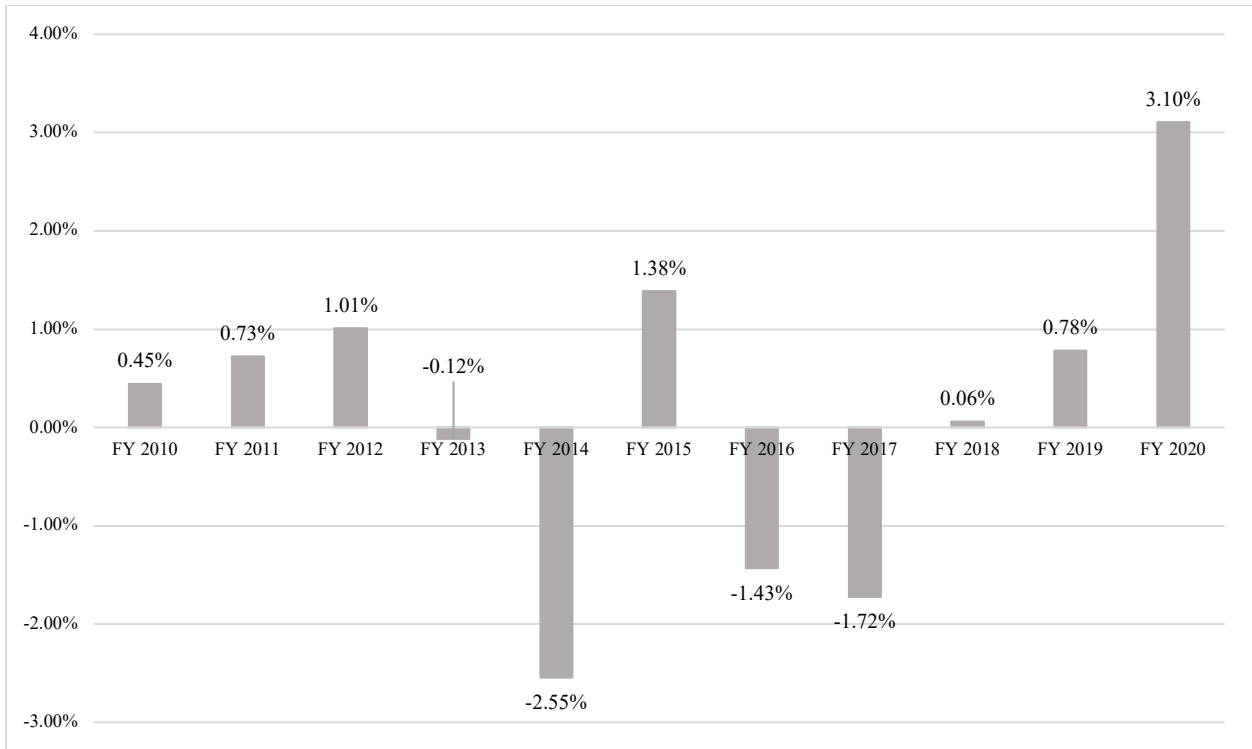


Figure 5-12. Hartford General Fund Balance to Revenue Ratio in Percentage

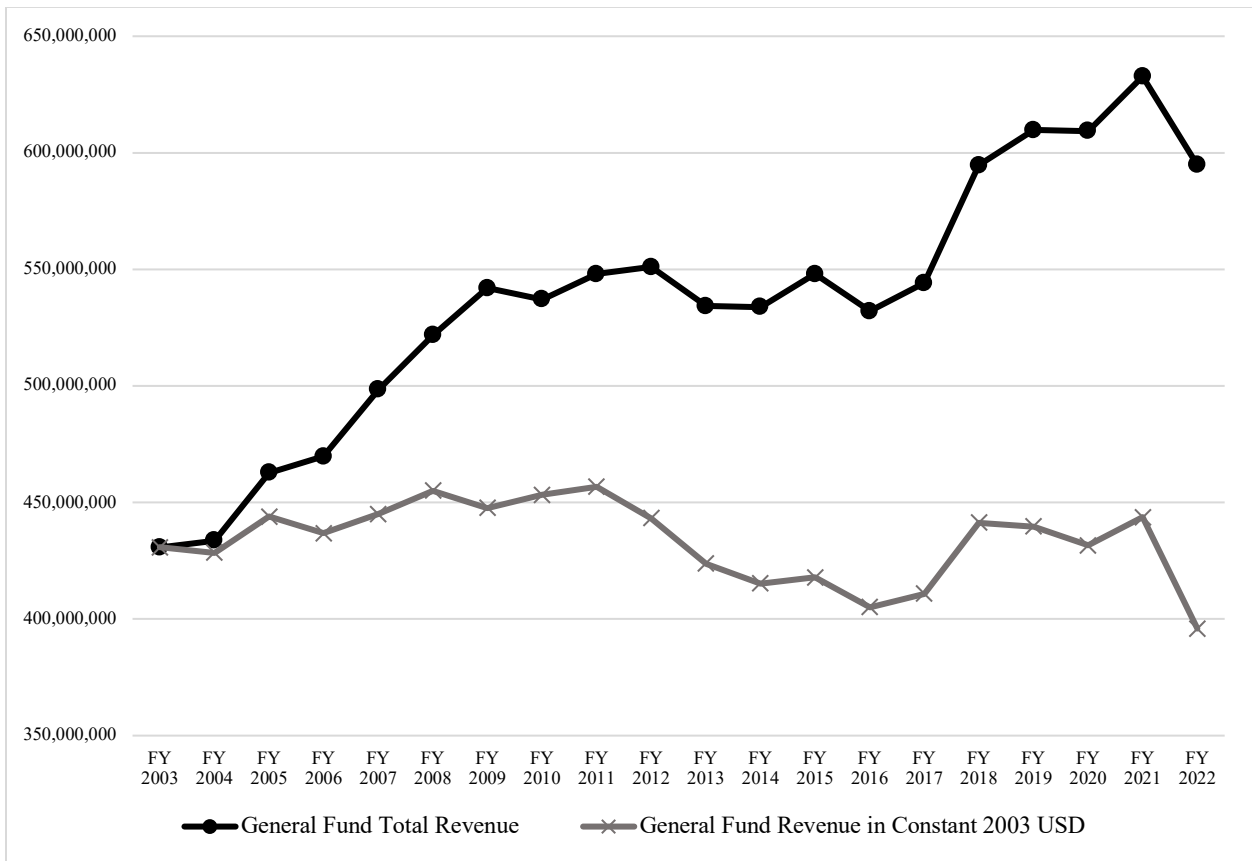


Figure 5-13. Hartford General Fund Total Revenue, 2003-2022

At this point, it is worth looking into what the city spends its money on. Education takes the bulk, utilizing half the available funding (see Figure 5-14). In fiscal year 2016, Hartford Public Schools spent \$441.57 million in total including the \$284.01 million the district received from the city. Out of this, \$232.88 million or 52.73 percent of the funding went toward paying salaries, and an additional \$61.42 million or 13.91 percent of the funding went toward fringe benefits (Schiavino-Narvaez 2016:13). In other words, the school district spends all of the education funding set aside by the city on wages and benefits, which are fixed costs.

Operating expenditures, a combination of public safety expenditures and others, utilize the next largest chunk of the funding at approximately a quarter. Public safety expenditures take up about two-thirds of the total operating expenditures. Benefits and insurance expenditures for city employees take the distant third place, and it varies year to year, as does debt service. If we exclude the portion of the funding that goes toward education, we can see much more in detail where the money goes. In general, non-public safety expenditures stagnate whereas benefits and insurance and debt service oscillate extensively, as Figure 5-15 illustrates. Debt service is particularly interesting as it offers a concrete example of a previous administration's profligacy or parsimony. There does appear to be certain truths to Bronin's words when he blames previous administrations, including Segarra, for spending too much as debt service spikes from 1.78 percent of the expenditures in fiscal year 2015 to 17.46 percent in fiscal year 2021.

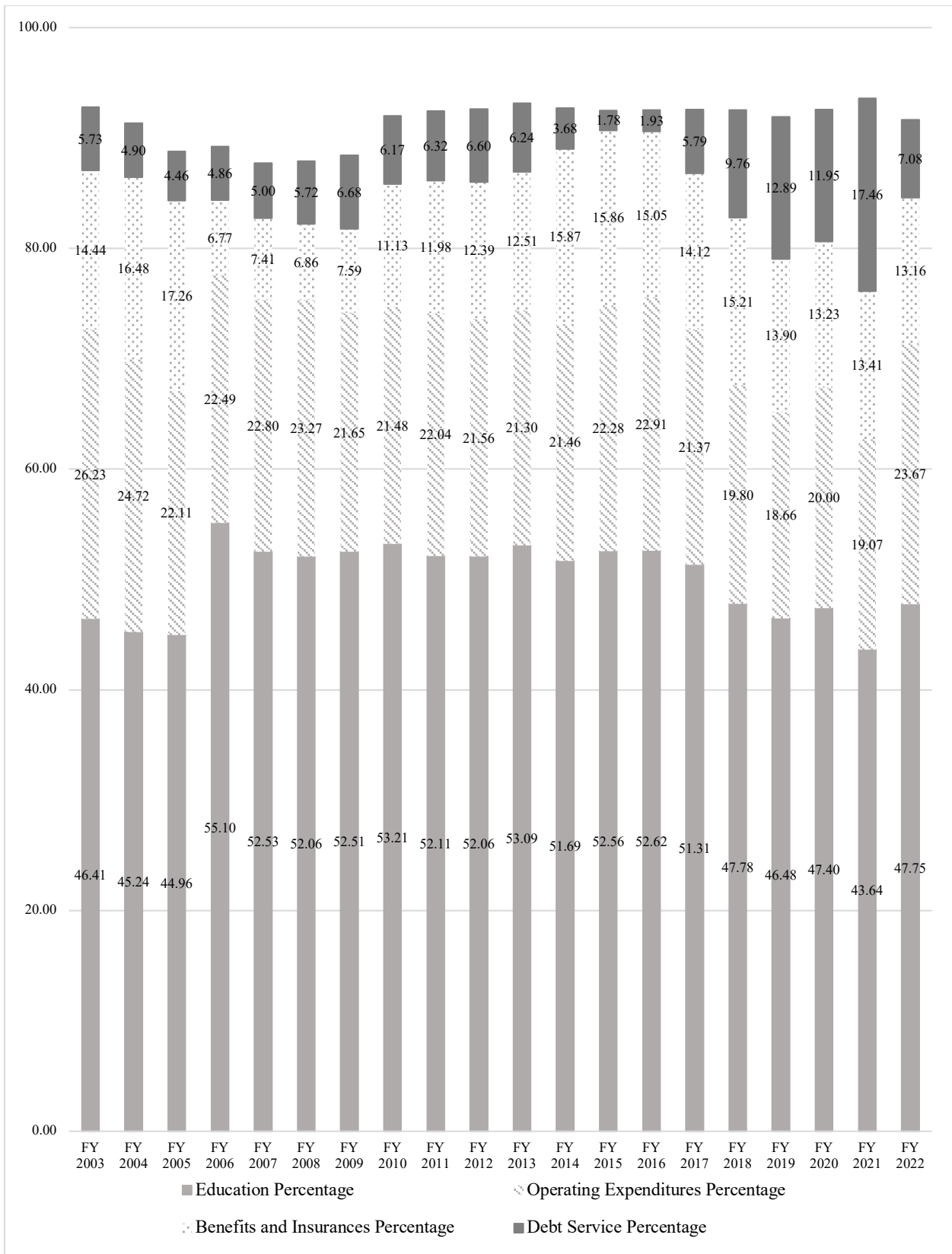


Figure 5-14. Hartford General Fund Expenditures from Four Largest Sources by Percentage

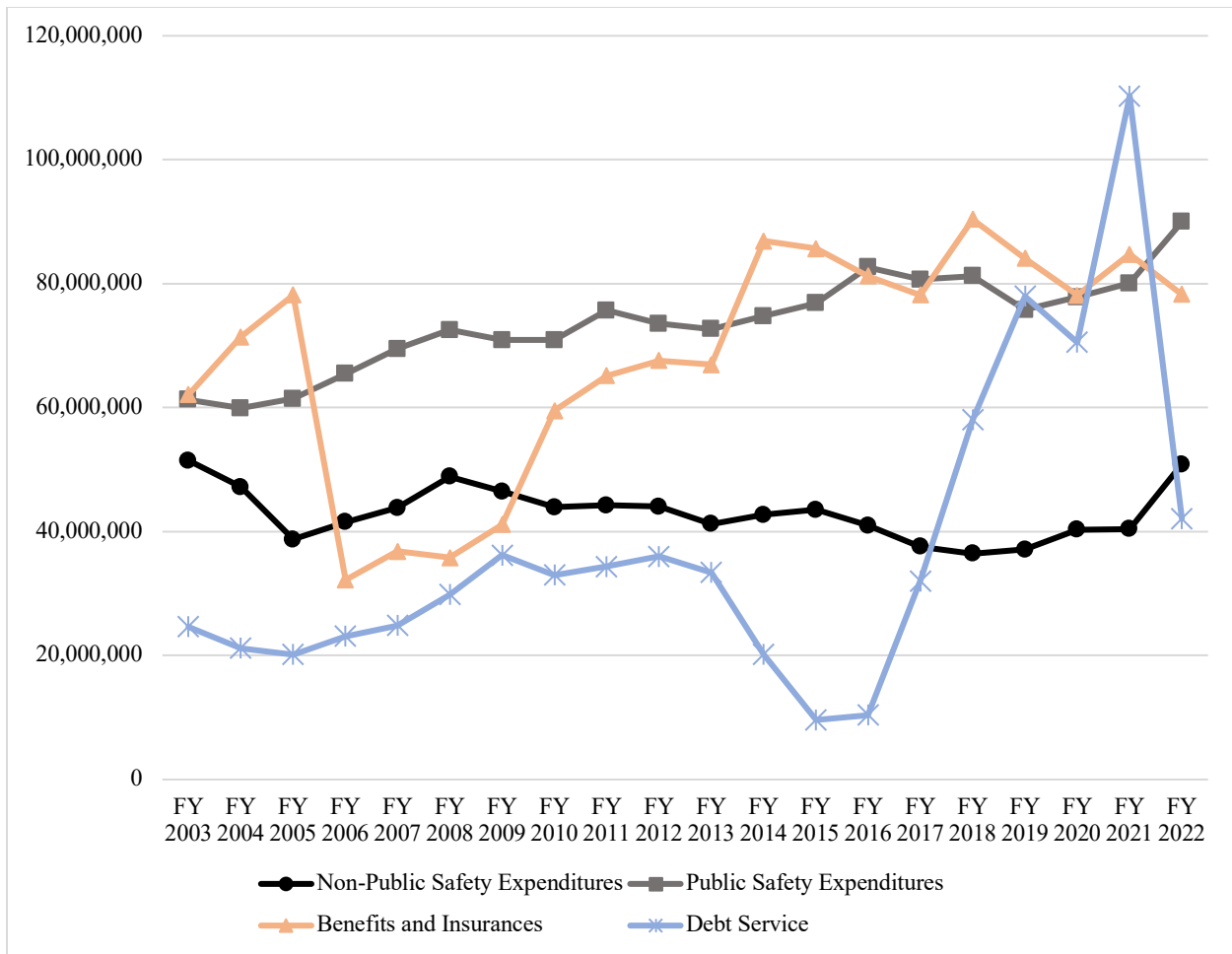


Figure 5-15. Non-Education Expenditures of the City of Hartford

One notable aspect of the city’s appropriations is the increasing public safety expenditures. They witnessed increase nearly every year in the twenty-year period between fiscal year 2003 and fiscal year 2022. What started out in the \$60 million range ended up increasing by 50 percent to \$90 million. The budget for the police went from \$34.60 million or 8.05 percent of the General Fund expenditures to \$50.04 million or 8.41 percent of the General Fund expenditures, increasing the funding level even as the city experienced anemic growth of the annual General Fund Revenue. This trend corresponds well with militarization of law enforcement agencies in the United States in the same period, which has led to heavy investments in policing in cities with growing Latino population like Hartford (Vargas and

McHarris 2016:8-14) and the enhanced availability of surplus military equipment (Delehanty, Mewhirter, Welch, and Wilks 2017:1-2). In fact, during the public hearings discussed in next sections, public safety expenditures are never once brought up as an item to be cut by either municipal or state political actors. Thus, operating expenditures along with education funding are fixed costs that cannot be pared back without risking political fallout. Reneging on debt service would mean an uncontrolled bankruptcy, inviting economic turmoil. The only substantial appropriations that can be trimmed in a politically expedient manner is the money spent on benefits and insurance. And every municipal actor involved in the process of budget talks understands this. While neither municipal political actors nor state legislators vilify city employees' unions to the degree the state legislators do state employees' union, the budget spent on benefits and insurance becomes a target for renegotiations and cuts.

To this point, I have proven that Hartford's fiscal health is invariably tied to Connecticut's fiscal health. In the previous chapter, I investigated the extent of fiscal distress Connecticut found itself in during the 2010s. The Great Recession and the stagnant growth of revenue have contributed to a protracted fiscal malady Connecticut has experienced in recent years. And malady is the perfect term to describe the chronic and increasingly frequent financial flare-ups the state has endured. This has necessarily led to consistent underpayment of PILOT to Hartford. At the same time, the federal government has become tightfisted in direct transfers to Connecticut due to its own fiscal problems. This continued the movement to restrict intergovernmental transfers from the federal government (Pacewicz 2016b:265, 267-268), reversing the tacit fiscal contract between the federal government and local governments to pay for local functions using federal money following the Great Depression (Monkkonen 32, 116).

Add to the intergovernmental dysfunction and fragmentation the city's inexorable decline from the unraveling of the Fordist order and the Keynesian state (Piore and Sabel 170-174, 183), and we get a fiscal crisis. Hartford has become peripheralized, losing population (see Chapter 2) and businesses (see Chapter 3) just as Detroit has, and its revenue collection has stagnated or decreased over many years. With limited amount of revenue to fulfill all obligations, Hartford has slid into a bona fide – though the extent is up for debate – fiscal crisis between 2016 and 2018. This is the background in which we locate and analyze the languages of municipal actors, Mayor Bronin and the city council especially, as they attempt to sway state legislators.

C. The Debate Surrounding 2016 S.B. No. 464

In this section, I examine the public hearing testimonials for 2016 S.B. No. 464 An Act Establishing the Hartford Financial Sustainability Commission. The bill was the direct result of Mayor Bronin publicizing Hartford's fiscal trouble in January 2016 on his inauguration day (Mahoney 2016). Therefore, the bill specified Hartford as the city that would be subsumed under the review of a sustainability commission. The Hartford Sustainability Commission would be comprised of the mayor, the Secretary of Connecticut's Office of Policy and Management, the city treasurer, the president of the city council, the chair of the Council Committee on Operations, Management, and Budget as well as four members appointed by the mayor, one of which would be the chief executive officer of the union representing the city's employees (Senate 2016). The commission would have the right to review financial plans of the city and the power to approve or reject all collective bargaining agreements for a new term. At a bare minimum, the commission would not terminate until the city has maintained a positive balance for three consecutive fiscal years.

During the testimonials, the mayor's economic style of reasoning clashed with the moral imperative argument of the city council, the city treasurer, and the city employees' unions. Meanwhile, state legislators agreed with the mayor in his economic style of reasoning. The public hearing on March 28 was an emotional and passionate affair. Despite the staid beginning, municipal political actors came out in droves to defend their interests. In the process, I explain further that they also employed what correspond to the neoliberal and Keynesian languages seen in Chapter 4.

Mayor Luke Bronin

First, we start with Mayor Luke Bronin. From the outset, he is the definition of a political insider and a perfect electoral candidate. Educated at Yale followed by a stint at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar and Yale Law School, he worked for Governor Malloy as a general counsel from January 2013 to December 2014 (Bednarz 2013) and started his mayoral campaign when he was only 35 (Cohen 2015). He served in Afghanistan as a Naval reservist in 2010 and 2011. He is married to a tenured professor at the University of Connecticut Law School and has three children (Pazniokas 2014). His pedigree is the diametric opposite to Pedro Segarra's. Segarra was born in Puerto Rico, grew up poor in the Bronx, and became the city's first openly gay mayor when his predecessor Eddie Perez resigned in disgrace following a bribery and extortion conviction (Carlesso 2010).

Reflecting his political insider status and his education at Yale Law School, which has seen an influx of endowments for increasing the size of economics faculty members from conservative foundations dedicated to free market capitalism and neoliberal ideals (Teles 2008:183-200), Bronin is an advocate for the economic style of reasoning. He appeared on a

news program on Fox61 on October 11, 2015, three weeks before the mayoral election. During the program, he reiterated his commitment to fighting crime and investing in policing, which prompted one of the anchors to ask:

AL TERZI: Well, when people hear candidates talk about investments, right away they figure that that's higher taxes. Uh, is it likely that the taxes are gonna have to go up to do all these things?

LUKE BRONIN: No, it--it--it's not higher taxes, it's smarter choices. And I've made clear there are some--there's some room to find efficiencies in the municipal budget. I also think there's a lot of room to be more effective in advocating for our city at the state capitol (Fox61 2015:00:05:15).

Bronin is a Democrat. Yet, his language is steeped in the economic style of reasoning that matches up well with neoliberalism. Higher taxes are to be avoided at all costs; there is always a new way to boost efficiency in the form of cuts in the municipal budget. It is reasonable to characterize him as a fiscally conservative Democrat, a product of political discourse in which the economic style of reasoning has become the dominant way of understanding and implementing public policy. As Berman states, the economic style in governance has found great advocates among center-left more so than the right (13). Indeed, Bronin's view merely reflects that of the well-educated professionals who form a bulk of the Democratic electorate today (McQuarrie S124, S127). These voters tend to hold conservative views on fiscal and economic issues even though they stand on a more liberal side regarding social issues (Brint 1985:407-410).

As the incoming mayor, Bronin's foremost concern is the budget, and the city's deficit and the extant debt burden interact with each other to create a perfect storm. At the hearing on March 28, he begins by informing the state legislators on this interplay of debt and deficit that he perceives poses an unavoidable problem for the city:

And without fundamental changes, it gets worse in the years ahead. Because of debt restructuring in the past, our debt payments will rise by tens of millions of dollars in the next few years even if we don't borrow another dollar. The gap will soon be so big that even if we eliminated our entire police department and our entire fire department, we would still have a deficit. We cannot raise

the mill rate across the board in a city with a mill rate of 74. A property tax rate that is about twice most surrounding towns. To do so would kill the city of Hartford — maybe slowly, maybe quickly, but surely (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1089).

In his mind, deficit looms as the most important matter relating to the city's operation, enough to posit a hypothetical in which the city is forced to shutter public safety institutions to pay for its debt load. At the same time, he argues that the city cannot raise the mill rate any higher than 74.29, implying that doing so would devastate the city as the higher mill rate would further render it unattractive to newcomers and new businesses. This view can trace its lineage back to Charles Tiebout's famous 1956 article on how to improve the allocation of governmental resources by increasing residential mobility (423-424). Tiebout analyzes the political problem of resource allocation through an economic lens with a particular focus on general equilibrium and micro-level choice. Assuming a condition in which a resident is fully capable of knowing all available choices in local governments and is fully mobile, they would vote with their feet, moving to a town that minimizes taxation and maximizes social welfare.

It is noteworthy the term Tiebout uses for the hypothetical resident is a consumer-voter (417). It implicitly introduces the notion that (a) social welfare produced by the government is a consumable product just like any other goods produced in the private sector, and (b) the fundamental principle undergirding our society is economics. To Bronin and other fiscally conservative Democrats who trade in the economic style of reasoning, this is the most natural and most accurate way of framing the world. The assumption is that if the city tries to raise the mill rate, the consumer-voters of Hartford would vote with their feet and abandon the city.

Bronin proceeds to state that the city faces a choice, an inflection point in its history. And the right choice is to pass the bill at the state legislature, form the sustainability commission, and renegotiate the contract with the city employees' unions. But he emphasizes this bill is not to exclude anyone from the process of saving the city from bankruptcy:

The bill would give us tools to take responsibility to ensure that *all stakeholders in Hartford are a part of the solution* and to get our house in order. The bill would establish a financial sustainability commission which would serve as the arbitration panel if we are unable to reach agreements with our municipal unions (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1089; italics added for emphasis).

Here, we see the economic style of reasoning effortlessly melding with the neoliberal language of partnership. Yet, partnership does not mean an equal relationship. The mayor envisions other groups falling into line with his agenda, a public consensus driven by a neoliberal desire to implement austerity across the city (Brenner and Theodore 2002:20-21). He addresses the city employees' unions in an appeal:

I have the deepest respect for public employees and for labor, and I have profound respect for those of you who serve in uniform in our police departments and fire services. You put your life on the line to make our communities and our citizens safer and there is no city in the country that could possibly compensate you adequately for the risks that you take on our behalf. But defeating this bill will not make things better or easier for anyone. The challenge we face is so big that we must begin to contemplate paths forward that would in other times be unthinkable (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1092).

The main part of Bronin's appeal is on sharing the burden of restructuring the city's budget. His definition of partnership hinges upon relevant partners like the city employees' unions and non-profits sharing the burden, which is the most efficient and politically expedient way of handling the deficit:

There will be cuts. The cuts will be deep but there's a limit to how much you can cut when you're only providing basic services already. If we can't find substantial savings in our contract, then there will have to be even deeper cuts, I think cuts that are so deep that they're irresponsible, that we cannot sustain them. And as I said in testimony, that leaves us in a position where we may not be able to close the gap. Now a part of this is also giving us the tools to get our largest institutions and our non-profits to the table and ask them to be part of the solution. I don't think they will come to the table in the absence of a broader effort to share the burden of restructuring city government (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1094).

He goes on to list concrete items to cut:

What we need to do is number one, obtain as much savings as we can through changes to contract. That will be in salary, it will be in benefits, it will be in pension. *These are prospective changes going forward, [...] not changing pensions earned.* We'll have to obtain as much savings as we can then. In some cases, I think that means looking at the numbers of employees in a particular department. I'm not just talking about police and fire; I'm talking across the board. The vast majority of our costs are in personnel, that's the nature of any municipal government and

certainly the vast majority of the costs that we can in any way control. So, there will have to be changes in contract benefits, there will have to be beyond that, cuts that are still extremely deep. There is no way to move forward without cuts that the — in services that the city currently provides (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1099-1100; italics added for emphasis).

To Bronin, austerity is a foregone conclusion, which highlights the inherent assumption of the neoliberal perspective in contextualizing Hartford's situation in his testimonial. The only way to fight the deficit is to cut and cut some more; austerity is good, spending is bad (Blyth 2013:9). But it is the city workers who are expected to bear most of the cost associated with austerity, which amounts to redistribution of city's fiscal problem onto workers (Peck 2014:20). Further, while emphasizing the importance of partnership under his banner, Bronin seeks to sow a division within the city employees, specifically between those who are still working versus those who are retired. According to his plan, the salary, the benefits, and the pensions of those who still work are on the chopping block whereas the retirees are spared. A division would soften the union for negotiations, and by emphasizing partnership among all groups of interest, Bronin seeks to rouse civic spirit to lessen their aversion to budget cuts.

But Bronin's appeal for partnership and burden sharing is not limited to Hartford interest groups. His appeal extends to the Greater Hartford Region and the suburbs that rely on Hartford. First, he describes the conundrum Hartford faces vis-à-vis the surrounding region:

The city of Hartford is less than 18 square miles – more than half of our property is tax-exempt. We are home to state government and to non-profits that serve the region and the state but which pay no taxes to the city of Hartford. We house a vastly disproportionate share of the region's social service providers, halfway houses, shelters, and clinics, and we serve neighborhoods that are among the poorest in the nation. Hartford's tax base is simply not adequate to support what we must do as a city (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1091).

As I have clarified previously, Hartford does suffer from its limited size and a limited tax base.

Bronin goes on to explain what he envisions as the future of Hartford:

Yes, I am asking you to support this bill, but we need to have a much bigger conversation about how we can build Connecticut cities into vibrant strong urban centers. Cities that will help us keep our young people close to home, cities that will help us attract the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs. Cities that will help Connecticut compete for the largest employers

in the world, not lose them. Cities where we don't have thousands of men and women standing in line for hours on a Saturday before Easter to compete for a few part-time jobs at a ballpark because there are so few jobs to be found. Hartford is the economic and cultural center of a region of more than a million people and every town in the region has a stake, not only in Hartford's survival but in Hartford's success. (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1091).

Later, he adds:

We cannot compete with the Louisvilles and the Pittsburghs and the Atlantas and the Charlottes and on and on around this country if we don't figure out how to stop duplicating costs across every single one of our 169 towns (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1107).

Here, we see another instance of the growth imperative applied to the city's problem in the economic style of reasoning. Economic growth can lead to tax base growth as it is associated with increasing population and thriving businesses. Still, it is no easy feat for Hartford to grow out of its fiscal problem given that its economy is developed, deindustrialized, and located well away from the Sun Belt (Glaeser and Tobio 34-35). Hartford simply cannot expect to grow like developing economies do. In fact, degrowth politics, which emphasizes stabilizing the shrinking economy and improving the residents' quality of life over chasing an elusive growth, may be more suitable for Hartford as it is for Detroit (Schindler 2016:826-832). Nonetheless, Bronin offers regional integration as a panacea, something that would allow Hartford to compete for jobs and people against larger cities like Atlanta and Charlotte.

But the defense of regional integration is still couched in the economic style of reasoning that pervades through Bronin's testimonial. This is especially evident when he is challenged by Representative Christopher Davis (R-57):

How do you explain, for instance, to my constituents [...] how do we respond to the idea that you have now come before us after [...] the State of Connecticut giving tremendous amounts of money to the City of Hartford over many, many years. [...] [T]his is the responsibility of the city of Hartford, why does it have to be the responsibility of the state of Connecticut to step in and take over? (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1114)

Here, Representative Davis is ignoring the relationality of Hartford's crisis with suburban prosperity. Continuing suburbanization (Quillian 23; Jackson 284) resulted in a spatial mismatch

of good jobs and people who need jobs (Wilson 49; Holzer, Lane, Rosenblum, and Andersson 2011:143-147; Desan and Steinmetz 2015:21), which has led to enrichment of Hartford's suburbs at the expense of the city. At the same time, as Bronin argues, the city provides vital services that suburbs do not. By framing the fiscal crisis as a neoliberal morality issue of unfettered spending (Peck 19) while overlooking the series of political and economic decisions that led to suburbanization (see Chapter 3), Davis seeks to minimize the state's role in assisting Hartford. Moreover, Davis neatly demarcates suburbanites and urbanites, stressing the division that benefits his argument. To this, Bronin replies:

Because Hartford's success or failure will be very quickly reflected in your town's success or failure. If we decline, that decline will be reflected in home prices, in home sales, in unemployment numbers – in all of the surrounding towns. [...] If we don't start thinking of our economic fates as linked, we will not win the war (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1116-1117).

We can clearly see that, whether deliberate or unwitting, Bronin fails to move past the economic style of reasoning. Hartford's failure leads to economic decline of the surrounding region including Davis's district. The decline inevitably affects the price of real estate properties, which should concern all. It is interesting to note, however, that beneath the economic style of reasoning also lurks neoliberal morality just as Davis's argument does. The image Bronin draws is that of a crusader waging a war against the evil deficit and those who stand in the way – the city employees' unions. Bronin expects regionalism would gain him crucial allies to wage that war and help stimulate economic growth in the moribund city.

Beyond the talk of partnership and shared burden, Bronin does not hide or obfuscate that the city employees' unions are the primary antagonist in his vision of the fight to eliminate deficit. In fact, he argues that it is necessary to weaken collective bargaining in order to accomplish his goal:

There are many versions of collective bargaining. Connecticut's is not the only one. [...] [I]n many states in New England, arbitration panels have no ability to impose a result on a city when it comes to financial matters. Even, for example, in the state of Rhode Island, which does not have a reputation as being an unfriendly state to organize labor, there is no binding arbitration on financial matters. In many other New England states, there are alternative processes where the legislative body of the city retains the ultimate say on whether an agreement that imposes costs on the taxpayers of that city goes forward. So, what I propose is quite clearly a change for a limited period of time to what has been the traditional arbitration process in Connecticut. But as mentioned, it's not unprecedented, it's based on what has been done in other Connecticut cities in times of crisis. It's for a short period of time and it's a response to a dire crisis where the alternatives are worse (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1098-1099).

Again, this is tantamount to redistribution of the deficit onto city workers. By rendering arbitrators ineffectual in enforcing the results of the arbitration, the Mayor's Office can in theory hold out and shop for an outcome it desires. In Bronin's case, it would be to slash the benefits further. The weakening of the right to collective bargaining, a neoliberal solution to a neoliberal problem, is the culmination of his plan to save Hartford from a fiscal crisis.

Bronin's assertion and attendant language are aggressive enough to make Democratic state legislators uncomfortable. As I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, Democratic legislators with a few exceptions favor the outward appearance of harmony borne of neoliberal partnership, and they talk like it. Senator Fonfara (D-1) intervenes during Bronin's testimonial and calls for an amicable conclusion to the bill's passage:

But I think it's important that whatever we do here that it be credible and hopefully supported – it may not be enthusiastic support – that is supported by all parties. I hope that between now and when this bill has to be acted upon either favorably or otherwise, that, that – those conversations will take place that all parties recognize that the taxpayers of Hartford, of which many of whom I represent. And so, this is a delicate situation that I hope responsible people will come to the table and recognize the greater good and that means sacrifice on everyone's part [...] as our Governor said some time ago when the state was facing a prior crisis, that it's about shared responsibility and shared sacrifice (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1096).

Even so, he must admit that some interest groups are less likely than others to come out with enthusiastic support of the bill. Still, the main point of Fonfara's statement is the importance of shared sacrifice among pertinent interest groups. This advocacy for neoliberal partnership is entirely compatible with the economic style of reasoning, and Fonfara is not chastising Bronin

for his aggressive plan. In fact, by emphasizing the need for shared sacrifice, Fonfara buys into the argument for austerity that frames much of Bronin's testimonial.

But what happens when the interest groups refuse to share the burden on this delicate matter? Representative Angel Arce (D-4) has a lesson for all:

I wouldn't want to see this city go into bankruptcy. I wouldn't want to see the city go – become another Detroit. And I—I'm very concerned about that, and I'm hoping that all parties could come into an agreement. I think it's important that all parties sits (*sic*) and hopefully come up with some kind of agreement that will save our city (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1101).

The largest municipal bankruptcy in American history makes Detroit an easy target for politicians to make an example out of when they seek to push neoliberal policies on the unwilling (Desan and Steinmetz 18-20). Arce is agreeing with Bronin that a drastic measure is necessary to "right the ship." Arce brings up an anecdote about an indigent mother, which further compels this narrative:

A pregnant woman, nowhere to live, living under a bridge. Those are some of the things that are happening in our city. A pregnant woman living under a bridge. I know that Hartford is in big financial crisis and I'm hoping that all parties – council, unions, Mayor's Office – can sit down and come up with some kind of resolution, a solution, on this matter. [...] I'm hoping that talks get on the way because the last thing I want to see is more pregnant womans (*sic*) under a bridge [...] (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1102).

A closer examination shows that this story proves the opposite of what Bronin and Arce are advocating for. The city, racked with poverty, requires more social spending, not less. What Bronin is arguing for would cut funding for services evaluated as unessential, which excludes public safety but includes welfare. But what Arce is doing is comparing the poor to the city, to emphasize the city's plight to push for a policy that would supposedly help fix its dire situation. Representative Russell Morin (D-28) further advances this narrative of comparing the city to the poor when he adds:

You know, Representative Arce's talking about a homeless person. I personally volunteer at South Park at a homeless shelter. I understand the need. I've had Senator Fonfara in there, I know he's gone in and spoken to the people and that does create – it's kind of a catch-22 because you're

providing services for the people that really need it and the people that are down on their luck, but it also does not generate anything for the city (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1105).

Neoliberal morality in this narrative is clear. The city is down on its luck, and the reason for it is its profligacy. It has spent more than its means. It needs help to get sober, to get clean, to become a productive member of the state once again. That help can come in the form of S.B. No. 464 that creates a sustainability commission that supersedes many of the powers listed by the municipal charter. The city is its indigent who must be helped but also guided with a firm hand. At the same time, Morin’s statement is decidedly neoliberal in its approach to governance. A government is to be run like a corporation generating profits. The poor, who take from the government rather than contribute, add nothing of value to the city.

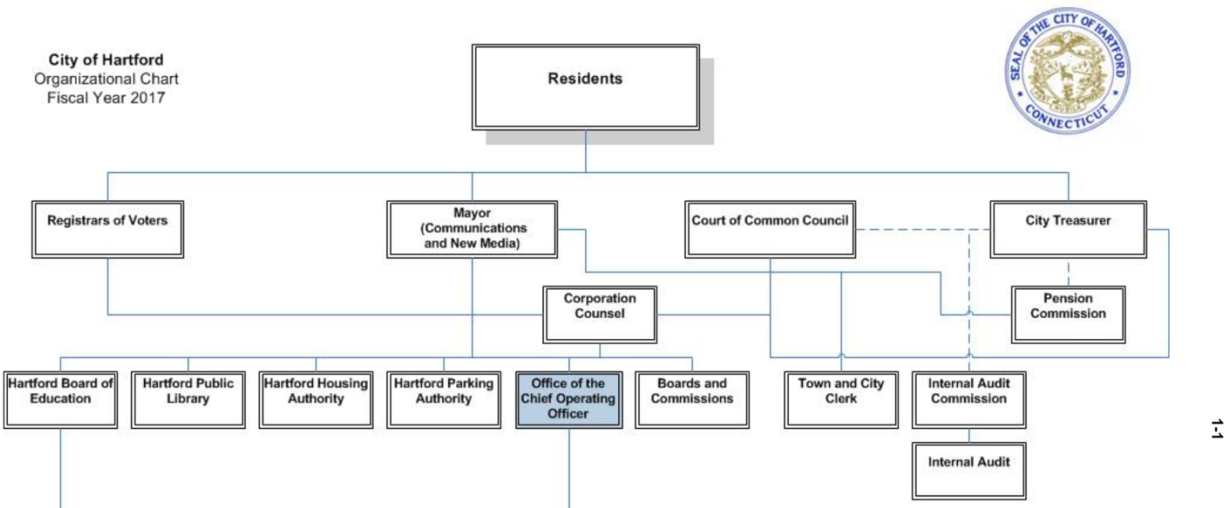


Figure 5-16. The Organizational Chart of Hartford for Fiscal Year 2017

As the figure above illustrates, each year’s budget book has an organizational chart at the beginning with Hartford’s residents on top as the head. Not all residents are created equal, however. The indigent, who take from the government rather than contribute, add nothing of value to the city and therefore can be excluded from the organizational chart. On the other hand, taxpayers and not the poor or the city workers are held up as valuable members of society. As Bronin puts it, the taxpayers are the true head of the city the officials must answer to:

I have an enormous amount of respect for everybody who goes into public service, and I have a deep, deep respect for everyone who puts their life on the line for our communities. In putting this bill forward, I mean no disrespect. But my highest obligation is to the taxpayers of the city of Hartford and to the future of the City of Hartford and to ensure that we can get the City of Hartford through a crisis and on a path to growth (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1105).

This is reminiscent of nineteenth-century American local governments that saw taxpayers as the only class of people invested in urban politics and therefore deemed eligible to participate (Einhorn 8-18). Even so, these officials cannot deny the will of their constituents to implement measures that run counter to it. This is where we find a paradox. If the residents are the head of Hartford and the city council represents their collective will, how does bypassing the city council work within the democratic polity? The language on the bill pertinent to this discussion is the following:

Sec. 4. (*Effective from passage*) (a) In carrying out the purposes of sections 1 to 11, inclusive, of this act, the commission shall have the following powers, duties and functions:

(1) To review and make recommendations to the mayor and council for any modifications to the city's annual budget, including, but not limited to, the governmental funds, enterprise funds and internal services funds, in accordance with the provisions of section 5 of this act, provided such modifications shall become effective if the city council does not act on or before its next regularly scheduled meeting to disapprove such modification with an affirmative of vote of five members of the council (Connecticut Senate).

But Bronin attempts to dodge the issue by citing a technicality when he is questioned by

Representative Dan Carter (R-2):

REPRESENTATIVE CARTER: [T]he part of this that I've been most interested in understanding is the concept of whether or not you're bypassing the council. And, you know, the way it's listed in the bill, it explains that the commission will make the rule, make whatever the ruling is, whatever the requirement will be, and the council will have to vote it down, basically, with a – with a vote of five to – I think there's nine on the council, is that correct?

MAYOR BRONIN: Correct.

REPRESENTATIVE CARTER: Why wasn't it written in place where the council would have consent – saying the council would have to consent with what the board said?

MAYOR BRONIN: I think in either circumstance, the will of the council prevails. The majority of the council determines whether to accept or reject that recommendation (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1110).

The commission retains the power to review and recommend modifications to the annual budget, which coincides with that of the city council. Moreover, unless the city council successfully intervenes, the recommendations made by the commission becomes the budget. In effect, this places the commission above the city council in terms of having the final say on the budget, giving it the ability to bypass the authority of the city council.

Overall, the term *fiscally conservative Democrat* describes Mayor Luke Bronin well. He is fully conversant in the neoliberal language of partnership that melds with the economic style of reasoning. He emphasizes the deficit as the most important issue in the city's operations. The failure to balance the budget is framed in moralistic terms, and Bronin prescribes austerity as the medicine to cure the city's failings. This austerity is to be borne by the city employees through budget cuts. Bronin's testimony is saturated with the economic style of reasoning that puts efficiency ahead of equity and justice, thereby providing him with the ideological means to defend and push for bypassing the city council in budget matters. As I show in the next section, the city council, on the other hand, stands at the opposite end of the spectrum, focusing on the moral imperative of what is owed to various Hartford interest groups.

The Court of Common Council and City Treasurer Cloud

The Court of Common Council, Hartford's city council, has nine councilmembers in total. Therefore, five votes are necessary to pass a resolution. In 2016, six members of the city council were Democrats, making the Democratic Party the majority party, whereas three members were affiliated with the Working Families Party, a left-wing minor political party.

Table 5-3. The Court of Common Council Members, 2016-2018

Party Affiliation	Title for 2016-17 Sessions	Name
Democratic Party	Council President	Thomas J. Clarke II
	Majority Leader	Julio A. Concepción
	Assistant Majority Leader	John Q. Gale
	Councilman	James Sánchez
	Councilwoman	Glendowlyn L. H. Thames
	Councilwoman	rJo Winch
Working Families Party	Minority Leader	Wildaliz Bermúdez
	Councilman	Larry Deutsch, MD
	Councilwoman	Cynthia R. Jennings

Source: The City of Hartford.

The Democratic councilmembers varied in their responses to S.B. No. 464 from passive disagreement to neutrality to ringing endorsement, but those who spoke out conversed in economic terms. Council President Thomas “TJ” Clarke II, a Bronin ally, said he disagreed with the bill and criticized Bronin for his bluntness with which he revealed the fiscal problem (Hartford Business Journal 18) but did not testify against him at the public hearing. In an interview with Hartford Business Journal, Clarke was quoted as worrying that Bronin’s frankness has brought too much negative attention including that from credit rating agencies (18). He emphasizes the aspect of the fiscal crisis that only involves actors from the financial sector and reveals the economic style of reasoning in his speech. Meanwhile, Assistant Majority Leader John Q. Gale, James Sánchez, and rJo Winch remained silent on the bill. Majority Leader Julio A. Concepción⁷ and Councilwoman Glendowlyn L. H. Thames diverged from their fellow councilmembers, presenting a resolution at the city council that supported Bronin “in his efforts

⁷ At the time, Concepción also served as the Vice President of Hartford Partnerships for the MetroHartford Alliance. Currently, he is the Executive Director of the Hartford Chamber of Commerce under the aegis of the MetroHartford Alliance.

in seeking Special Legislation that will give Hartford leadership more tools (Bazzano 2016b),” implicitly granting their approval on the bill and any financial and economic measures to follow.

All three members of the Working Families Party, however, came to the public hearing to express their disapproval of the bill. Their objections centered on three primary reasons: (1) that the commission would weaken the collective bargaining power of unions; (2) that the commission would be used to bypass the democratically elected municipal legislature, and; (3) that there are unexplored avenues for revenues that should be considered before implementing the bill. In the course of explaining their reasons for disapproval, the testifying councilmembers all employ the language of moral imperative, of what should be rather than what is the most efficient. For them, the question is, what is owed to Hartford, its workers, and its residents? This language of equity and justice is the diametric opposite of what Berman identifies as the economic style of reasoning.

Despite testifying *after* these councilmembers, Mayor Luke Bronin appears to mischaracterize the reasons for their objections. He notes:

The extent of the criticism is that there are those who have a stake in those negotiations serving on the panel, that is correct. And the reason that’s necessary is that we have to have some greater ability in a crisis like this to shape the ultimate outcome of contracts that will determine whether the City of Hartford can survive as an independent financial entity (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1098).

To reiterate, the sustainability commission would have the mayor, a departmental head of the State of Connecticut, the city treasurer, two city council members, and four members appointed by the mayor, one of which would be representing the union (Senate). The conflict of interest is inherent as some members like the union would benefit from the generous city budget, but it is a minor one that would be rectified by the fact that various interest groups are represented and would act as counterweights.

Instead, each testifying councilmember cites other reasons why they object to the bill starting with Minority Leader Wildaliz Bermúdez. She does not mince words when she speaks:

This bill seeks to weaken the collective bargaining provisions for city unions, possibly in violation of state and federal law. The mayor wants this commission to negotiate with the unions, and if that fails, he wants to send the contract into binding arbitration and give the commission the power to be the binding arbitration panel. I don't think it to be fair for the commission to be judge, jury, and executioner. Workers should be part of the solution (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1063).

As a child, Bermúdez was one of the plaintiffs in *Sheff v. O'Neill*, a 1989 lawsuit against William A. O'Neill, the then Democratic Governor of Connecticut (238 Conn. 1, 678 A.2d 1267 [1996]). The plaintiffs alleged children attending Hartford's public schools were suffering from lingering socioeconomic segregation and argued that the state, represented by Governor O'Neill, had "an affirmative obligation to desegregate the public schools (Long 2002:284)." The case reached the Connecticut Supreme Court where the justices ruled that the state did indeed have an affirmative obligation to create an environment of equal educational opportunity for Connecticut children (238 Conn. 1, 678 A.2d 1267). The case is mentioned at the beginning of Bermúdez's official biography in the City of Hartford webpage, which speaks volumes about her political ideology. In her testimony, she sees through the bill's intent, which is to weaken the right for city workers to negotiate contracts as a collective. She is adamant that workers must be included in resolving the fiscal problem.

Bermúdez is followed by Councilman Larry Deutsch whose official biography includes the line: "His present involvement in public affairs dates back to the childhood memories of community activities for civil rights and unnecessary wars (Bazzano 2016a)." He is a medical doctor who worked in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the Dominican Republic with Haitian refugees. In his testimony, he underscores the undemocratic nature of the bill:

Much power would be given to the small commission rather than a democratically elected city council and adherence to established rules for labor negotiation in the public and private sector (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1068).

Unlike Bronin whose main concern is the fiscal deficit and the outcome of labor negotiations, Deutsch's concern is with the process itself. While the economic style of reasoning seeks to realize the most efficient outcome possible, the language of equity and justice focuses on fairness of the process on top of fairness of the outcome. The question for Deutsch is whether the process of reaching a solution for the fiscal problem is objectively fair or not. Does the commission reflect the city's population composition? For Deutsch, the process is just as important as the outcome if not more:

We hope for your agreement that the process and results of negotiated agreements must be fair, just, and justified. Taxes fairly and progressively received in proportion to ability to pay and services delivered in proportion to need and all of our society's interest whether it be in Hartford or any other city or elsewhere in the state. In this bill, there are several aspects that we think contradict these principles of fairness that are written into tradition and state and city law as the minority leader just emphasized. You'll note that the designated membership on this commission is not sufficiently and democratically representative of the whole city – that means labor and businesses, political parties and a balance between the legislative branch that's city council and the executive – that's the Mayor. That's already been said, the balance is not quite right. Some details and facts have been well presented just now and there are solutions other than this special commission which avoids a fair and respectful negotiation. And tries also to avoid bankruptcy and receivership (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1068).

As a politician concerned with fairness of the process, he naturally turns to democracy and the protection of municipal home rule:

So, it is oppression. I think everyone in this room is here because we feel if it passes – if you approve this for Hartford, what will happen in many other towns and what will happen to the democracy that we all proclaim through our elected legislature? [...] So, I think it's the implications that we also have to look at very carefully and most of all, we emphasize the issue of democracy with a small D that it cannot be overturned because our city, right here where we're sitting, happens to have a fiscal difficulty like so many others across the country (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1077).

The term oppression is a hyperbole when referring to the state legislating to solve Hartford's fiscal problem. But for Deutsch whose concern for the fairness of the process outweighs the outcome of the bill, the term rings true. Imposing of the sustainability commission is a top-down

approach to solving the fiscal problem that would undermine the power of the elected city council. And Deutsch is of the position that even a minuscule part of the city council's power must not be diverted to the commission as it is not comprised of elected members. Deutsch's language is full of mentions of justice and fairness and contains no mention of economic efficiency, the shibboleth of Mayor Bronin and the Democratic legislators in the committee.

Here, we take a moment to analyze the testimony of City Treasurer Adam M. Cloud since his comments converge with what Deutsch asserts. Cloud's biography includes details that would suggest he is an official conversant in the economic style of reasoning: he "brings [...] more than 20 years of experience in financial services with leading institutions (City of Hartford Treasurer's Office 2022)." He has worked as a public financier who "structured several billion dollars worth of bond transactions which financed infrastructure such as schools, parking facilities and student housing (Cloud)." Yet, in spite of his background, he employs the language of equity and justice in the context of protecting the Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS):

I'm also here to object to what appears to be an attempt to take away home rule [...]. The MERS is an irrevocable trust established for the benefit of its members and its funding is an obligation, not part of the operating budget of the city. The funding requirement cannot be ignored, altered or reduced by the city council and the mayor in an attempt to close a financial gap (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1137).

Cloud proceeds to explain that the MERS is sustained from three sources of funding including contributions from current employees, contributions from the city, and gains from the city's investment portfolio, none of which may be compromised (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1137-1138). For him, the city's annual contribution is a rule set in stone that cannot be altered by the state legislature. Not only does the bill undermine Hartford's charter and home rule, it would also enable Mayor Bronin to ignore the city's obligation in favor of political expediency by letting him underfund the MERS up to 35 percent of the full amount (Senate).

At the heart of this conflict is the question of fairness, which in Cloud's mind separates Hartford from other cities that chronically underfund their pension accounts. Detroit is brought up once again:

This system only works when everyone does their part. The members have always done their part. Our investments play an important role and the city must continue to do its part. Otherwise, there is little separating the city of Hartford from the situation facing cities like Detroit and Chicago. We should be thankful for the fiscal discipline that was wisely built into the city charter. This is no time to abandon this – this discipline (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1138).

It is only fair that those who worked for the city receive what they deserve. Cloud concedes that the language of economic efficiency has a place at the table but then relies on the language of equity and justice to refute its points:

I don't necessarily disagree that we need to have structural balance. I do not disagree that the tools that the mayor requests are important to get us on the right track. However, as it pertains to the 5,000-plus employees who have worked hard for many years – blood, sweat and toil –, the idea of the pension fund taking on the significant burden to reduce that operating cost because it's an irrevocable trust is troubling to me (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1140).

When Cloud speaks of the city's home rule, he is invoking the need for fairness in the process.

On the other hand, when he speaks of the city's responsibility to its retirees, he is invoking the need for fairness in the outcome, as the city is recompensing for years of service by the retirees.

His words correspond to what Councilman Deutsch states in his testimony and contradict Mayor Bronin.

Cynthia R. Jennings is the last councilmember to testify before the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee. According to her official biography, Jennings "is an environmental and civil rights attorney" and one of her causes is "the issue of environmental justice in Hartford (Bazzano)." The biography delves into other causes dear to her heart:

Anyone who knows Cynthia, knows of her love for people, justice, civil rights, and the right for all people to have employment and educational opportunities in an environment that is healthy, supportive and caring. She is known to be a protector of the youth and elderly, and for those who are not able to defend themselves. She is a strong advocate for an end to the unjust prison system that disproportionately imprisons African-American and Latino men and women, depriving them

of their right to a respected place in this society, and she is a true fighter for justice and an end to educational, employment, health and economic disparities that affect African-Americans, Latinos, women, children, and other protected classes throughout Connecticut (Bazzano).

She is therefore another person who trades in the language of equity and justice. The sense of fairness is the motivating factor in her testimonial, and she speaks up for both state and city employees on what they are owed from the state:

Even though Connecticut has the highest per capita income, the New York Times also stated that Connecticut has roughly half of what it needs to pay future retirement benefits for the workers. In fact, Connecticut is number one in the country for per capita income and number 48 in funding of its pension obligations. This disparity places Connecticut workers at extreme risk. Not only is the financial stability commission a huge social experiment, if unions can be busted in Hartford and the budget can be balanced on the backs of labor, then the next logical step would be to allow the State of Connecticut to sidestep its responsibilities to workers by allowing pension promises made to labor to be ignored (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1079).

But unlike other Working Families Party members testifying at the hearing, Jennings is also able to cross into the economic style of reasoning when need be. Though the stated purpose of the sustainability commission does not explicitly include union busting, Jennings is able to exploit the potential to describe the worst-case scenario for the Connecticut economy:

Ignoring union contracts and circumventing the arbitration process in Hartford would have significant and dire consequences on the economy of the State of Connecticut. Those displaced workers and their families would have no choice but to turn to the state for food, clothing and shelter. [...] The tax bases throughout the state would shrink and many jobs with living wages would be reduced to jobs that are no longer considered as living wage jobs. This may appear to solve the problem but busting unions in Hartford would close firehouses, lay off firefighters, public works, public safety and other workers and provide a level of injustice to workers who have to bargain annually in order to obtain benefits and healthcare so that they are able to care for their families. Connecticut taxpayers would have to carry the burden for workers who are laid off in Hartford (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1079).

Here, we can see that Jennings is mixing the language of justice with the economic style of reasoning. Union busting is not fair to state and city employees who deserve job security, benefits, and pensions. But at the same time, those who lose their jobs from union busting would put undue pressure on the finances of the state to provide for them. It is an issue of justice as well

as an issue of economic efficiency. Jennings's primary point of contention to the bill, however, is that Hartford has not received what it is owed in the literal sense:

The [...] structural deficit is caused specifically because 51% of Hartford land is tax-exempt. A huge part of that land is utilized by the State of Connecticut because Hartford is the capital city. Hartford is in fiscal crisis primarily because the State of Connecticut for the last ten years has never paid full payment in lieu of taxes which is called PILOT to the city of Hartford. It is unconscionable for the State of Connecticut to pass state law relative to management of our budget while the state budget is also in severe crisis and the state refusal – refusal to pay its bills to the City of Hartford is the primary reason the city is in financial difficulty. [...] Further, Senate Bill 464 produces no plan to have the state reimburse the city for full PILOT (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1080).

As I have previously discussed using Figure 5-8, Hartford received increasingly fewer PILOT dollars until fiscal year 2017. Each year, the state would pay less than 75% of the full PILOT. Jennings is correct in her assessment that should the state pay the full amount of PILOT it owes Hartford, the city would be able to balance its budget. As I mentioned previously, the city ended fiscal year 2016 with \$7.61 million deficit in its General Fund (see Figure 5-11), and the PILOT shortfall for that year amounted to more than \$20 million. However, Connecticut ended fiscal year 2016 with \$170.4 million deficit and paid less PILOT partly because of this. For Jennings, the issue at hand is not the deficit itself but Hartford's relationship with Connecticut. She argues that it is not fair for the state to impose the sustainability commission on Hartford when (a) it has its own difficulty balancing budget and (b) it does not pay the full amount of PILOT owed to Hartford. On the other hand, abandoning the bill in the committee and fulfilling Hartford's full PILOT are just.

Intriguingly, following Councilwoman Jennings's testimony, Representative Berger (D-73) reframes the state's PILOT using the economic style of reasoning. Consider:

I think it should be noted here to make a clarification here for committee members that the state of Connecticut historically, for every municipality in the state of Connecticut, does not receive 100% PILOT through the course of the existence of the pilot program. Historically it has averaged in the 40 to 46 percentile for every municipality in the state of Connecticut, just not Hartford. So, I just wanted to make that clarification (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1087).

According to Berger, if the question is about fairness, the amount of PILOT the state gives to Hartford is already justified because all Connecticut towns and cities receive less than half the expected amount. Equity in this case is used as a rhetorical cudgel to strike at the issue of justice.

Hartford Councilmembers Bermúdez, Deutsch, and Jennings affiliated with the Working Families Party and City Treasurer Cloud utilize the language of equity and justice to rebut Mayor Bronin's logic based on the economic style of reasoning. But they use a variety of tactics to base their arguments. Bermúdez asserts that workers must be part of the solution to the fiscal problem and that the bill instead weakens the collective bargaining rights of the city employees. Deutsch argues that the bill disregards the democratic power vested in the city council while City Treasurer Cloud argues that the bill allows the city to ignore its obligations to the city retirees. Both the process, according to Deutsch, and the outcome, according to Cloud, must be just. Finally, Jennings claims that the bill overlooks what is owed to Hartford from the State of Connecticut. She argues that the city deserves PILOT and other supportive measures from the state. These tactics all depend on moral imperative – *what must be and what ought to be* – to make their cases. And these clash with the economic style of reasoning that emphasizes the efficiency of the outcome. Senator John Fonfara's (D-1) observation embodies this clash:

[T]hat decisions were made from the collective bargaining process that we live with today. That union members — fire fighters, police officers, other employees of the city as negotiated fairly. We live with those today but then the question becomes, as you said, the chickens have come home to roost. Not just with respect to labor but also with respect to other decisions that the city has made that we would question today (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1144).

The city and its workers agreed on what the latter group deserves through rounds of negotiations in a fair and just manner. But with the city's fiscal situation in deterioration, fairness may no longer be the means by which they evaluate the government function. The bill, representing economic efficiency and political expediency, may win over the moral imperative.

Overall, the city councilmembers varied in their response to Hartford's fiscal crisis and the state's legislation to combat it. Some Democratic members endorsed S.B. No. 464, but no Democrat showed up at the public hearing. However, members of the Working Families Party, a leftist political party, did. All three councilmembers from the Working Families Party spoke in the language of equity and fairness to argue against the bill at hand, though Jennings was able to cross into the economic style of reasoning to try to convince the state legislators. This pattern carries over to union actors, who utilize both moral imperative and economic efficiency argument to compel the bill's demise. In the next section, I explore their arguments especially on the value of services provided by the city workers.

The City Unions

Like the city councilmembers, the heads of city worker unions came out in large numbers to protest the bill and ask for the state legislators to vote it down. Their testimonies were relatively short compared to the extensive deliberations that the mayor and the city council exchanged with the state legislators. But they were no less ardent in advocating for what they deem is fair and just.

We start with Frank Ricci, the President of New Haven Fire Fighters, who supports his Hartford colleagues by referring to Representative Angel Arce's (D-4) anecdote about a homeless pregnant woman.

It's not about Hartford firefighters, it's about the services they provide to that pregnant lady. Who do you think's going to deliver that baby underneath the underpass when government fails them? It's going to be the fire department (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding 1151).

One of the facts the union leaders rely on to build and legitimize their argument is the value and efficacy of services the city workers provide. Because city workers are valuable insofar as they

make Hartford function, they deserve to be heard in arbitrations and negotiations. Ken Blue, the President of AFSCME⁸ Council 4 Local 1716 in Hartford, points out:

We maintain the parks, plow the roads, waste and recycling as well as staff our public libraries and so much more. We keep the City of Hartford running (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1247).

The moral imperative is that city workers with their value as service providers deserve to have their voices heard when the city makes a decision that affects them. However, there is a tinge of the economic efficiency argument here: city workers are valuable so long as they provide services that are valuable. It is not that city workers deserve to be heard by their inherent value but that they deserve to be heard based on what they can offer to the city. The question is still how much the city owes to its workers, but it is interesting to note that even in an argument based on the moral imperative, we may locate at its base the economic style of reasoning. It speaks to the dominance of the economic style of reasoning in American political discourse.

But the union leaders do not rely on the value of services alone. Instead, they also argue that the fairness of the process is crucial. To them, the process of arbitration is not something that can be swept aside in favor of economic efficiency. Blue adds:

S.B. No. 464 would take away the right to come to a fair agreement by removing the existing processes that have been shown to be effective. Currently we would negotiate with the city and if we are unable to come to agreement, we would go to arbitration where a neutral fair party would make the final determination. In S.B. No. 464, the arbitration panel would be the oversight commission which has representatives from the city, including the mayor, which would be far from neutral. This is an [...] overreach of power, which strips the hardworking members of Local 1716 of their collective bargaining rights (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1247).

And the union leaders express their incredulity at the mayor willing to upend the process to achieve a balanced budget. Many attribute this rashness to the mayor's short tenure. Lori Pelletier, the President of Connecticut AFL-CIO, states:

And I'm also concerned with the mayor of Hartford saying he knows there would be roadblocks with city employees. That's called not bargaining in good faith and so – but I think that that

⁸ American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

comes from his inexperience. Look, he's been on the job 90 days. If I was in the shop 90 days, I'd still be on my probationary period (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1176-1177).

Jan Hochadel, the President of AFT⁹ Connecticut, criticizes Mayor Bronin in no uncertain terms:

[A]re we to believe that after fewer than 90 days in office, Mayor Bronin is so bankrupt of ideas that we must now attack city workers and retirees? By insisting on the extraordinary parts contained in Senate Bill 464, the mayor has decided that partnership is impossible and any solution must be imposed unilaterally. This attitude not only ignores the history of collaboration that these two outstanding union leaders [Shellye Davis and Jackie Aviles of the Hartford Federation of Paraprofessionals] have established but it strikes at the heart of the democratic tradition in the city. It's a power grab that cannot be accepted (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1227).

Hochadel's statement is noteworthy because she code-switches from neoliberal language of partnership to Keynesian language of partisanship in which labor is locked in a zero-sum struggle with the mayor. By citing the history of collaboration between union leadership and the city, Hochadel underscores the possibility of partnership. Yet, by adding that the bill the mayor advocates for "strikes at the heart of the democratic tradition in the city," she refutes the earlier statement, connoting that the esteemed process has broken down and that a political struggle is inevitable.

There is one exception to the union leaders speaking in the terms of the value created by the city workers and the moral imperative of the arbitration process. Liz Cavinaugh, the leader of CSEA SEIU¹⁰ Local 2001, leans into the economic style of reasoning to argue against the bill:

As it is, the benefits and wages in Hartford are less competitive than our surrounding cities from many positions. A loss of collective bargaining rights will make it harder for Hartford to attract and retain staff, leading to a significant degradation of city services. Our members are dedicated to the city of Hartford and have proposed deficit reduction ideas ranging from the sale of unused equipment to elimination of overlapping services. These ideas have been presented to our members, to supervisors and managers in hopes of increasing efficiency of city government and eliminating waste. So, our Mayor Bronin has the ability to seek these contractual changes to existing negotiation processes and he does not need this legislation to get the city's finances in order (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 1235-1236).

⁹ American Federation of Teachers.

¹⁰ Connecticut State Employees Association, Service Employees International Union.

Cavanaugh's assertion is that Hartford must remain competitive in wages, benefits, and collective bargaining rights to attract the best workers and maintain the level of service. At the same time, she cites the sacrifices the city workers have made to improve efficacy without the bill. The bill, therefore, is redundant according to her.

The union leaders in general speak in the language of moral imperative. They ask, what do city workers deserve for the values they create? They answer by arguing that Hartford city workers must be part of the process of resolving the fiscal problem and that the mayor must not bypass the traditional arbitration process. In this, their arguments match with what Councilmembers Bermúdez, Deutsch, and Jennings assert, pitting them against Mayor Bronin.

The Aftermath: You Win Some, You Lose Some

The proposal of S.B. No. 464 exacerbated the relationships the new mayor maintained with the city's interest groups including the unions and the city council. At the special committee meeting the city council convened on April 4, Councilwoman Jennings argued passionately that the city must not "hurt people who need their jobs to feed their families," to which Bronin explained the city faced a budget deficit of \$48.5 million and asked not to "kick the can down the road one more year to pretend we don't have a problem, to sell [the city's] last parking garage, to jack up the taxes one more time (Vittal 2016b)." The union leaders attended the meeting as well, asking the city council not to approve the bill and to further negotiate. Outside the council chamber, supporters of Moral Monday CT and Black Lives Matter protested the mayor by chanting "Luke must go! (Vittal)" Bronin and his staffers had to be escorted back to his office by police officers.

The special committee meeting ended with at least one councilmember switching their position. The Court of Common Council voted 8 to 1 to indefinitely postpone any measure to

support S.B. No. 464, which discouraged the state legislators from further pursuing the bill. In the end, the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee did not refer the bill to be voted on in the General Assembly. At the same time, the state took no discernible action to mitigate the effects of the budget gap in Hartford: no full PILOT, no extra transfers. Despite this, Mayor Bronin continued to push for cuts and renegotiations with the city employees' unions in order to close the gap, which came to fruition when the unions agreed to the plan three days later (Vittal 2016a). Ultimately, the Hartford Fire Fighters Association agreed to four years of zero pay increase as well as changes in pension contributions, healthcare, and other benefits (Bronin 2017:1).

Bronin did not get the bill he wanted, but he got a year of fiscal discipline. Indeed, austerity is his foremost goal, and during the public hearing for S.B. No. 464, Bronin speaks extensively in the economic style of reasoning. He adroitly pits the city against the city employees' unions while employing neoliberal language to stress the importance of partnership in overcoming the budget deficit.

On the other hand, the city councilmembers affiliated with the Working Families Party position themselves on the opposite side with the language of moral imperative. Minority Leader Bermúdez argues that the bill would weaken collective bargaining and unfairly exclude city workers from the process of closing the budget gap, Councilman Deutsch argues the sustainability commission cannot interfere with the democratic process that confers power upon the city council, and Councilwoman Jennings emphasizes what the state owes to Hartford in PILOT. The city treasurer assists by proclaiming that the bill would disrupt the MERS payments, which is an obligation the city must not deviate from. These municipal actors count fairness in

the process and fairness in the outcome as their foremost goal, which necessarily pits them against Mayor Bronin.

The union leaders complement the councilmembers by employing the language of moral imperative as well. They emphasize the value of services the city workers provide to Hartford, which should validate their concerns. Notwithstanding the economic style of reasoning inherent to the assertion that city workers are only as valuable as the services they provide, the union leaders extend their argument further to defend the fairness of the process as Councilman Deutsch does. To them, the process of fair arbitration is a cornerstone of partnership between the city and its workers.

This is not the end of Hartford's fiscal crisis. The state would legislate a bill that achieves similar goals to S.B. No. 464 in 2017. In the following section, I explore the debate around 2017 H.B. No. 7050 and consider the different languages relevant actors choose to make their arguments. I find once again that Mayor Bronin uses the economic style of reasoning while the city councilmembers rely on the language of equity and justice. There are, however, a few cases of divergence that are significant enough for a further discussion.

D. The Debate Surrounding 2017 H.B. No. 7050

On February 8, 2017, Governor Malloy introduced 2017 H.B. No. 7050 An Act Establishing the Municipal Accountability Review Board and Designated Tiers as part of his budget for 2018-2019 biennium (The Darien Times 2017), which dragged on until October 2017 before being passed by the General Assembly as I demonstrated in Chapter 4. The bill serves multiple functions. It curtails Connecticut municipalities' ability to borrow, prohibiting them from issuing bonds to fill a general fund deficiency (House of Representatives 2017:Sec. 7a), and requires the

municipalities to pay matching contributions to teachers' pensions (House of Representatives Sec. 27). However, as Secretary Benjamin Barnes of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) testifies, the main point of 2017 H.B. No. 7050 is to propose "a tiered system of municipal accountability (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 756)," which divides Connecticut towns to four different levels of financial condition. The standard with which the towns are assigned to tiers includes their General Fund balance, their bond rating, their mill rate, and the percentage of their budget that is fulfilled by the state.

Most towns belong to tier I. Tiers II and III indicate more severe financial problems and a greater need for external assistance, which necessitates the inculcation of the Municipal Accountability Review Board (MARB). This board would act similarly to the Hartford Financial Sustainability Commission proposed by S.B. No. 464 with powers to oversee and approve municipal finances and intervene in fiscal affairs (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 757). Board members must include the Secretary of the OPM, the State Treasurer, four members appointed by the governor and of whom two are representatives from the affected community.

Towns in tier III have the option to escalate their rating to tier IV by the action of the review board or the local government. In tier IV, the powers of the MARB would broaden to include the ability to act as an arbitration panel in collective bargaining negotiations, the ability to approve large contracts, the ability to approve new budgets, and the ability to approve new bonds (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 757-758). Tier IV would preclude and replace Chapter 9 bankruptcy protection in Connecticut. Tier III and IV towns retain their ratings for a minimum of three fiscal years unless conditions improve (House of Representatives Sec. 22). In the following sections, I analyze the languages utilized by various municipal and state actors while deliberating on H.B. No. 7050, categorizing them as the economic style of reasoning

or the language of moral imperative. By doing so, I reveal a divergent pattern from the public hearing on S.B. No. 464.

What Remained the Same

In most ways, the debate surrounding 2017 H.B. No. 7050 mirrored the debate surrounding 2016 S.B. No. 464. In fact, the proceedings were similar enough that Mayor Bronin did not attend the public hearing on March 9, 2017 in person but submitted a written testimony instead. While the committee did not refer S.B. No. 464 to the General Assembly for votes, Bronin did manage to successfully institute fiscal austerity for Hartford in 2016. He employs the same economic style of reasoning in his testimony to the committee:

Residents throughout the region recognize that the health of our Capital City matters greatly to the health of the region and the State. But residents also questioned how they can be sure that the City will continue to exercise the same discipline that we have shown over the past year. Understandably, Connecticut residents do not want their hard-earned tax dollars being used wastefully – or simply funding an increase in the cost of city government. This bill provides an accountability mechanism to give comfort and confidence to those taxpayers (Bronin 2).

Bronin characterizes any shortfall Hartford may experience as the result of needless wastefulness, which redirects criticism to the city away from the state for failing to fully fund PILOT. The assumption is that Hartford must be run like a corporation, which cannot continue to operate in the red. In the process, he legitimizes the tough love approach that involves stringent austerity.

The councilmembers affiliated with the Working Families Party testified, positioning themselves as the opposition yet again. This time, it was Councilman Deutsch who pointed out the failings of the state for the missed PILOT:

I'd like to point out that this building, all of us are here in Hartford, but Councilwoman Bermúdez just said that the PILOT is not fully funded, which means that this very building gets fire protection from our fire union without being adequately reimbursed for its services, likewise, police and some others, roads. [...] We think that this bill 7050 would upend some of those

relationships – between the town and the state government by having that control without the kind of negotiation, collective bargaining, and respect for arbitration that has traditionally existed. [...] Finally, one can evoke the old phrase taxation without representation, and in a sense, we have a nasty twist on that if we're going to have the state take over control of Hartford, whose legs have been cut out from under it by lack of PILOT funding, educational responsibility, and so on (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 866-867).

The protest against taxation without representation was the fundamental justification for the American Revolutionary War, and consequently, the value it represents is engrained in the collective civic identity of the United States. Deutsch's argument that Hartford suffers from taxation without representation does not reflect the reality, which is that the city is suffering from unfulfilled PILOT obligations by the state. The city is duly represented in the Connecticut State Capitol by state legislators from its districts. But by citing taxation without representation, Deutsch is making a powerful argument that the state has inflicted injustice on the city and the bill must not pass.

While Councilwoman Jennings does point to the insufficient PILOT, she also argues against Mayor Bronin's assertion that the city wastes its revenues:

We have a high-tech crime center. We have the best firefighters and best police officers in the country. We have a Class I fire department. So, we really have worked, and we are not mismanaging our money. We're being shorted, you know [...]. Yes, they owed us \$6 million dollars. That's State money again, \$6 million dollars for rent for the XL Center, but they can't afford to pay it. If The State can't afford to pay its taxes, but yet the State wants to manage the City of Hartford's budget, and those budgets of so many, I think it's [...] 25 other municipalities in the state, and it's a predatory lending process because as soon as you are 30 days late under 7050, you're 30 days late for paying your debt payment, they actually shut off all reimbursement, and that is just unconscionable (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 930).

Jennings draws a radically different view of the city from Bronin. According to her, Hartford is a city with potential that spends its money wisely. But the city is not the one that must be confronted for its issues: she speaks of a state that would be responsible for financial decisions of tens of municipalities should the bill pass. In the latter half of her testimony, Jennings refers to Section 27 of the proposed bill, which states:

Sec. 27 (*Effective July 1, 2017*) (a) Each municipality shall annually reimburse the state for a portion of the state's contributions to the teachers' retirement system made pursuant to section 10-183z of the general statutes. Such reimbursement payment shall be made not later than December thirty-first of each fiscal year. [...]

(b) If any municipality fails to make the payment required under subsection (a) of this section for any fiscal year within thirty days after the date such payment is due, a five per cent penalty shall be assessed on the total amount of the payment due for such fiscal year.

(c) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, if any municipality defaults in the payment of its obligation under subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the State Treasurer shall notify the State Comptroller and the Commissioner of Administrative Services that the municipality is in default of such obligation. Upon notice of such default, the state shall withhold payment of state aid and assistance to such municipality pursuant to any statute in existence at the time the default is established up to the amount of such obligation (House of Representatives).

The matching payment to teachers' pensions is the state's way of shifting the pension obligation to municipalities, and the provisions for late payment indeed punish those towns that fail to pay on time. Jennings frames this as an issue of moral imperative, of the state imposing undue burdens on municipalities despite undergoing a similar problem of fiscal instability. She questions: since the state is in a delicate fiscal position that prompts for it to transfer pension obligations to municipalities with fewer resources, does it truly have the moral authority to dictate the terms of spending in those municipalities?

Union leaders and their language of equity and justice remained consistent as well.

Interestingly, this language ran parallel to Keynesian language of partisanship (see Chapter 4) in one instance. Shellye Davis, the Co-President of the Hartford Federation of Paraprofessionals¹¹, testifies:

This legislation would establish Municipality Review Accountability Board, a dictatorial panel that would have final say over municipal finances, including making the collective bargaining agreement and arbitration of them. The Board would have very extensive powers over the lowest of the four tiers into which municipalities would be classified. Labor can only lose and the municipalities can only win through this procedure. This is not right, and if this legislation is enacted, there will be a labor strife in Connecticut, and likely, labor strikes. Furthermore, there would be political consequences for those who push this onto municipal employee (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 826).

¹¹ Paraprofessionals are teacher-adjacent positions that provide specialized assistance to K-12 students.

Davis's testimony is filled with invectives against those who would deny what is owed to the city's unions, embodying the language of moral imperative. But Davis's language also pits labor against municipal and state officials, which is evocative of Keynesian partisanship that focuses on the divide between labor and businesses. To Davis, the MARB and the officials who support its operations are the enemies that must be opposed.

Confronted by Davis's vaguely threatening call for labor strife should the bill pass, Senator Fonfara (D-1) asks her to elaborate:

If I could just say that, Ms. Davis, you made – in your testimony you said that if this were to go forward, that the municipality would win and labor would lose. But there's been a long history in Hartford and throughout our state of labor and town officials, state officials working closely together. You don't believe that there is only one paradigm, do you, that if labor wins that the municipality loses and – or if the municipality wins, then labor loses? (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 832)

Davis immediately folds and reframes her testimony, offering a more conciliatory tone:

Absolutely not, that's not what my testimony is. I was referring to this particular bill, and I think what this would cause, when you have this type of bill put out, you do have some antagonism and things that will come behind it. So, we've worked with the City, we've worked with the mayor, we've worked with other people in the past. [...] I'm not testifying that I believe in just one way that it can be done. I absolutely believe that we should all roll up our sleeves and sit down and work together, whether union leaders, whether the mayor, whether the governor, and that's just not something that has really been happening (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 832-833).

In this instance, Davis is employing the neoliberal language of partnership, which emphasizes shared burdens and negotiated resolutions as opposed to the zero-sum nature of resource distribution expressed by Keynesian partisanship. She nimbly sidesteps the conflict between two languages by claiming that she adopted the more bellicose tone in the context of opposing H.B. No. 7050 and that should the bill fail, there is nothing to stop her from cooperating with the city and state officials. The change in Davis's tone once again confirms what we discovered in Chapter 4, that actors switch languages depending on the situation they face. The substance they debate does not necessarily matter but verbal victory does. Had Fonfara not directly challenged

Davis on her words, she would not have felt the need to code-switch. Overall, the same set of actors appeared to argue for and against H.B. No. 7050 using a similar set of rhetorical points, though there were a few notable exceptions.

What Went Differently

In some ways, the divergence was clear during the public hearing for H.B. No. 7050. First, Minority Leader Bermúdez reached across the divide and reasoned in economic terms as well as the moral imperative. In her testimony, she states:

[A]ll of us are aware that Hartford is in a very tough financial situation, but [H.B. No. 7050] would really undermine developments that are currently happening, such as the downtown UConn branch that's going to be moving to Hartford, and it would really destroy all of that momentum that Hartford currently has going for it. It's going to essentially put a big sign that says don't move here, for the City of Hartford, and putting a control board onto to multiple cities is a giant sign for overall saying do not invest here, do not invest in our entire state. You know, Hartford is readying itself right now to grow in numerous ways and a state takeover would undercut all the momentum that the mayor has been able to build (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 2017:865).

Bermúdez's assertion against the bill is based on the economic style of reasoning in that it invokes economic growth as the ultimate goal. If Bronin's argument is for the state to signal the intention to guarantee the city's fiscal situation by instituting a sustainability commission, Bermúdez's argument is that the mere presence of a sustainability commission that controls Hartford's affairs would negatively affect the city's economic recovery. According to her, signaling success to external investors is as important as maintaining fiscal discipline. There is no moral imperative associated with her argument; it is all about the growth imperative, attracting and retaining economic growth for the good of Hartford. At the same time, she reframes the collective bargaining rights:

When it comes to collective bargaining, our existing firefighters, they provided a lot in concessions, over \$3 to \$4 million dollars in the collective bargaining process currently, and so there are different ways to look at this, and collective bargaining, mediation, binding arbitration

should be used to identify – to be a cost savings (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 865).

Again, Bermúdez utilizes the economic style of reasoning to argue for collective bargaining. While collective bargaining boosts the negotiating power of unionized labor, it also focuses the group to a few representatives so that the opportunity cost associated with negotiations may be lower. Moreover, as Bermúdez states, collective bargaining does not stop the city from winning concessions. Thus, she posits that collective bargaining does not necessarily run counter to economic efficiency that Mayor Bronin and Democratic legislators favor.

The fact that Bermúdez switches between the language of moral imperative and the economic style of reasoning suggest that these municipal actors are aware of the entire repertoire of what they need to say at these meetings. Indeed, there is a theatrical quality to every testimony that directly addresses the targeted audience of each municipal actor. For Bronin, the audience includes fiscally conservative voters. For councilmembers from the Working Families Party, this includes their progressive electorates. And for union representatives, it includes their constituent members. It consequently means no one is a committed ideologue despite what the initial look may suggest, they simply seek to maximize their chances at reelection and retention of power. In other words, there are no partisan activists to be found among municipal actors.

Another aspect that diverged from the hearing on S.B. No. 464 is the extensive deliberation on the merit of the bill by Benjamin Barnes, the Secretary of the OPM, and the state legislators. Here, we see an inverted pattern of the economic style of reasoning clashing with the language of moral imperative. Barnes is a technocrat who trades in economic facts while state legislators appeal to the moral imperative of what their towns and their constituents deserve. At the beginning of his testimony, Barnes explains the logic behind the bill:

[W]e believe that it is important that we do find ways to direct significant new resources to our poorest communities in order to give them an opportunity to both meet the educational

requirements in the constitution and be successful as economic and civic participants in our state's positive future. In order to do that, we think it's very critical that we address the concern that significant new resources to our poorest communities will be squandered or wasted or not used wisely, or will not be directed toward those activities that the state believes are most important, namely developing high quality education systems, developing stable local finances, and maintaining tax rates at a rate that will ensure future success of those communities. [...] [A]s we ask you, the Legislature, to make some very difficult changes that would direct those new resources to our poorest communities, we feel that we must also provide you with assurances that those communities will be given oversight necessary and direction necessary to – that we can all be confident that those resources will be well used, and well used toward the ends that the state has – that the state holds for those communities (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 755-756).

Barnes's technocratic credential is impeccable. Before Governor Malloy appointed him to head the OPM, Barnes was the Operating Officer for Bridgeport Public Schools and the Director of Operations for the City of Stamford. He holds a master's degree in urban planning (Office of Policy and Management 2023). Consequently, Barnes stresses economic efficiency as one of the goals of the bill, to ensure the resources the distressed municipalities receive from the state are allocated to the places that would benefit the most.

Representative Christopher Davis (R-57), however, has reservations regarding the bill. As he did with Mayor Bronin regarding S.B. No. 464, he questions the assumption underlying the bill that the state governs and allocates resources more efficiently than municipalities. He states:

I certainly appreciate the intent here that would try to hold accountable towns that receive a significant amount of state aid, but, however, I find that rather hypocritical that given the dire fiscal situation that the State of Connecticut is in that we would then step in and say, we're going to start running the management of towns. And to that point, would the – given our fiscal situation that we're in right now, one that continuously finds us in deficits and inability to pay certain bills, and restructuring our pension plans and everything else, I mean, would the Governor be open to the United States Government, Federal Government, stepping down and having an oversight board over states' abilities to do their own fiscal budgeting? (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 763-764)

Davis is speaking in the language of moral imperative. His point is twofold: the state that has its own fiscal problems must not judge and oversee distressed municipalities, and if the state could control municipalities, the federal government should be able to exert control over Connecticut as well. To this, Barnes's answer is firm and technical:

I think that that flies in the face of the sovereignty of the states under the United States form of government, that it is – the federal system does provide that states are sovereign, that we have a unique position based on the United States Constitution, and so I don't believe that that would be appropriate. Moreover, under that system, local governments are creatures of state statute and state government, and in many cases, in the cases of the communities we're talking about, they are fiscally significantly, if not entirely, dependent on the state for their ability to function (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 764).

Barnes is not entirely correct in that the federal government can and do override the state's sovereignty. In fact, the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution (U.S. Constitution, Article IV, Clause 2) allows federal laws to take precedence over any conflicting state laws. But as a state employee, Barnes is of a position that state sovereignty is a different animal than municipal authority, which is also true. Whereas state laws may have power over areas not explicitly granted to the federal government (The White House 2023), municipal governments may only wield powers explicitly granted to them by the state.

The scope of municipal authority is more complicated than meets the eye. There are multiple dimensions to understand. First, Connecticut is a home rule state. Justice Joseph S. Longo of the Connecticut Supreme Court wrote in *Caulfield v. Noble* that the Home Rule Act serves two purposes:

- [T]o relieve the General Assembly of the burdensome task of handling and enacting special legislation of local municipal concern, and;
- [T]o enable a municipality to draft and adopt a home rule charter or ordinance which shall constitute the organic law of the city [...] (178 Conn. 81 [1979])

Local actors decide local matters but only local matters. Anything that relates to “things of general concern to the people of the state” (178 Conn. 81 [1979]) is handled by the General Assembly. It is a system of division of labor. But more importantly, the Dillon's Rule¹² applies, which dictates that a municipality may exercise only the powers that are:

¹² John Forrest Dillon, a justice of the Iowa Supreme Court, argued in 1868 that “[m]unicipal corporations owe their origin to, and derive their powers and rights wholly from, the legislature. It breathes into them the breath of life, without which they cannot exist. As it creates, so it may destroy. If it may destroy, it may abridge and control.

- Explicitly granted to them;
- Necessarily or fairly implied in or incident to the powers expressly granted, and;
- Essential to the declared objects and purposes of the corporation, not simply convenient, but indispensable (Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 5, 10).

Thus, the intergovernmental relationship between the State of Connecticut and the federal government is incomparable to that between Connecticut and its municipal corporations.

In another instance, Representative Lonnie Reed (D-102) asserts that the state is rewarding bad behaviors of a few municipalities and punishes those that are run efficiently. She says:

But the thing that I'm getting from my community, Branford, [...] we've been very well managed as a town. We have a rainy-day fund. We have a AAA bond rating. We try not to build, you know – spend what we can't afford, and we've always paid into our pensions, and we have a change in demographic. We have a whole bunch of new families moving in. [...] So, we have – I think we're up to 27 percent now of free and reduced lunch program children. So, we're dealing with a whole new set of challenges. And the theme of the Governor's bills, which I think is very concerning to those kinds of communities, is that there's going to be a reallocation of resources that punishes the well-managed towns and gives them to those who are not so well-managed, and that's a real concern in terms of fairness (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 777-778).

Reed is arguing in moral imperatives. Well-managed towns deserve state funding, but poorly managed towns like Hartford do not. Reed overlooks the fact that the MARB severely undercuts the ability of towns in tiers III and IV to operate independently. As municipal actors have asserted, the bill punishes the towns that are struggling. Yet, to Reed, the bill unfairly favors distressed municipalities. To Reed's impassioned speech, Barnes has a dispassionate technocratic answer:

I think, though, it's a mistake to look at that this is – somehow, we're setting up a dichotomy between those towns that are well run and those that are not. [...] Hartford may appear as though it is not as well run as other communities, but in fact, I'm not sure that that's entirely true. Hartford has [...] fewer resources to bring to bear. So, its problems are more acute. It has – you know, it has tens of thousands of very poor children with extraordinary deficits educationally. It has extreme racial segregation. It has an aging infrastructure, which Branford does not have. [...] [T]here are features about Hartford which make its shortcomings and its challenges more evident to the public and more challenging for people to overcome. [...] I think that the difference is not

Unless there is some constitutional limitation on the right, the legislature might... sweep from existence all of the municipal corporations in the State, and the *corporation* could not prevent it (24 Iowa 455 [1868]).”

so much the quality of management, although there are good towns – well-run towns and less-well-run towns, and individual towns are better or worse run over time. That’s the way of organizations, but it’s about the capacity that these communities have (Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee 778-779).

To Barnes, who seeks to maximize economic utility of the state through the bill, the morality associated with fiscal politics has no place in the debate, and he explains as such.

The debate surrounding H.B. No. 7050 was as contentious as the one surrounding S.B. No. 464 and mirrored it in many aspects. Mayor Bronin argued in his typical economic style of reasoning emphasizing the importance of austerity and accountability to taxpayers while Hartford city councilmembers affiliated with the Working Families Party argued in their typical language of moral imperative emphasizing what the state owes to Hartford. Yet, in some crucial aspects, the two public hearings diverged. Minority Leader Wildaliz Bermúdez switched to the economic style of reasoning to fight against the bill, arguing that having the MARB would disrupt economic recovery of Hartford and other municipalities. Representatives Davis (R-57) and Reed (D-102) employed the language of moral imperative to debate with Secretary Benjamin Barnes of the OPM whose technocratic words provided a foil. These instances of code-switching imply that the relevant actors know what they need to say at these hearings to address their audiences.

In the end, H.B. No. 7050 made it out of the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee in a favorable report with substitute language with 28 yeas and 23 nays. Representative Davis (R-57) along with many of his Republican colleagues voted nay while Senator Fonfara (D-1) and Representative Reed (D-102) voted yea on the bill. It was included in the October 2017 budget, which became Public Act No. 17-2 (see Chapter 4, E. The Tumult Surrounding Fiscal Year 2018 Budget and Bipartisan Partnership). The first meeting of the MARB was held on December 8, 2017 following the passage of the law, and the Hartford subcommittee of the MARB convened

for the first time on March 29, 2018, signaling the end to the protracted period of debate on Hartford's financial situation.

E. Conclusion

In describing Detroit's bankruptcy and attendant fallouts, Desan and Steinmetz use the term "social hyper-crisis," which they define as "one in which the determinants of crisis are a complex conjuncture of causes, and the crisis itself is irreducible to a single region of social space (15)." Just as Detroit's bankruptcy reverberated throughout the region and had root political, economic, and social causes far beyond the city's boundaries (see Chapter 3, A. Changes in the National Economy and Hartford's Declining Importance), Hartford suffered from a similar combination of problems and encountered a fiscal crisis. The loss of population and businesses, the limited tax base due to its capital status, and the erratic support from the state all contributed to poor finances. As in the case of Detroit, Hartford's fiscal crisis was a politically manufactured one (Desan and Steinmetz 25) in the sense that a complex combination of decisions over decades by relevant political actors at national, state, and municipal levels led to this event. The only difference was that the size of this "hyper-crisis" was smaller for Hartford due to its population size and therefore was managed in a politically expedient manner in the form of renegotiation of union contracts and H.B. No. 7050 instead of resulting in a bankruptcy.

In this chapter, we observed what each actor said at the public hearings on two bills in front of the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee of the General Assembly. Mayor Luke Bronin and the state legislators, those who pushed for a politically expedient solution of a state oversight board, applied the economic style of reasoning to paint austerity and fiscal discipline as an unavoidable part of Hartford's future. To them, there was no question Hartford was suffering

from a structural deficit that could only be resolved through radical restructuring. And the dominance of the growth imperative continues with the emphasis on economic growth as the panacea to the city's problems. The city employees' unions and the city council that demanded more for their constituents were obstacles standing in the way of stabilizing the city's finances, and the mayor implied this in his lengthy testimonies.

On the other hand, the Court of Common Council and union leaders provided an alternative to the economic style of reasoning. They spoke in the language of equity and justice, the moral imperative of what the state owed to the city and what the city owed to its workers. To them, while the city's fiscal crisis was real, it was blown out of proportion by the mayor and the state's intervention in the form of an oversight board was unnecessary. It was a local problem that required a local remedy, albeit with state assistance in the form of PILOT.

The testimonies at these hearings reveal that the language of moral imperative makes for a sufficient foil to the economic style of reasoning. The moral imperative or what is perceived as subjective competes against economic efficiency or what is perceived as objective. Fainstein's thesis on what makes for a just city argues for subjectivity in creating more just socioeconomic outcomes in an urban context (2010:8-9, 56). In Hartford's case, however, its city councilmembers and union leaders pushed for a just process and a just outcome to no avail: the monopoly the economic style of reasoning has over American policymakers including Connecticut lawmakers is hard to break. And with the passage of H.B. No. 7050, the state put Hartford under the care of an oversight board, which is the outcome Mayor Luke Bronin originally intended.

When we observe the economic style of reasoning and the language of moral imperative from a broader perspective, we find that they constitute two clashing ideals of what makes for

good local governance in an era of permanent fiscal crisis. And in Hartford, these two ideals have found champions in the form of the mayor and the city council respectively. This is reminiscent of Karl Polanyi's observation of the entrenchment of conflict between capitalists and labor in the 1920s (Polanyi 2001[1944]:243-244). This conflict between the two competing groups would eventually cripple the market societies in European countries until fascism took over all aspects of national life.

As I have clarified in the previous chapter and this chapter, many component parts of the U.S. federal polity are suffering from an imbalance between revenue collections and expenditures. Consequent fiscal constraints make smooth operation of the governing apparatus impossible. Each year, local governments must economize and save, and each year, they must negotiate the treacherous waters of deficit politics. The two competing ideals of local governance produces two solutions to this problem, which accentuates the political conflict among local interest groups. In Hartford's case, the economic style of reasoning handily won over the language of moral imperative because state legislators favored this option, yet this does not preclude such competition from repeating in other municipalities. One possibility is that such clash between two opposing ideals cripples local governance until state intervention is the only way out. The overreliance on a state's ability to intervene and act as a referee has already been seen in many cases of municipal bankruptcies. Should this trend continue, it could render local governance an untenable practice in the United States, threatening the democratic institutions at the grassroots level.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

A. Summary of Findings

After successfully passing the budgets for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 through the General Assembly, Governor Ned Lamont of Connecticut¹ gave an interview to Dennis House of WTNH News 8 on June 11, 2023. Having overseen a hefty General Fund surplus of \$1.6 billion in fiscal year 2023 (Office of the State Comptroller 2023:1) and instituted “the largest income tax cut for working and middle-class individuals and families in Connecticut history (Office of the Governor Ned Lamont 2023),” the interview was sort of a victory lap for Lamont. As well as talking about the tax cut, he mentioned the \$810 million the state plans to spend on new affordable housing in the biennium and the economic growth it would bring to Connecticut cities. He said:

I want to see our cities really coming back. I think that means we speed up our transportation system. We’re gonna take a good twenty minutes off that ride on Amtrak from, uh, you know, Providence down to New Haven, and then from New Haven down to, uh, uh, Grand Central as well as Penn Station. I want to have nice urban centers in and around where young people know they’ve got a really (*sic*) liveli–livelihood there. That’s what our future is – get our small cities bigger, more vibrant, younger (House 2023:00:03:32).

Hope springs eternal. Facilitating the commute from Connecticut should attract young professionals interested in urban living but who want a cheaper cost of living. They could live in Connecticut cities and work in New York City or perhaps even Boston. But is a faster commute enough of an incentive? Notwithstanding a kitschy billboard by southbound I-91, New York City does not need further encouragement to attract people. It is the Big Apple. But people do need encouragement to move to Bridgeport, to New Haven, to Waterbury. To Hartford.

Lamont did not address this fundamental quandary Connecticut faces. After all, the interview was about positive developments. House soon turned the conversation to the possible

¹ In office since 2019.

return of a National Hockey League team to Hartford. On May 16, 2023, the voters of Tempe, AZ rejected the Arizona Coyotes' plan to build a new arena where the team would be based in permanently (Wyshynski 2023). Since then, both Governor Ned Lamont and Mayor Luke Bronin have put out overtures on their social media pages to lure the Coyotes to Hartford. The Coyotes would become the new Whalers, resurrecting the name from a bygone era of a team that had abandoned Hartford for Raleigh, NC in 1997 (Amore 2023). Hartford would be competing against the likes of Kansas City, Salt Lake City, and Houston for the coveted NHL team. But the Whalers hold a special place in Connecticut's collective memory: the Whalers logo and sweaters are still top sellers for the NHL (Amore). And Lamont knows to capitalize on it. He has stated there is already an unnamed investment group interested in purchasing the team:

Yeah, I know them personally. Um, they've expressed a real interest. Um, now there's a lot of negotiations out there. Um, I've got a development group that says, "Boy, if the Whalers were back in Hartford, I'd be very interested in doing more economic development and housing in that greater area," and these are folks who have done it before, so that means a lot (House 00:05:53).

The Lamont interview well encapsulates the position Hartford and Connecticut are in. Hartford used to boast its economic centrality by touting itself as the Insurance Capital of not just the United States but of the World. Now, it is a peripheralized city of a decreasing population with pretensions of national reach. The city struggles to maintain its relevance in the global economy through new developments – or in this case, a hockey team – in order to attract new residents. But the young professionals the city seeks to attract prefers New York City or Boston. Hartford is simply too close to both global cities. The development regime based on a growth machine of municipal officials and corporate executives fragmented a long time ago, leaving the city dependent on the state for aid. In turn, the state has become the insurer of last resort to Hartford's socioeconomic viability, funneling money and political capital to keep the city going.

The two main thrusts of this dissertation relate to the transformation Hartford underwent over the years from a city ruled by a diarchy of local political and economic actors to a city that must rely on the state officials to make ends meet. First, where did the local economic actors that hold up half of the development regime go? Second, how does the federal structure of governance affect the actions of state and municipal officials? To answer these questions, I delved into archival and statistical data and constructed a long-term view of Hartford's development that contextualizes its fiscal crisis between 2016 and 2018. In the process, I elucidated the need to update our theoretical understanding of how American cities are governed in the age of neoliberalism and permanent fiscal crisis.

In Chapter 2, I presented the context of worsening socioeconomic conditions in Hartford. The city suffered from white flight and suburbanization since the 1950s. Moreover, its limited geographic size preordained its fiscal tribulations. Concurrently, I discovered a configuration of local governance that extant urban sociology literature often observed in other American cities. This configuration relies upon a diarchy of municipal officials and local economic actors. The growth machine theory calls this a growth machine; the urban regime theory calls this a development regime. In both theoretical models, local economic actors take the helm. Between the 1960s and the 1980s, as home to many large insurance and banking companies, Hartford saw a coalescence of corporate executives into a coherent ruling stratum that dictated the city's revitalization efforts. In short, the corporate executives were the leading force behind Hartford's development regime. Called the Bishops, these corporate leaders advanced the growth imperative and launched many projects to rehabilitate the downtown area in a way that would benefit them. Within this development regime, Hartford's chamber of commerce acted as the primary intermediary between the corporate executives and city hall.

The Bishops are the core of the story of economic actors I present in this study, and I continued their saga in Chapter 3 by looking at their gradual dissolution and abandonment of Hartford. First, in order to properly understand the milieu of the Bishops' disappearance, I examined the great transformation of the national economy through the twentieth century. Financialization was a consequence of the political and economic problems leading up to the 1970s, but it also became one of the leading causes for contemporary socioeconomic difficulties in central cities. This is because financialization encouraged corporations to liquidate place-specific fixed capital and invest in financial activities that do not benefit central cities. Confronted by a slew of disinvestments and suffering from racial segregation and white flight, central cities in the Northeast and the Midwest fell into a deep socioeconomic decline. At the same time, financialization meant the destruction of the mass industrial production system and the rise of a new post-industrial service-oriented economy. The new economy shifted the power dynamics among U.S. cities. The unequal, hierarchical relationship that had formed among cities became entrenched, and as global cities accrued more and more executive functions in the service economy, cities down the ladder like Hartford lost population and businesses.

I showed in Chapter 2 that socioeconomic problems stemming from residential segregation and suburbanization confronted Hartford since the 1950s. Yet, its corporate economy based on insurance and banking industries performed well under the pressures of financialization until the early 1990s. I established this by compiling data from Fortune Directory lists of top 500 national companies over the decades. Mergers, acquisitions, and the centralization of executive functions in a handful of global cities decreased the number of metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) containing Fortune 500 companies over the years. But the number of Fortune 500 companies more than doubled in Hartford from five in 1970 to eleven in 1990.

Yet, the city was too small to stop the trend of peripheralization. Ten Fortune 500 companies have departed Hartford since 1990. In other economic measures, Hartford fares poorly as well. The MetroHartford Alliance, Hartford's main chamber of commerce and the oldest one in the region, was only the seventh largest in the Greater Hartford Region in 2022. Its membership shrank from 600 to 450 in six years. I demonstrated through testimonies at the General Assembly's Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Joint Standing Committee that there is no connection between the Mayor's Office and the MetroHartford Alliance anymore. Today, the MetroHartford Alliance is a shadow of its former self.

The Bishops went through a similar process of dissolution and departure. From the 1972 to 1984, John H. Filer, the chairman and chief executive officer of Aetna, led the Bishops, directing a considerable amount of money to charities and revitalization projects. These dozen white, male executives would gather every six months at exclusive dining halls or their boardrooms to discuss the issues facing the city with Arthur J. Lumsden, the president of Hartford's chamber of commerce. The Bishops began to disappear with Filer's retirement in 1984. James T. Lynn, Filer's successor at Aetna, was disinterested in community outreach, especially in projects that cost his company money. And with a wave of mergers and acquisitions starting in the 1980s, many Hartford-based corporations saw their independence stripped away. With the corporations gone, so were the corporate executives who were now concerned more with global cities than Hartford's civic affairs.

Without the Bishops pulling it together, Hartford's development regime fragmented into individual groups of interest. Corporations still count as one of the interest groups that dominate Hartford's civic affairs in 2023 by involving themselves in charitable giving. But they refrain from participating in political discourse, instead engaging in non-confrontational community

outreach. I discovered through archival analysis of corporate relations that though the titles vary, most of the corporate actors represented in charities registered in Hartford are mid-level managers in charge of community outreach programs. Each manager patronizes no more than three charities. In other words, instead of having their top executives engage in potentially controversial projects – previous revitalization efforts from the 1960s to the 1980s certainly resulted in a lot of resentment – corporations nowadays have mid-level, professionalized managers handle their relations with Hartford in a way that does not disrupt extant social and political structures of the city.

The Bishops used to funnel money into multiple causes, sometimes using the United Way, a centralized fundraising organization, as the conduit. The contemporary senior executives, however, follow a pattern similar to that of their mid-level subordinates. They patronize apolitical, distinguished charities and support one or two of them at most. The limited number of charities these corporate actors patronize and this decentralized pattern of charitable giving decreased the potential for interlocking networks and subsequent consolidation of the corporate interest group into a new development regime allied with Hartford municipal officials.

In Chapter 3, I also looked at the public hearings on bills held by the General Assembly's joint standing committees from 2016 to 2018 to determine how fragmented the development regime had become. I found that no insurance and banking executives showed up to testify for or against any bill. The majority of testimonies were by public agencies, non-profit and NGOs, and unaffiliated individuals. When corporate actors did turn up to testify, they limited the scope of their testimonies to indicate the narrowness of their interests. I concluded that local economic actors today, while still active in charitable giving and community outreach, have neither the willingness nor the ability to intervene in the city's political affairs, restricting their reach.

With the Bishops gone and remaining local economic actors bound to their limited sphere of interest, the federal polity has become the arena where relevant actors resolve the contention surrounding Hartford's fiscal politics. This trend is partly due to Hartford deriving half of its revenue from state transfers. Moreover, if Hartford were to file for Chapter 9 bankruptcy, it must first receive the state's explicit approval. Therefore, the state's fiscal health directly affects Hartford's fiscal health, which means it is imperative to understand fiscal politics at the state level before further exploring fiscal politics in Hartford.

In Chapter 4, I examined the state legislators' responses to two dilemmas between 2015 and 2018: Connecticut's own ongoing fiscal crisis as well as Hartford's. Adopting Pacewicz's paradigm of Keynesian and neoliberal community governance, I devised two different categories of legislative languages based on Keynesian partisanship and neoliberal partnership. The focal point of the Keynesian language of partisanship is the labor-business axis of factionalism that translates to partisan politics. It stresses the competitive aspect of community governance whether for votes or for economic resources. In contrast, the neoliberal language of partnership emphasizes the value of promoting the appearance of harmony in community governance. At the same time, its neoliberal foundation privileges the market-based solution to the problem of resource allocation, namely the growth imperative. These two languages are antithetical to each other.

The languages are clear-cut in their rhetorical division – one underscores conflict and the other underscores the veneer of harmony. Yet, I found Connecticut state legislators' usage of these languages muddled together. Instead of sticking to one language over the other, they code-switched languages depending on the expediency of the moment. This frequent code-switching denotes the fact that much of what the legislators say is performative. While the Republican

legislators push for the growth imperative, they are not true adherents of the ideology. Instead, they use the growth imperative to advance their cause of cutting taxes and inflating their chances at reelection. The only thread of consistency in policy discourse was that of partisan conflicts between Democrat and Republican legislators on how the state budget should be made.

The Republicans spoke out loudly and often, framing their party as the wronged minority that cares about the state's deteriorating fiscal health. The Republicans blamed the Democrats for supporting the state employees' union that they argued contributed to the deficits. They also argued that Hartford must help itself out rather than be allowed to depend on the state for rescue. As the majority party in control of both legislative and executive branches of the Connecticut government, the Democrats did not speak up as much as the Republicans did. With a slim majority, they did not have the luxury of ideological posturing. They focused all their attention on producing a working budget and providing a helping hand to Hartford in the form of \$40 million and an oversight committee.

Still, despite much ideological posturing, neither the Connecticut Republican Party nor the Democratic Party was controlled by the partisans. In fact, it is the moderates who jump from one language to another depending on the situation that dominated the legislative discussions and agenda in the state. This has been noted by the politicians themselves. House Speaker Matthew Ritter (D-1) said, "We've tried to create a culture in the House whereby people have to learn to compromise – not only with Republicans but with each other in our caucus (Pazniokas 2023)." Sarah Ganong, the state director of the leftist Working Families Party, observed, "Connecticut Democrats [...] allowed their most conservative members to take control of the agenda along with the minority Republican Party (Pazniokas)." This dominance of moderates in Connecticut politics diverges significantly from what scholars have found in other states. Pacewicz (207-225)

and Masket (3) found partisans filtering through local political parties and leading this polemical polarization in Iowa and California respectively. And in these states, this polemical polarization reflected the actual polarization of political positions. But Connecticut seems to diverge from the pack. Despite the Democratic majority in all branches, Connecticut has somehow become the bastion of political moderation.

The view from the state precedes the view from the city, and we continue on to Hartford in the next chapter. The fiscal politics at the municipal level mirrored that of the state in two major ways. First, many relevant actors blamed public workers' unions for the deficits. Second, the relevant actors utilized two different types of languages to debate and argue. And most crucially, the growth imperative remains dominant in local policy discourse. In Chapter 5, I investigated the municipal officials and actors' responses to Hartford's financial problems by adopting the framework of Berman's thesis on the economic style of reasoning. The economic style of reasoning seeks to maximize economic efficiency in policies, thereby commodifying governmental service and promoting market-based solutions to the society's problems. It has become the hegemonic ideology in American political discourse. And the relevant actors utilize this rhetoric to keep the growth imperative as the dominant ideology. On the other end of the spectrum from the economic style of reasoning stands the language of moral imperative, which is of equity and justice. If the former asks how to maximize economic efficiency in policies, the latter asks what each interest group deserves as a fair share and how the society can allocate its resources equitably.

I showed that at the public hearings of joint standing committees of the General Assembly, arenas in which anyone can voice their concerns and opinions, four main groups of relevant actors effectively employed these two languages to argue their cases. Mayor Luke

Bronin and state legislators relied upon the economic style of reasoning to defend the bills that would introduce an oversight board on fiscally distressed municipalities including Hartford. For them, the bills represented the most expedient means of forcing austerity and fiscal discipline on Hartford. Mayor Luke Bronin especially used the economic style of reasoning to create a moralistic frame to contextualize the city's deficits. In the process, he cast the city employees' union as the enemy that stands in the way of improving Hartford's fiscal health. He also suggested economic growth through regional integration as the panacea, confirming the dominance of the growth imperative in public consciousness. On the other hand, the leftist city councilmembers and the local union leaders utilized the language of moral imperative to argue against these bills. They asserted that the city's democratic charter must be protected from the overreach of the state-implemented oversight boards and the city employees must be allowed to receive their fair share for the services they provided.

After surveying the federal polity involved in the resolution of Hartford's fiscal crisis in 2018, I concluded that local democratic institutions are in the process of erosion. Local economic actors are either no longer interested in political affairs or departing to global cities, fragmenting the development regime. In turn, municipal officials have no choice but to ally with state officials that have a larger reserve of financial resources to even attempt to improve socioeconomic conditions of their cities. In this way, the federal polity becomes a lone lifeline for cities under fiscal duress.

But the problem arises when we consider the fact that fiscal crisis is endemic in many cities today. Since the tax revolt of the 1970s, American politicians have become wary of any tax increase. At the same time, service provisions continue to rise. As fiscal conditions of municipal governments weaken further, ideological clashes between the economic style of reasoning and

the moral imperative become ever more extreme. This is where the state government steps in to mediate and facilitate the resolution of a fiscal crisis. Yet, state intervention steps on local democratic institutions. If the trend of permanent fiscal crises were to continue in American cities and state intervention became more frequent, local governance and democratic institutions may eventually be rendered unsustainable.

B. Contributions to Urban Sociology

Bearing the conclusion of Chapter 5 in mind, I see the contribution of this dissertation as threefold. By conducting a case study of Hartford, which presents a unique pattern of local development, this study adds to the extant theories. First, it elucidated that the diarchy of local governance is breaking down in American cities. Until recently, urban sociology theories observed that local economic actors encourage the growth imperative, head the institutions that govern cities, and control the decisions of municipal political officials (Logan and Molotch; Hunter; Stone). Yet, Hartford demonstrates such a pattern does not hold in the new post-industrial economy. The double transformation of both the national economy and Hartford has resulted in the city losing its important local economic actors to global cities. At the same time, those economic actors who remained behind are neither interested in political affairs nor in possession of the influence to affect changes at the local level. They concentrate on apolitical community outreach that funnels money from corporations to local charities.

Second, I proved the important role the multilevel governing apparatus of federal polity plays in local governance. In the vacuum left by the departed economic actors comes state political officials. When Hartford experienced an acute fiscal crisis, it was Connecticut's legislators who approved a budget that enabled the city to pay for its services. Thus, to

understand today's municipal politics, we must look to the state as well as the city. This aspect has been lacking in the extant theories because they treat the federal polity as a mere background detail. This study seeks to expand the theories by actively introducing state actors into the discussion of municipal politics. At the same time, the findings of Chapter 5 warn of the possible breakdown of local democratic institutions from the encroachment of state actors.

Finally, I identified and categorized the various political languages used in the policymaking process in Connecticut and Hartford. As I explained, political actors can co-opt languages to serve their ideological purposes (Thompson; Holborow), but rhetorical consistency is not a quality I found among the state legislators and municipal officials. Indeed, there is a theatrical quality to many of the words uttered by these political actors, because they so readily code-switch depending on the situation they face. A Republican legislator may employ the Keynesian language of partisanship to decry the Democratic majority, yet the next moment, they employ the neoliberal language of partnership to extol the virtues of all legislators. A city councilmember may use the language of moral imperative to blast the bill that encroaches upon their political power and appeal their electability to their liberal constituents, yet they could also rely on the economic style of reasoning to try to convince the state legislators who favor such language. These political actors are not ideologues; they are politicians hoping to ensure their reelection.

But political theater is not insubstantial. It creates real political power through performance (Apter 223) and political capital that legislators and officials can draw from. The growth imperative continues to hold sway over public policy discourse on how to best combat urban problems regardless of its actual applicability, and because of its dominance, it remains a fount of much political capital. The fact that the explosive economic growth witnessed by

previous generations is no longer possible due to the changing economic structure does not matter to the political actors so long as they can derive real power – sustained renewal of their electoral terms through reelection – from the growth imperative.

And however performative the legislative processes are, they still make laws that municipalities must abide by. Therefore, the identification of various political languages adds to the extant theories of urban sociology by capturing another dimension of complexity inherent in local governance. State and municipal political actors negotiate their power through performances given in political theater exploiting the growth imperative. These performances in turn result in real laws. Ultimately, the study deepens our understanding of American local governance by looking at every facet that constitutes it.

C. Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

Despite the contributions I have enumerated, there are several limitations to this study. First, it relied on a qualitative case study of one city in one country during one particular period, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Hartford is unique. It is a city founded during the colonial era that failed to expand beyond its downtown, and it used to be called the Insurance Capital of the World and had a close-knit coterie of Fortune 500 insurance and banking corporations. Not many cities can claim to have had such unique conditions, and this is what prompted my initial exploratory research. But this uniqueness undercuts the study's generalizability across the discipline.

Second, like much of the literature, the study focuses on American urban phenomena. I frame deindustrialization, financialization, and the rise of global cities in the American context. This harks back to the issue of generalizability – findings from American cases are not

generalizable to the rest of the world, especially in much of the developing world that has traversed different developmental paths. Fortunately, there have been some efforts to rectify this dearth of case studies and include non-western cities in urban research (Yang and Chang 2007; Heller, Mukhopadhyay, and Walton 2016; Schindler, Gillespie, Banks, Bayırbağ, Burte, Kanai, and Sami 2020).

Most importantly, I was unable to break through with the public persona of political officials and economic actors by conducting one-on-one interviews with them. Pacewicz's work on two Iowan cities presents a complete view of the transformation of local politics, formal and informal, because he was able to familiarize himself to his subjects and talk with them directly at length. For example, he shows through interviews how an informal grassroots network of Democratic political activists, symbolized by the central figure Frannie Steele, controlled the local party before the 1980s (80-84). In contrast, I relied heavily on official archival records and newspaper articles to describe the relationships among contemporary municipal politicians, state legislators, and local economic actors. Beside the discussion of the Bishops whose records are rich and varied despite their informality, this study fails to tap into the informal network of important individuals that undergird the local governance structure. How many informal meetings and conversations among political officials happened during Hartford's fiscal crisis? How did these informal events influence the outcome of the state stepping in to assist Hartford? I cannot answer these questions.

In order to rectify the first limitation, future research should pursue a broader array of cases to advance generalizability. The new cases may include other cities from the United States or cities from other developed countries like the United Kingdom or France that have experienced a similar trend of deindustrialization and financialization (King and Le Galès). To

remedy the second limitation, we should expand our knowledge of how cities in the Global South operate. Cases from other federal republics like Brazil or Mexico may be especially helpful to compare and contrast.

Another way to increase generalizability is to introduce quantitative analysis to the cases. I attempted to do so by performing a series of correlational analysis on American cities that have either filed for Chapter 9 bankruptcy or experienced fiscal crises in the introduction. I recommend expanding upon this base. By looking at variables of multiple cases in a systematic manner, we can expect to find a general pattern that was not visible before with individual case studies.

But this does not mean we should abandon Hartford. In fact, we should reach further within Hartford for important clues about evolving features of local governance in the U.S. Future researchers should try to adopt the methods employed by Pacewicz to embed themselves in Hartford's political and economic communities at the grassroots level and interview the individuals who make the decisions behind the scenes.

At the same time, future research must continue to expand our understanding the politics of places that are in the process of disappearing. In countries with a stagnant or decreasing national population like Korea and Japan, government officials, sociologists, and scholars from other disciplines have established a new field in which they explore politics, economics, and social relations of places suffering from heavy population loss (Masuda 2014:2-8). In fact, the threat of local disappearance is treated so seriously that some scholars have critically examined the assumptions of the theory of disappearing places (Okada 2015:6-7; Chung 2019:6-7). Recently, there have been valid criticisms against the terms like *shrinking cities* and *disappearing places*, that they confer stigma upon particular spaces (Audirac 2017:3-7) and

legitimize the implementation of extreme austerity and slashing of remaining government services (Berglund 2020:4). Nevertheless, the increasing frequency of disappearing places across the world necessitates discussions and debates on them.

For the time being, the U.S. does not expect to suffer from national population loss unlike other developed democracies. The U.S. population is projected to increase from approximately 331 million in 2020 to 404 million in 2060 assuming the immigration rate holds constant (U.S. Census Bureau 2018). But there are still many places across the country that have been losing population to global cities. So far, American urbanists have focused their efforts on Rust Belt cities like Detroit (Akers 2015; Draus, Roddy, McDuffie 2016; Kinder 2016; Schindler; Paddeu 2017; Markus and Krings 2020), Cleveland (Rosenman and Walker 2015; Coppola 2018), Youngstown, OH (Rhodes 2016), and Allentown, PA (Safford). But as the case of Hartford demonstrates, cities outside the Rust Belt with more diversified economies can and do shrink. We must expand the scope of urban sociology and geography literature by conducting detailed case studies outside the Rust Belt.

Lastly, there is a need for studies on how municipalities, states, and local economic actors handle different types of disasters and public emergencies beyond a fiscal crisis. This is especially pertinent considering the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. As global warming intensifies, climate-related natural disasters like tropical storms, heat waves, wildfires, floods, and new infectious diseases pose a significant risk to human life and test the tensile strength of local governments more frequently (Berlemann and Steinhardt 2017:355-359). The development regime and the growth coalition of yesteryears, if they are intact, are pushed to address these disasters. We may observe a shift in the definition of growth among political and

economic actors under the strains of natural disasters, which would have lasting consequences on our theoretical understanding of local governance.

REFERENCES

Archival Resources and Government Documents

- Appropriations Committee. 2016. *Joint Standing Committee Hearings: Appropriations 2016 Pt.08 p.3960-4681*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- Augur, Rebecca. 2023. "Regional Planning Organizations RPO." *Connecticut Office of Policy and Management*. Retrieved July 25, 2023 (<https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/IGPP/ORG/Planning-Regions/Planning-Regions---Overview>).
- Bazzano, John V. 2016a. "Court of Common Council." *Court of Common Council*. Retrieved July 7, 2023 (<http://www.hartford.gov/council>).
- . 2016b. *The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Court of Common Council, March 28, 2016*. Hartford, CT: The Court of Common Council.
- Bednarz, David. 2013. "Gov. Malloy Selects Luke Bronin as General Counsel."
- Bronin, Luke A. 2017. "Testimony by Mayor Luke A. Bronin of the City of Hartford on HB 7050, An Act Concerning Enhancements to Municipal Finance and Accountability."
- Bryant, Daniel. 2018. "Statement by Insurance Association of Connecticut, American Council of Life Insurers, and Insurance and Real Estate Committee on HB 5205 An Act Concerning the Connecticut Life and Health Insurance Guaranty Association."
- City of Hartford Treasurer's Office. 2022. "Meet The Honorable Adam M. Cloud." *City of Hartford Treasurer's Office*. Retrieved July 9, 2023 (<https://www.hartfordcitytreasurer.org/treasurer/meet-adam-cloud>).
- Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. 2022. *Home Rule and Local Control in Connecticut*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.
- Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development. 2022. *Distressed Municipalities List Since 2010*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development.
- . "Distressed Municipalities." *Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development*. Retrieved October 4, 2023 (https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/About_DECD/Research-and-Publications/02_Review_Publications/Distressed-Municipalities).
- Connecticut Department of Labor. 2023. "Connecticut General Statute 31-57r – Paid Sick Leave." *Connecticut Department of Labor*. Retrieved July 29, 2023 (<https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wgwkstnd/SickLeave.htm>).

- Connecticut State Department of Revenue Services. 2023. "Tax Exemption Programs for Nonprofit Organizations." *Connecticut State Department of Revenue Services*. Retrieved August 13, 2023 (<https://portal.ct.gov/DRS/Sales-Tax/Tax-Exemption-Programs-for-Nonprofit-Organizations>).
- Dillon, John Forrest. 1868. *City of Clinton v. Cedar Rapids & Missouri River Railroad*.
- Dillon, Kevin A. 2016. "Testimony Regarding SB 464, An Act Establishing the Hartford Financial Sustainability Commission."
- Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee. 2015. *Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee Meeting to Adopt Revenue Estimates, June 1, 2015*. Hartford, CT: CT-N Connecticut Network.
- . 2016. *Joint Standing Committee Hearings: Finance, Revenue, and Bonding 2016 Pt.03 p.927-1390*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2017. *Joint Standing Committee Hearings: Finance, Revenue, and Bonding 2017 Pt.2 p.549-1095*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- Fiore, Thomas. 2023. "Question about CT Financial Forecasts."
- Frame, Matthew H. 2022. *State Legislative Terms of Office*. 2022-R-0056. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- Furbish, Lawrence K. 2002. *Legislative History of Balanced Budget Law*. 2002-R-0170. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- George, Eric. 2017. "Statement by Insurance Association of Connecticut on SB 787 An Act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Governor's Budget."
- . 2018. "Appropriations Committee Public Hearing Re Governor's Proposed FY 19 Budget Adjustments."
- Hansen, Lee R. 2012. *OLR Backgrounder: The 2011 SEBAC Agreement*. 2012-R-0032. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- . 2013. *The Prevailing Wage*. 2013-R-0393. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- . 2020. *Setting Prevailing Wage Rates*. 2020-R-0251. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- Hartford Business Journal. 2016. *Book of Lists and Economic Forecast, 2016-2017*. Hartford, CT: Hartford Business Journal.

- . 2021. *2022 Book of Lists*. Hartford, CT: Hartford Business Journal.
- House of Representatives. 2015a. *House Proceedings 2015, v.58, Pt.03, p.695-1034*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2015b. *House Proceedings 2015, v.58, Pt.23, p.7631-7984*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2015c. *House Proceedings 2015, v.58, Pt.26, p.8665-8921*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2017a. *An Act Establishing the Municipal Accountability Review Board and Designated Tiers*.
- . 2017b. *Connecticut House of Representatives Special Session to Consider the FY 2018-19 State Budget*. Hartford, CT: CT-N Connecticut Network.
- Leser, Sarah. 2022. *OLR Backgrounder: Capital Region Development Authority*. 2022-R-0203. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- Livingston, Daniel E., and Lisa Grasso Egan. 2017. *SEBAC 2017 Agreement between State of Connecticut and State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC)*. Hartford, CT: The State of Connecticut.
- Livingston, Daniel E., and David Krayski. 2022. *SEBAC 2022 Agreement between State of Connecticut and State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC)*. Hartford, CT: The State of Connecticut.
- Longo, Joseph S. 1979. *Caulfield v. Noble*.
- Ludlow, Roger. 1638. *The Fundamental Orders of Connecticut*.
- Malloy, Dannel P. 2017. "A Lettter from Governor Malloy to Mark Bertolini, The President and CEO of Aetna."
- Messner, Gregory. 2023. "Monthly Forecasts Home." *Connecticut Office of Policy and Management*. Retrieved July 27, 2023 (<https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Bud-Other-Projects/Comptroller-Letters/Monthly-Forecasts-Home>).
- Moran, John D., and Anthony Naples. 2020. *SEBAC 2017 an the 2022 Retirement Wave*. 2020-R-0347. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- National Transportation Safety Board. 1984. *Safety Recommendations*. H-84-40 through-54. Washington, DC: National Transportation Safety Board.

- Office of Policy and Management. 2023. "OPM Secretary Biography." *Connecticut Office of Policy and Management*. Retrieved July 11, 2023 (https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Root/Welcome/OPM-Secretary-Biography_Sisco).
- Office of State Treasurer. 2023. "Investment Advisory Council Membership." *Office of State Treasurer*. Retrieved July 30, 2023 (<https://portal.ct.gov/OTT/Pension-Funds/Investment-Advisory-Council/Investment-Advisory-Council-Membership>).
- Office of the Governor Ned Lamont. 2023. "Governor Lamont Reaches Budget Agreement With Legislative Leaders That Includes the Largest Income Tax Cut in Connecticut History."
- Office of the Secretary of the State. 2023. "Biographies - Leaders of the Connecticut General Assembly." *Office of the Secretary of the State, Connecticut*. Retrieved July 30, 2023 (<https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Register-Manual/Section-II/Biographies---Leaders-of-the-CT-General-Assembly>).
- Office of the State Comptroller. 2020. "Supplemental Benefits." *Care Compass*. Retrieved July 29, 2023 (<https://carecompass.ct.gov/supplementalbenefits/>).
- . 2023. *Comptroller Scanlon Projects \$1.6 Billion Surplus, Commends Successful National Debt Ceiling Negotiations*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of the State Comptroller.
- Peters, Ellen Ash. 1996. *Milo Sheff et al. v. William A. O'Neill et Al.*
- Philip, John. 2023. "Question about CT Revaluation Schedule."
- Pinho, Rute. 2016. *Spending Cap Definitions*. 2016-R-0137. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- . 2020a. *Connecticut's Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program*. 2020-R-0330. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- . 2020b. *Issue Brief: Budget Reserve Fund*. 2020-R-0291. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- Poole, Heather. 2019a. *Issue Brief: Special Transportation Fund*. 2018-R-0293. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- . 2019b. *Special Transportation Fund*. 2019-R-0160. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.
- Schaeffer-Helmecki, Jessica. 2020. *Property Tax Exemptions for Non-Profits*. 2020-R-0071. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Office of Legislative Research.

Senate. 2015a. *Senate Proceedings 2015 v.58, Pt.01, p.1-340, Index*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.

———. 2015b. *Senate Proceedings 2015 v.58, Pt.12, p.3444-3721*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.

———. 2016a. *An Act Establishing the Hartford Financial Sustainability Commission*.

———. 2016b. *Senate Proceedings 2016 v.59, Pt.10, p.3098-3389*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.

———. 2017a. *An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2019, Making Appropriations Therefor, Authorizing and Adjusting Bonds of the State and Implementing Provisions of the Budget*.

———. 2017b. *Connecticut State Senate Special Session to Consider the FY 2018-19 State Budget, October 25, 2017*. Hartford, CT: CT-N Connecticut Network.

Smith, Catherine H. 2017. “A Letter from Commissioner Smith to Mark Bertolini, the President and CEO of Aetna.”

The Capitol Regional Planning Agency. 1967. *Governmental Organization in the Capitol Region*. Hartford, CT: The Capitol Regional Planning Agency.

The State of Connecticut. 1818. *Constitution of Connecticut*.

———. 1874. *Amendments to the Constitution of Connecticut 1818*.

———. 1965. *Of Home Rule*. Article Tenth.

The White House. 2023. “State and Local Government.” *The White House*. Retrieved August 4, 2023 (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/our-government/state-local-government/>).

U.S. Congress. 1978. *Reservation of State Power to Control Municipalities*. Vol. 11 Ch. 9 §903.

Warren, Earl. 1962. *Charles W. Baker et al. v. Joe C. Carr et Al.*

———. 1964a. *James P. Wesberry, Jr. et al. v. Carl E. Sanders et Al.*

———. 1964b. *Reynolds, Judge, et al. v. Sims, et Al.*

Books, Book Sections, and Journal Articles

- Abbott, Andrew Delano. 2001. *Chaos of Disciplines*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- . 2014. *Digital Paper: A Manual for Research and Writing with Library and Internet Materials*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Akers, Joshua. 2015. “Emerging Market City.” *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 47(9):1842–58.
- Audirac, Ivonne. 2018. “Shrinking Cities: An Unfit Term for American Urban Policy?” *Cities* 75:12–19.
- Alderson, Arthur S., and Jason Beckfield. 2004. “Power and Position in the World City System.” *American Journal of Sociology* 109(4):811–51.
- Apter, David E. 2006. “Politics as Theatre: An Alternative View of the Rationalities of Power.” Pp. 218–56 in *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual*, edited by J. C. Alexander, B. Giesen, and J. L. Mast. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
- Aronowitz, Stanley, and William DiFazio. 1994. *The Jobless Future: Sci-Tech and the Dogma of Work*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Barman, Emily. 2006. *Contesting Communities: The Transformation of Workplace Charity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Bell, Daniel. 1973. *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.
- Berglund, Lisa. 2020. “Critiques of the Shrinking Cities Literature from an Urban Political Economy Framework.” *Journal of Planning Literature* 35(4):423–39.
- Berlemann, Michael, and Max Friedrich Steinhardt. 2017. “Climate Change, Natural Disasters, and Migration—a Survey of the Empirical Evidence.” *CEifo Economic Studies* 63(4):353–85.
- Berman, Elizabeth Popp. 2022. *Thinking like an Economist: How Efficiency Replaced Equality in U.S. Public Policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Bluestone, Barry, and Bennett Harrison. 1982. *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.
- Blyth, Mark. 2013. *Austerity*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Bomey, Nathan. 2016. *Detroit Resurrected: To Bankruptcy and Back*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Brender, Adi, and Allan Drazen. 2008. "How Do Budget Deficits and Economic Growth Affect Reelection Prospects? Evidence from a Large Panel of Countries." *American Economic Review* 98(5):2203–20.
- Brenner, Neil, and Nik Theodore. 2002. "Cities and the Geographies of 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism.'" Pp. 2–32 in *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*, edited by N. Brenner and N. Theodore. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Brint, Steven. 1985. "The Political Attitudes of Professionals." *Annual Review of Sociology* 11:389–414.
- Brown, M. Craig, and Barbara D. Warner. 1992. "Immigrants, Urban Politics, and Policing in 1900." *American Sociological Review* 57(3):293.
- Burns, Peter. 2002. "The Intergovernmental Regime and Public Policy in Hartford, Connecticut." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 24(1):55–73.
- Caro, Robert A. 1975. *Broker: The Fall of New York*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Castells, Manuel. 1980. *The Economic Crisis and American Society*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- . 2002. "Information Technology, the Restructuring of Capital-Labor Relationships, and the Rise of the Dual City." in *The Castells Reader on Cities and Social Theory*, edited by I. Susser. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Inc.
- . 2010. *Rise of the Network Society*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Chandler, Alfred D. Jr. 1990. *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Chung, Sungho 정 성호. 2019. "A Critical Review of the Local Extinction Discourse" [Jibangsomyeollone Daehan Bipanjeok Geomto] 지방소멸론에 대한 비판적 검토. *Korean Regional Sociology* 20(3):5–28.
- Clemens, Elisabeth S. 2010. "From City Club to Nation State: Business Networks in American Political Development." *Theory & Society* 39:377–96.
- Cohen, Michael D., James G. March, and Johan P. Olsen. 1972. "A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17(1):1–25.
- Coll, Steve. 1986. *The Deal of the Century: The Breakup of AT&T*. New York: Atheneum.

- Coppola, Alessandro. 2019. "Projects of Becoming in a Right-Sizing Shrinking City." *Urban Geography* 40(2):237–56.
- Cramer, Katherine J. 2016. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Crozier, Michel. 1964. *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Delehanty, Casey, Jack Mewhirter, Ryan Welch, and Jason Wilks. 2017. "Militarization and Police Violence: The Case of the 1033 Program." *Research and Politics* April-June:1–7.
- Desan, Mathieu Hikaru, and George Steinmetz. 2015. "The Spontaneous Sociology of Detroit's Hyper-Crisis." Pp. 15–35 in *Reinventing Detroit: The Politics of Possibility*. Vol. 2, *Comparative Urban and Community Research*, edited by M. P. Smith and L. O. Kirkpatrick. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Domhoff, G. William. 1967. *Who Rules America?* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Dowding, Keith. 2001. "Explaining Urban Regimes." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 25(1):7–19.
- Draus, Paul, Juliette Roddy, and Anthony McDuffie. 2018. "'It's about Half and Half': Austerity, Possibility and Daily Life inside a Depopulated Detroit Neighborhood." *City, Culture and Society* 14:37–46.
- Dunning, Claire. 2022. *Nonprofit Neighborhoods: An Urban History of Inequality and the American State*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Einhorn, Robin L. 1991. *Property Rules: Political Economy in Chicago, 1833-1872*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Fenno, Richard F. 1973. *Congressmen in Committees*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company.
- Florida, Richard L. 2012. *The Rise of the Creative Class Revisited*. New York: Basic Books.
- Forsyth, Ann. 2005. *Reforming Suburbia*. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press.
- Frederickson, H. George, Gary A. Johnson, and Curtis H. Wood. 2003. *The Adapted City: Institutional Dynamics and Structural Change*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Friedman, Milton. 1971. "The Euro-Dollar Market: Some First Principles." *Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review* 53:16–24.

- Garreau, Joel. 1991. *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier*. New York: Doubleday.
- Glaeser, Edward L., and Kristina Tobio. 2007. "The Rise of the Sunbelt." *NBER Working Paper Series* 13071:1–55.
- Gordon, Robert J. 2016. *The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living Since the Civil War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Gorina, Evgenia, and Craig Maher. 2016. *Measuring and Modeling Determinants of Fiscal Stress in US Municipalities*. Arlington, VA: Mercatus Center.
- Gryta, Thomas, and Ted Mann. 2020. *Lights Out: Pride, Delusion, and the Fall of General Electric*. Boston, MA: Mariner Books.
- Hallett, Tim, and Matt Gougherty. 2018. "Professional Education in the University Context: Toward an Inhabited Institutional View of Socialization." Pp. 144–80 in *Education in a New Society: Renewing the Sociology of Education*, edited by J. Mehta and S. Davies. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Harvey, David. 1982. *The Limits to Capital*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- . 2005. *The New Imperialism*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.
- . 2007. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.
- Hawley, Amos H. 1950. *Human Ecology: A Theory of Community Structure*. New York: The Ronald Press Company.
- Heller, Patrick, Partha Mukhopadhyay, and Michael Walton. 2016. "Cabal City: Regime Theory and Indian Urbanization." *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
- Hirsch, Arnold R. 1998. *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago 1940-1960*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Hoffmann, Tom D. 2014. "Municipal Bankruptcy Authorization Under Chapter 9: A Call for Uniformity Among States." *Saint Louis University Public Law Review* 34(1):215–38.
- Holborow, Marnie. 2007. "Language, Ideology and Neoliberalism." *Journal of Language and Politics* 6(1):51–73.
- Holian, Matthew J., and Marc D. Joffe. 2013. *Assessing Municipal Bond Default Probabilities*. Sacramento, CA: California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission.
- Holmes, Thomas J. 1998. "The Effect of State Policies on the Location of Manufacturing: Evidence from State Borders." *Journal of Political Economy* 106(4):667–705.

- Holzer, Harry J., Julie I. Lane, David B. Rosenblum, and Fredrik Andersson. 2011. *Where Are All The Good Jobs Going?* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Hunter, Floyd. 1953. *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Jackson, Kenneth T. 1985. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.
- Janowitz, Morris. 1984. "Introduction." Pp. vii–x in *The City: Suggestions for Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Jessop, Bob. 2005. "Fordism and Post-Fordism: A Critical Reformulation." Pp. 54–74 in *Pathways to Industrialization and Regional Development*, edited by M. Storper and A. J. Scott. London, U.K.: Routledge.
- Kaufman, Jason. 2002. *For the Common Good? American Civic Life and the Golden Age of Fraternity*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.
- Ki, Youn, and Misung Ahn. 2020. "Financialization of Non-Financial Industries, United States, 1980-2006." *Research in World Economy* 11(5):72–89.
- Ki, Youn, and Yongwoo Jeung. 2020. "Ideas, Interests, and the Transition to a Floating Exchange System." *Journal of Policy History* 32(2):151–82.
- Kimhi, Omer. 2010. "Chapter 9 of the Bankruptcy Code: A Solution in Search of a Problem." *Yale Journal on Regulation* 27(2):351–95.
- Kinder, Kimberley. 2016. *DIY Detroit: Making Do in a City Without Services*. Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press.
- King, Desmond, and Patrick Le Galès. 2017. "The Three Constituencies of the State: Why the State Has Lost Unifying Energy." *The British Journal of Sociology* 68(S1):S11–33.
- Kirkland, Stephane. 2013. *Paris Reborn: Napoléon III, Baron Haussmann, and the Quest to Build a Modern City*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Krippner, Greta R. 2011. *Capitalizing on Crisis: The Political Origins of the Rise of Finance*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kühn, Manfred. 2015. "Peripheralization: Theoretical Concepts Explaining Socio-Spatial Inequalities." *European Planning Studies* 23(2):367–78.

- Kühn, Manfred, and Matthias Bernt. 2013. "Peripheralization and Power - Theoretical Debates." Pp. 302–17 in *Peripheralization: The Making of Spatial Dependencies and Social Injustice*, edited by A. Fischer-Tahir and M. Naumann. Wiesbaden, Germany: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Lin, Ken-Hou, and Donald Tomaskovic-Devey. 2013. "Financialization and U.S. Income Inequality, 1970-2008." *American Journal of Sociology* 118(5):1284–1329.
- Lockard, W. Duane. 1954. "Legislative Politics in Connecticut." *American Political Science Review* 48(1):166–73.
- . 1959. *New England State Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Logan, John R., and Harvey L. Molotch. 2007. *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press.
- Long, Josh. 2010. *Weird City*. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press.
- Long, Justin R. 2002. "Enforcing Affirmative State Constitutional Obligations and *Sheff v. O'Neill*." *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 151:277–310.
- Lynd, Robert S., and Helen Merrell Lynd. 1929. *Middletown: A Study in Contemporary American Culture*. New York: Harcourt, Brace And Company.
- Mandelbaum, Seymour J. 1990. *Boss Tweed's New York*. Chicago, IL: Elephant Paperbacks, Ivan R. Dee.
- Markus, Gregory B., and Amy Krings. 2020. "Planning, Participation, and Power in a Shrinking City: The Detroit Works Project." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 42(8):1141–63.
- Martin, Isaac William. 2008. *The Permanent Tax Revolt: How the Property Tax Transformed American Politics*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Marwell, Nicole P., and Michael McQuarrie. 2013. "People, Place, and System: Organizations and the Renewal of Urban Social Theory." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 647:126–43.
- Masket, Seth E. 2009. *No Middle Ground: How Informal Party Organizations Control Nominations and Polarize Legislatures*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.
- Massey, Douglas. 1990. "American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass." *American Journal of Sociology* 96(2):329–57.

- Masuda, Hiroya 増田寛也. 2014. “For the Twenty-First Century Growth - Stop Declining Birth Rate - Regional Revitalization Strategy” [Seichō wo Tsuzukeru 21-Seiki no Tame ni - Sutoppu Shōshika - Chihō Genki Senryaku] ストップ少子化・地方元気戦略. *Japan Policy Council*.
- Mayhew, David R. 2004. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- McGranahan, David, and Timothy Wojan. 2007. “Recasting the Creative Class to Examine Growth Processes in Rural and Urban Counties.” *Regional Studies* 41(2):197–216.
- McGrath, Mike. 2022. “A Model for the Twenty First Century: Equity and Engagement in the Ninth Edition, Model City Charter.” *National Civic Review* 111(1):44–49.
- McKee, Clyde, and Nick Bacon. 2013. “Politics and the Transformation of Hartford.” Pp. 219–35 in *Confronting Urban Legacy: Rediscovering Hartford and New England’s Forgotten Cities*, edited by X. Chen and N. Bacon. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- McQuarrie, Michael. 2011. “Nonprofits and the Reconstruction of Urban “Governance: Housing Production and Community Development in Cleveland, 1975-2005.” Pp. 237–68 in *Politics and Partnerships: The Role of Voluntary Associations in America’s Political Past and Present*, edited by E. S. Clemens and D. Guthrie. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- . 2017. “The Revolt of the Rust Belt: Place and Politics in the Age of Anger.” *The British Journal of Sociology* 68(S1):S120–51.
- Menes, Rebecca. 2006. “Limiting the Reach of the Grabbing Hand: Graft and Growth in American Cities, 1880 to 1930.” Pp. 63–93 in *Corruption and Reform: Lessons from America’s Economic History*, edited by E. L. Glaeser and C. Goldin. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Merriam, Charles Edward. 1929. *Chicago: A More Intimate View of Urban Politics*. New York: The MacMillan Company.
- Merriman, Ben. 2019. *Conservative Innovators: How States Are Challenging Federal Power*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Meyer, John W., and Brian Rowan. 1977. “Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony.” *American Journal of Sociology* 83(2):340–63.
- Mills, C. Wright. 1956. *The Power Elite*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Molotch, Harvey L. 1976. “The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place.” *American Journal of Sociology* 82(2):309–32.

- . 1979. “Capital and Neighborhood in the United States: Some Conceptual Links.” *Urban Affairs Review* 14(3):289–312.
- Molotch, Harvey L., and John R. Logan. 1985. “Urban Dependencies: New Forms of Use and Exchange in U.S. Cities.” *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 21(2):143–69.
- Monkkonen, Eric H. 1995. *The Local State: Public Money and American Cities*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Neubeck, Kenneth J., and Richard E. Ratcliff. 1988. “Urban Democracy and the Power of Corporate Capital: Struggles over Downtown Growth and Neighborhood Stagnation in Hartford, Connecticut.” Pp. 299–332 in *Business Elites and Urban Development: Case Studies and Critical Perspectives*, edited by S. Cummings. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Okada, Tomohiro 岡田知弘. 2015. “Criticism against the Argument of ‘Disappearing Regional Localities’: From the Perspective of Regional Economic Studies” [Chihōshōmetsuron Hihan - Chiikikeizaigaku No Shitenkara] 地方消滅論批判 - 地域経済学の視点から. *Rural Issues Research [Nōgyō Mondai Kenkyū] 農業問題研究* 47(1):4–13.
- Pacewicz, Josh. 2016a. *Partisans and Partners: The Politics of the Post-Keynesian Society*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- . 2016b. “The City as a Fiscal Derivative: Financialization, Urban Development, and the Politics of Earmarking.” *City & Community* 15(3):264–88.
- Pacewicz, Josh, and John N. Robinson. 2021. “Pocketbook Policing: How Race Shapes Municipal Reliance on Punitive Fines and Fees in the Chicago Suburbs.” *Socio-Economic Review* 19(3):975–1003.
- Paddeu, Flaminia. 2017. “Legalising Urban Agriculture in Detroit: A Contested Way of Planning for Decline.” *Town Planning Review* 88(1):109–29.
- Park, Robert E. 1925. “The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment.” Pp. 1–46 in *The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment*, edited by R. E. Park, E. W. Burgess, and R. D. McKenzie. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Peck, Jamie. 2002. “Labor, Zapped/Growth, Restored? Three Moments of Neoliberal Restructuring in the American Labor Market.” *Journal of Economic Geography* 2:179–220.
- . 2014. “Pushing Austerity: State Failure, Municipal Bankruptcy and the Crises of Fiscal Federalism in the USA.” *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 7:17–44.
- Peck, Jamie, and Adam Tickell. 2002. “Neoliberalizing Space.” *Antipode* 34(3):380–404.

- Peterson, Paul E. 1981. *City Limits*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Phillips-Fein, Kim. 2017. *Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics*. New York: Metropolitan Books.
- Piketty, Thomas, and Emmanuel Saez. 2003. "Income Inequality in the United States, 1913-1998." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 118(1):1-39.
- Piore, Michael J., and Charles F. Sabel. 1984. *The Second Industrial Divide: Possibility for Prosperity*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.
- Polanyi, Karl. 2001. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Quillian, Lincoln. 1999. "Migration Patterns and the Growth of High-Poverty Neighborhoods, 1970-1990." *American Journal of Sociology* 105(1):1-37.
- Reiter, Howard L. 1979. "Democratic Resurgence and Party Decline in Connecticut." *Publius* 9(1):205-13.
- Revenga, Ana L. 1992. "Exporting Jobs? The Impact of Import Competition on Employment and Wages in U.S. Manufacturing." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 107(1):255-84.
- Rhodes, James. 2019. "Revitalizing the Neighborhood: The Practices and Politics of Rightsizing in Idora, Youngstown." *Urban Geography* 40(2):215-36.
- Rose, Gary L. 1992. *Connecticut Politics At The Crossroads*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc.
- Rosenman, Emily, and Samuel Walker. 2016. "Tearing Down the City to Save It? 'Back-Door Regionalism' and the Demolition Coalition in Cleveland, Ohio." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 48(2):273-91.
- Sabel, Charles F., and Gary Herrigel. 2018. "Collaborative Innovation in the Norwegian Oil and Gas Industry." Pp. 230-48 in *Petroleum Industry Transformations: Lessons from Norway and Beyond*, edited by T. Thune, O. A. Engen, and O. Wicken. London, U.K.: Routledge.
- Sacks, Michael Paul. 2013. "The Puerto Rican Effect on Hispanic Residential Segregation." Pp. 127-44 in *Confronting Urban Legacy: Rediscovering Hartford and New England's Forgotten Cities*, edited by X. Chen and N. Bacon. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Safford, Sean. 2009. *Why the Garden Club Couldn't Save Youngstown: The Transformation of the Rust Belt*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Sassen, Saskia. 2001. *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Schindler, Seth. 2016. "Detroit after Bankruptcy: A Case of Degrowth Machine Politics." *Urban Studies* 53(4):818–36.
- Schindler, Seth, Tom Gillespie, Nicola Banks, Mustafa Kemal Bayırbağ, Himanshu Burte, J. Miguel Kanai, and Neha Sami. 2020. "Deindustrialization in Cities of the Global South." *Area Development and Policy* 5(3):283–304.
- Schumpeter, Joseph A. 1994. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. London, U.K.: Routledge.
- Simmons, Louise. 2013. "Poverty, Inequality, Politics, and Social Activism in Hartford." Pp. 85–109 in *Confronting Urban Legacy: Rediscovering Hartford and New England's Forgotten Cities*, edited by X. Chen and N. Bacon. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Stern, Adam. 2009. "Connecticut's Income Tax Wars: A Brief History of the State's Personal Income Tax, 1915-1991 Part I." *Connecticut History Review* 48(2):135–63.
- Stone, Clarence N. 1976. *Economic Growth and Neighborhood Discontent: System Bias in the Urban Renewal Program of Atlanta*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.
- . 1989. *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta 1946-1988*. Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas.
- . 1993. "Urban Regimes and the Capacity to Govern: A Political Economy Approach." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 15(1):1–28.
- Sugrue, Thomas J. 2014. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Svara, James. 2020. "Revising the Model City Charter: The Case for Change." *National Civic Review* 109(3):35–45.
- Swanstrom, Todd. 1985. *The Crisis of Growth Politics: Cleveland, Kucinich, and the Challenge of Urban Populism*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Tani, Karen M. 2016. *States of Dependency: Welfare, Rights, and American Governance, 1935-1972*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Teaford, Jon C. 1984. *The Unheralded Triumph: City Government in America, 1870-1900*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Teles, Steven M. 2008. *The Rise of the Conservative Legal Movement: The Battle for Control of the Law*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Thompson, John B. 1990. *Ideology in Modern Culture: Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

- Tiebout, Charles M. 1956. "A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures." *The Journal of Political Economy* 64(5):416–24.
- Tolbert, Pamela S., and Lynne G. Zucker. 1983. "Institutional Sources of Change in the Formal Structure of Organizations: The Diffusion of Civil Service Reform, 1880-1935." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 28:22–39.
- Touraine, Alain. 1971. *The Post-Industrial Society: Tomorrow's Social History: Classes, Conflicts and Culture in the Programmed Society*. New York: Random House.
- Vargas, Robert, and Philip McHarris. 2017. "Race and State in City Police Spending Growth: 1980 to 2010." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 3(1):96–112.
- Wallace, Michael, and Andrew S. Fullerton. 2003. "Workers' Earnings in the New Economy." *Sociological Focus* 36(1):7–27.
- Wallis, John Joseph, Price V. Fishback, and Shawn Kantor. 2006. "Politics, Relief, and Reform: Roosevelt's Efforts to Control Corruption and Political Manipulation during the New Deal." Pp. 343–72 in *Corruption and Reform: Lessons from America's Economic History*, edited by E. L. Glaeser and C. Goldin. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Warner, Sam Bass Jr. 1987. *The Private City: Philadelphia in Three Periods of Its Growth, Second Edition*. Philadelphia, PA: The University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Wilson, William Julius. 1996. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Wirth, Peter, Volker Elis, Bernhard Müller, and Kenji Yamamoto. 2016. "Peripheralisation of Small Towns in Germany and Japan – Dealing with Economic Decline and Population Loss." *Journal of Rural Studies* 47:62–75.
- Wolman, Harold, Robert McManmon, Michael E. Bell, and David Brunori. 2010. "Comparing Local Government Autonomy Across States." Pp. 69–120 in *Property Tax and Local Autonomy*, edited by M. E. Bell, J. M. Youngman, and D. Brunori. Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.
- Yang, You-Ren, and Chih-hui Chang. 2007. "An Urban Regeneration Regime in China: A Case Study of Urban Redevelopment in Shanghai's Taipingqiao Area." *Urban Studies* 44(9):1809–26.
- York, Erica, and Jared Walczak. 2022. *State and Local Tax Burdens, Calendar Year 2022*. Washington, DC: Tax Foundation.
- Yue, Lori Qingyuan. 2015. "Community Constraints on the Efficacy of Elite Mobilization: The Issuance of Currency Substitutes during the Panic of 1907." *American Journal of Sociology* 120(6):1–46.

Newspaper and Magazine Articles, Other Documents

- Altimari, Daniela, and Christopher Keating. 2017a. "Democrats Call For Sales Tax Increase; Possible Vote July 18." *The Hartford Courant*, June 29.
- . 2017b. "Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin Says State Aid Helps, Backs Away From Bankruptcy." October 26.
- Amore, Dom. 2023. "Dom Amore: The Whalers Left Hartford, But the Hope of Bringing Them Back Never Goes Away." *The Hartford Courant*, June 13.
- Anderson, Janet. 1971a. "Ghetto Renewal Project Backed by City Chamber." *The Hartford Courant*, January 9, 15.
- . 1971b. "Secrecy Irritating: Hartford Process Inc. Mum on Plans." *The Hartford Courant*, August 16, 1, 15.
- Asylum Hills Neighborhood Association. 2023. "People." *Asylum Hills Neighborhood Association*. Retrieved June 10, 2023 (<https://www.asylumhill.org/people.html>).
- Bernstein, Leonard. 1983. "Corporate Cash, Clout Flow Through United Way." *The Hartford Courant*, February 17, 1, 20–21.
- Bertolini, Mark T., Christopher J. Swift, and Alan D. Schnitzer. 2017. "Pledge From CEOs: We'll Give \$10M To Help Hartford." *The Hartford Courant*, March 2.
- Blair, Russell, and Kenneth R. Gosselin. 2017. "Moody's: State Budget Crisis Threatens Financial Health Of Dozens Of Connecticut Municipalities." *The Hartford Courant*, October 16.
- Bronin, Luke A. 2016. "Bronin: Hartford Needs State Power To Right Sinking Ship." *The Hartford Courant*, March 17.
- Buchner, Bill. 2022. "To Avoid Pension Cuts, Connecticut State Workers Are Retiring in Big Numbers." *WSHU*, June 2.
- Calvey, Mark. 2022. "Will Wells Fargo's San Francisco Headquarters Head to Texas?" *San Francisco Business Times*, October 11.
- Carlesso, Jenna. 2010. "Pedro Segarra Poised To Become Hartford Mayor." *The Hartford Courant*, June 23.
- . 2016a. "Bronin: Bankruptcy An Option, Though Not A Good One." *The Hartford Courant*, November 7.

- . 2016b. “Bronin Halts ‘Non-Essential’ Hiring, Spending To Address \$9M Budget Shortfall In Hartford.” *The Hartford Courant*, February 25.
- . 2016c. “State Panel Weighs In On Hartford’s Financial Woes.” *The Hartford Courant*, November 4.
- . 2017a. “Hartford Council Leaders Say They Oppose Bankruptcy.” *The Hartford Courant*, September 11.
- . 2017b. “Hartford Hires Bankruptcy Lawyer As City Officials Weigh Options.” *The Hartford Courant*, July 6.
- . 2017c. “Hartford Moves Closer to Bankruptcy, Soliciting Proposals From Law Firms.” *The Hartford Courant*, May 9.
- . 2018a. “Oversight Board Approves Budget, End-Of-Year Subsidy For Hartford.” *The Hartford Courant*, June 7.
- . 2018b. “State Oversight Board Approves Five-Year Recovery Plan For Hartford.” *The Hartford Courant*, May 3.
- Cohen, Jeff. 2015. “Luke Bronin, Gov. Malloy’s Lawyer, to Run for Hartford Mayor.” *Connecticut Public Radio*, January 14.
- Condon, Tom. 2011. “Visionary ’70s Plan Reimagined Region.” *The Hartford Courant*, March 13.
- Darien Times. 2017. “Commentary: Ten Things You Need to Know About the Governor’s Budget.” *Darien Times*, March 11.
- Dixon, Ken, and Michael P. Mayko. 2020. “‘A True Champion of the People’: Gov., Friends Recall State Sen. Edwin Gomes, Who Died after Car Crash.” *The Connecticut Post*, December 23.
- Dylan, Jonah. 2023. “What Renovations to Hartford’s XL Center Mean for UConn Games, Concerts and CT’s Pursuit of the NHL.” *CT Insider*, June 25.
- Fitch, Marc E. 2021a. *Connecticut State Employee Unions Willing to “Explore Positive Issues” in SEBAC Agreement but Will Make No Concessions*. Hartford, CT: Yankee Institute.
- . 2021b. *State Retirees to See Pension Bump as Inflation Jumps 6 Percent*. Hartford, CT: Yankee Institute.
- Fox61. 2015. “The Real Story - Mayoral Candidate Luke Bronin.” *Fox61*, October 11.

- French, Barbara. 1983. "Budd Knows Travelers Can't Live on Its Past Glory." *The Hartford Courant*, January 27, 1, 20–21.
- . 1984. "'Bishops' Reduce Civic Role in Changing Corporate Climate." *The Hartford Courant*, December 2, 1, 32.
- General Electric Company. 2015. "GE Statement on Potential Increase to Connecticut Taxes."
- . 2016. "GE Moves Headquarters to Boston."
- Giacomo, Carol. 2015. "Remembering a Force for Transformation in Hartford." *The New York Times*, September 18.
- Goldberger, Paul. 1996. "James W. Rouse, 81, Dies; Socially Conscious Developer Built New Towns and Malls." *The New York Times*, April 10, 17.
- Gosselin, Kenneth R. 2022. "In Hartford, More Than 1,500 Properties Don't Pay Local Real Estate Taxes. Here's What They Are." *The Hartford Courant*, May 8.
- Grant, Steve. 1983. "Connolly a Man of Contrasts." *The Hartford Courant*, February 1, 1, 8–9.
- Grava, Bill. 1975. "Civic Center Demonstration Shows Hispanic Frustration." *The Hartford Courant*, January 22, 59.
- Greenblatt, Alan. 2017. "How Did America's Richest State Become Such a Fiscal Mess?" *Governing Magazine*, August 29.
- Groves, Martha. 1995. "Service Now Counts With Fortune 500." *The Los Angeles Times*, April 26.
- Gryta, Thomas. 2017. "What's Behind GE's Move From the Connecticut Suburbs to Boston." *The Wall Street Journal*, May 17.
- Haigh, Susan. 2017. "Hartford Looking to State to Help Prevent Bankruptcy." *U.S. News & World Report*, May 29.
- House, Dennis. 2023. "Gov. Ned Lamont Has Group with Money to Buy Arizona Coyotes, Move Them to Hartford." *WTNH News 8*, June 11.
- Hussey, Kristin, and Eli Rosenberg. 2017. "What's the Insurance Capital Without Aetna? Hartford May Find Out." *The New York Times*, June 11.
- Johnson, Kirk. 1993. "The 1993 Elections: Connecticut; Mayor Perry Is Denied a Fourth Term by Voters in Hartford." *The New York Times*, November 4.
- Judson, George. n.d. "U.S. Judge Blocks Bridgeport From Bankruptcy Court." *The New York Times*, 2.

- Keating, Christopher. 2017. "Lawmakers Won't Pass State Budget By End Of Session Next Week." *The Hartford Courant*, June 1.
- Kravsow, Irving. 1958. "Opposition To Tax Hike Pledged By Democrats." *The Hartford Courant*, June 26, 3.
- Lacy, John. 1970. "Behind the Skyline... a City in Serious Trouble." *The Hartford Courant*, August 23, 2-4, 6.
- Levick, Diane. 1987. "The Test of James Lynn." *The Hartford Courant*, September 14, 1, 20-21.
- Lewis, Gregory. 1998. "Merger Drops S.F. a Notch." *San Francisco Examiner*, April 14, 1.
- Loomis, Worth, and Linda Case. 1990. "Should Hartford Bring Back the 'Corporate Bishops'?" *The Hartford Courant*, June 10, 3.
- Lumsden, Arthur J. 1971. "The Greater Hartford Corp." *The Hartford Courant*, January 19, 20.
- Mahoney, Matt. 2016. "Luke Bronin Spends First Day in Office as 67th Mayor of Hartford." *Fox61*, January 1.
- Majumdar, Dave. 2011. "GE, Rolls Royce Stop Funding F-35 Alt Engine." *Defense News*, December 2.
- Marshall, Marilyn. 1988. "Carrie Saxon Perry: More Than A Pretty Hat." *Ebony*, April, 60, 62, 64, 66.
- Martin, Antoinette. 1983. "'Bishops' of the Board Rooms Set City's Course." *The Hartford Courant*, January 23, 1.
- McCullum, Charles. 1983. "Filer Is First Among Equals." *The Hartford Courant*, January 25, 1, 10-11.
- McEnroe, Colin. 2015. "Remembering Nick Carbone, Hartford's Unlikely Power Broker." *Connecticut Public Radio*, September 16.
- McQuaid, Hugh. 2014. "Connecticut Lawmakers Elect Leaders; Witkos Tapped as GOP Leader Pro Tem." *The New Haven Register Citizen*, November 6.
- Miller, Doug. 2017. "Planned Cities Have Gone Out of Style, but Columbia Stil Influences Urban Design." *Howard Magazine*, June 8.
- Morse, Charles F. J. 1959. "Agency Orders Review Of McGraw's Financing For Constitution Plaza." *The Hartford Courant*, November 12, 1-2.

- . 1960. “Travelers Makes Offer To Finance Plaza; Phoenix Mutual Picks Site For New Home.” *The Hartford Courant*, January 30, 1–2.
- . 1983. “It’s Hard To Be Optimistic When You’re Outnumbered 7-to-1.” *The Hartford Courant*, January 31, 11.
- Mouawad, Jad. 2010. “James T. Lynn, Budget Director in Ford Administration, Dies at 83.” *The New York Times*, December 10.
- Nickisch, Curt. 2016. “GE’s Big City Move Part Of Larger Tech Trend.” *NPR News*, January 16.
- Papirno, Elissa. 1975. “2 Puerto Rican Directors Resign From Process Board.” *The Hartford Courant*, January 21, 2.
- Papirno, Elissa, and Bill Grava. 1975. “Process Head Rejects Puerto Rican ‘Cutback.’” *The Hartford Courant*, January 18, 1, 8.
- Pazniokas, Mark. 2014. “Malloy Counsel Bronin Leaving to Explore Hartford Mayoral Run.” *The Connecticut Mirror*, December 9.
- . 2019. “Debunking Connecticut’s Enduring Tax Myth.” *The Connecticut Mirror*, November 21.
- . 2023. “Why Connecticut Is Too Cautious for Progressives, Despite Being Deep Blue.” *The Hartford Courant*, June 13.
- Phaneuf, Keith M. 2017. “House, Senate Democrats Unable to Agree on Provisional Budget.” *The Connecticut Mirror*, June 27.
- Phaneuf, Keith M., and Mark Pazniokas. 2017. “Malloy Vetoes Budget, Seeks ‘Honest Dialogue.’” *The Connecticut Mirror*, September 28.
- Rojas, Rick, and Mary Williams Walsh. 2017. “Hartford, With Its Finances in Disarray, Veers Toward Bankruptcy.” *The New York Times*, August 15.
- Russ, Hilary. 2017. “Connecticut Governor Vetoes Budget as Spending Cuts Loom.” *Reuters*, September 28.
- Shih, Gerry. 2009. “Harry J. Gray, Who Led the Rise of United Technologies, Dies at 89.” *The New York Times*, July 9.
- Smith, Gene. 1971. “G.E. Plans Move To Connecticut.” *The New York Times*, July 3, 29.
- The Hartford Courant. 1958. “Democratic Platform Asks Support From GOP.” *The Hartford Courant*, October 26, 1.

- . 1959. “Further Doubt and Delay in Financing Redevelopment.” *The Hartford Courant*, December 17, 22.
- . 1960. “Redevelopment at Last.” *The Hartford Courant*, January 30, 8.
- . 1970. “Huge Plan Unveiled To Rebuild Region.” *The Hartford Courant*, April 10, 1, 33.
- . 1971. “General Electric Plans Office Facility in State.” *The Hartford Courant*, July 3, 3.
- . 1972. “The Corporate Good Citizen.” *The Hartford Courant*, March 6, 23.
- . 1986. “Gourmet Gala Benefit Features Celebrity Cooks and Judges.” *The Hartford Courant*, March 26, 10.
- . 1987. “The 26 Largest Employers in Greater Hartford.” *The Hartford Courant*, January 5, 16.
- . 1994. “John Filer Dies.” *The Hartford Courant*, September 19.
- . 2000. “Olcott Damon Smith Dies At 93.” *The Hartford Courant*, July 25.
- . 2001a. “Lebed, Hartzel ‘Hank’ Z.” *The Hartford Courant*, November 13.
- . 2001b. “Newell, Robert L.” *The Hartford Courant*, January 3.
- . 2002. “John Armstrong; Ex-Cigna Vice President.” *The Hartford Courant*, September 15.
- . 2013. “Hartford’s Constitution Plaza: Potential Still Unfolding.” *The Hartford Courant*, September 25.
- . 2015. “Nick Carbone, Hartford’s Last Political Boss, Shaped City In The ’70s.” *The Hartford Courant*, September 16.
- . 2016a. “Moody’s Cites Hartford’s ‘Weak Financial Position,’ Drops Bond Rating.” *The Hartford Courant*, April 20.
- . 2016b. “Moody’s Drops Hartford’s Bond Rating - Again.” *The Hartford Courant*, October 7.
- . 2017a. “Bertolini Letter to Employees Offers Glimpse of a Transformed Aetna.” *The Hartford Courant*, June 3.
- . 2017b. “Denis Mullane, Civic Leader And Connecticut Mutual Chief Executive, Dies.” *The Hartford Courant*, January 6.

- . 2017c. “Worth Loomis, ‘Bishop’ Of City, Dies at 94.” *The Hartford Courant*, July 22.
- . 2019. “DeRoy C. Thomas.” *The Hartford Courant*, March 24.
- The New York Times. 1971. “Land Deal Spurs Talk of G.E. Move to Connecticut.” *The New York Times*, March 7, 55.
- . 2003. “John Bailey, 59, Connecticut Law Official.” *The New York Times*, September 23.
- Thompson, Derek. 2017. “What on Earth Is Wrong With Connecticut?” *The Atlantic*, July 5.
- Todd, Gail. 2000. “The Bank That Disappeared.” *San Francisco Examiner*, April 10, 21.
- Vittal, Jeevan. 2016a. “Hartford Unions Agree to Work with Bronin Administration on Budget Crisis.” *Fox61*, April 7.
- . 2016b. “Hundreds Rally, Protest at Hartford City Council Meeting.” *Fox61*, April 4.
- Wack, Kevin. 2020. “How New York Became Wells Fargo’s New Center of Power.” *American Banker*, February 26.
- Walsh, Andrew. 1983. “Coalition Formed To Offer Information on Arms Race.” *The Hartford Courant*, December 22, 1, 18.
- Wyshynski, Greg. 2023. “Coyotes’ Arena Plan in Tempe Rejected by Voters; Future Cloudy.” *ESPN*, May 17.
- Young, Thora. 1973. “DevCo Agent, Resident Clash at Meeting.” *The Hartford Courant*, October 12, 18.
- . 1975. “1974 - The Year of DevCo.” *The Hartford Courant*, January 1, 44.
- Young, Thora, and J. Herbert Smith. 1973. “Process Buying Coventry Land.” *The Hartford Courant*, January 19, 1, 2.
- Zaiman, Jack. 1965. “84 Delegates Open Convention Today.” *The Hartford Courant*, July 1, 1.

Statistical Resources

- Acuitas Economics LLC. 2020. *City of Columbia: Property Tax Capacity Analysis*. Columbia, SC: Acuitas Economics LLC.
- Bloomberg Law. 2019. “Bloomberg Law Search.”

- Fortune. 1970a. “1970 The 50 Largest Commercial Banks.” *Fortune*, May.
- . 1970b. “1970 The 50 Largest Life-Insurance Companies.” *Fortune*, May.
- . 1970c. “1970 The 50 Largest Retailing Companies.” *Fortune*, May.
- . 1970d. “1970 The 50 Largest Transportation Companies.” *Fortune*, May.
- . 1970e. “1970 The 50 Largest Utilities.” *Fortune*, May.
- . 1970f. “1970 The 500 Largest Industrial Corporations.” *Fortune*, May.
- . 1980. “1980 The 500 Largest Industrial Corporations.” *Fortune*, May 5.
- . 1990a. “1990 Largest U.S. Industrial Corporations.” *Fortune*, April 23.
- . 1990b. “1990 The 50 Largest Diversified Financial Companies.” *Fortune*, June 4.
- . 1990c. “1990 The 50 Largest Life Insurance Companies.” *Fortune*, June 4.
- . 1990d. “1990 The 50 Largest Retailing Companies.” *Fortune*, June 4.
- . 1990e. “1990 The 50 Largest Savings Institutions.” *Fortune*, June 4.
- . 1990f. “1990 The 50 Largest Transportation Companies.” *Fortune*, June 4.
- . 1990g. “1990 The 50 Largest Utilities.” *Fortune*, June 4.
- . 1990h. “1990 The 100 Largest Commercial Banking Companies.” *Fortune*, June 4.
- . 1990i. “1990 The 100 Largest Diversified Service Companies.” *Fortune*, June 4.
- . 2000. “2000 500 Largest U.S. Corporations.” *Fortune*, April 17.
- . 2010. “2010 Largest U.S. Corporations.” *Fortune*, May 3.
- . 2022. “2022 Fortune 500.” *Fortune*.

Lafayette Consolidated Government. 2012. *Lafayette Consolidated Government Adopted Operating and Capital Budget FY 2012-2013*. Lafayette, LA: Lafayette Consolidated Government.

Medioli, Alfred, Kumar Kanthan, Varun Agarwal, Minh Bui, David Strungis, Veronica Zheng, and Daniel Gates. 2018. *US Municipal Bond Defaults and Recoveries, 1970-2017*. 1110152. New York: Moody’s Investors Service, Inc.

- Medioli, Alfred, David Strungis, Varun Agarwal, Veronica Zheng, and Daniel Gates. 2017. *US Municipal Bond Defaults and Recoveries, 1970-2016*. 1059508. New York: Moody's Investors Service, Inc.
- Office of Fiscal Analysis. 1990. *The State Budget for the 1990-91 Fiscal Year: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 1991. *The State Budget for the 1991-92 Fiscal Year: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 1992. *The State Budget for the 1992-93 Fiscal Year: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 1993. *Connecticut State Budget 1993-95: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 1994. *Connecticut State Budget 1993-95 Revisions: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 1995. *Connecticut State Budget 1995-97: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 1996. *Connecticut State Budget 1995-97 Revisions: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 1997. *Connecticut State Budget 1997-99: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 1998. *Connecticut State Budget 1997-99 Revisions: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 1999. *Connecticut State Budget 1999-2001: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2000. *Connecticut State Budget 1999-2001 Revisions: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2001. *Connecticut State Budget 2001-2003: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.

- . 2002. *Connecticut State Budget 2001-2003 Revisions: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2003. *Connecticut State Budget 2003-2005: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2004. *Connecticut State Budget 2003-2005 Revisions: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2005. *Connecticut State Budget 2005-2007: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2006. *Connecticut State Budget 2005-2007 Revisions: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2007. *Connecticut State Budget 2007-2009: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2008. *Connecticut State Budget 2007-2009 Revisions: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2009. *Connecticut State Budget 2009-2011: A Summary of Revenue Appropriations and Bonds Authorized by the General Assembly*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2010. *Connecticut State Budget: 2010-2011 Revisions*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2011a. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 12 & FY 13 Biennium*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2011b. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 12 & FY 13 Biennium Part II Summary & Schedules*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2012. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 13 Revisions*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2013. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 14 & FY 15 Budget*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2014. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 15 Revisions*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.

- . 2015. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 16 & FY 17 Budget*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2016. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 17 Revisions*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2018a. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 18 & FY 19 Budget*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2018b. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 19 Revisions*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2019. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 20 and FY 21*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2021. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 22 and FY 23*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- . 2022. *Connecticut State Budget: FY 23 Revisions*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly.
- Office of the State Comptroller. 2023a. “Comptroller’s Reports.” *Connecticut Office of the State Comptroller*. Retrieved July 27, 2023 (<https://www.osc.ct.gov/reports/index.html>).
- . 2023b. “OpenBudget.” *Connecticut Office of the State Comptroller*. Retrieved August 4, 2023 (<https://openbudget.ct.gov/#!/year/default>).
- Schiavino-Narvaez, Beth. 2016. *Hartford Public Schools Superintendent’s Adopted Budget Summary FY 2016-17*. Hartford, CT: Hartford Public Schools.
- The Bureau of Economic Analysis. 2022. “State Annual Summary Statistics: Personal Income, GDP, Consumer Spending, Price Indexes, and Employment - Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Percent Change from Preceding Period).”
- The City of Hartford. 2004. *City Council’s Adopted Budget: Fiscal Year 2004-2005*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2005. *City Council’s Adopted Budget: Fiscal Year 2005-2006*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2006. *City Council’s Adopted Budget: Fiscal Year 2006-2007*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2007. *City Council’s Adopted Budget: Fiscal Year 2007-2008*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.

- . 2008. *City Council's Adopted Budget: Fiscal Year 2008-2009*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2009. *City Council's Adopted Budget: Fiscal Year 2009-2010*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2010. *City Council's Adopted Budget: Fiscal Year 2010-2011*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2011. *City Council's Adopted Budget: Fiscal Year 2011-2012*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2012. *City Council's Adopted Budget: Fiscal Year 2012-2013*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2013. *City of Hartford Adopted Budget Fiscal Year 2013-2014*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2014. *City of Hartford Adopted Budget Fiscal Year 2014-2015*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2015. *City of Hartford Adopted Budget FY 2015-2016*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2016. *City of Hartford FY2017 Adopted Budget*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2017. *City of Hartford FY2018 Adopted Budget*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2018. *City of Hartford FY2019 Adopted Budget*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2019. *City of Hartford FY2020 Adopted Budget*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2020. *City of Hartford FY2021 Adopted Budget*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2021. *City of Hartford FY2022 Adopted Budget*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- . 2022. *City of Hartford FY2023 Adopted Budget*. Hartford, CT: The City of Hartford.
- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts. 2023. "Enacted Budget - Statewide Summary."
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2023. "CPI Inflation Calculator." *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*. Retrieved June 25, 2023 (https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm).
- U.S. Census Bureau. 1900. "1900 Decennial Census."
- . 1950. "1950 Decennial Census."

- . 1960. “1960 Decennial Census.”
- . 1970. “1970 Decennial Census.”
- . 1980. “1980 Decennial Census.”
- . 1990. “1990 Decennial Census.”
- . 2000. “2000 Decennial Census.”
- . 2005. “Connecticut - Race and Hispanic Origin for Selected Large Cities and Other Places: Earliest Census to 1990.”
- . 2010. “2010 Decennial Census.” *Census.Gov*. Retrieved July 22, 2023 (https://data.census.gov/table?q=2010+decennial+census&t=Hispanic+or+Latino&g=010XX00US_040XX00US09_160XX00US0937000_310XX00US25540).
- . 2018. “Projected Population Size and Births, Deaths, and Migration: Projections for the United States, 2017-2060.”
- . 2020. “2020 Decennial Census.” *Census.Gov*. Retrieved July 22, 2023 (https://data.census.gov/table?q=2020+decennial+census&t=Hispanic+or+Latino&g=010XX00US_040XX00US09_160XX00US0937000_310XX00US25540).
- . 2021a. “B03001: Hispanic or Latino Origin by Specific Origin.” *Census.Gov*. Retrieved July 22, 2023 (https://data.census.gov/table?q=B03001:+HISPANIC+OR+LATINO+ORIGIN+BY+SPECIFIC+ORIGIN&g=010XX00US_040XX00US09_160XX00US0937000_310XX00US25540&tid=ACSDT5Y2021.B03001).
- . 2021b. “B19083: Gini Index of Income Inequality.” *Census.Gov*. Retrieved July 18, 2023 ([https://data.census.gov/table?q=gini&g=010XX00US\\$0400000&tid=ACSDT1Y2021.B19083](https://data.census.gov/table?q=gini&g=010XX00US$0400000&tid=ACSDT1Y2021.B19083)).
- . 2021c. “S1701: Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months.” *Census.Gov*. Retrieved July 20, 2023 (https://data.census.gov/table?q=Poverty&g=010XX00US_040XX00US09_160XX00US0937000&tid=ACSST5Y2021.S1701).
- . 2021d. “S1901: Income in the Past 12 Months (In 2021 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars).” *Census.Gov*. Retrieved July 18, 2023 ([https://data.census.gov/table?q=median+household+income&g=010XX00US\\$0400000](https://data.census.gov/table?q=median+household+income&g=010XX00US$0400000)).

- . 2021e. “S2201: Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).” *Census.Gov*. Retrieved July 20, 2023 (https://data.census.gov/table?q=Poverty&g=010XX00US_040XX00US09_160XX00US0937000&tid=ACST1Y2021.S2201&moe=false).
- . 2022. “Gazetteer Files.” *Census.Gov*. Retrieved August 4, 2023 (<https://www.census.gov/geographies/reference-files/time-series/geo/gazetteer-files.html>).
- U.S. Office of Management and Budget. 2023. “Historical Tables.” *The White House*. Retrieved August 7, 2023 (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/historical-tables/>).
- U.S. Office of Management and Budget and Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. 2023. “Federal Surplus or Deficit [-] as Percent of Gross Domestic Product.” *FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis*. Retrieved July 3, 2023 (<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/FYFSGDA188S>).