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Gubernatorial Candidate Dan Drew: CT Needs Single-Payer Healthcare, Tolls, Free College & Legalized Pot

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Middletown Mayor Dan Drew, who's running for governor, positioned himself as a candidate of the progressive wing of the Democratic Party during a recent visit to Darien.

Speaking before the Darien Democratic Town Committee on Thursday, July 13, Drew talked about some of his proposed solutions to the state's budget woes. Shortfalls in tax revenue, have swollen the state's potential budget deficit to \$1.7 billion.

"There's no silver bullet," he said.

To solve this problem, he recommended legalizing and taxing recreational marijuana, instituting highway tolls, raising the state income tax, and implementing various state and municipal government reforms.

But he cautioned, "We have to do this carefully and intelligently, and we have to consult an awful lot of people."

Many of his proposals center on a state government focused on stabilizing Connecticut's middle class.

Drew wants a universal single-payer healthcare system in Connecticut. By uncoupling health insurance from employment, people can change jobs and start small businesses without fear of losing employer based health insurance.

"Morally, we have to make sure that everyone has healthcare," he said. "It's critically important that everyone be able to go to the doctor [...] when they're sick. If you don't have that, you don't have anything [...] With the proposals coming out of Washington, we have to protect our people, for moral reasons and for economic reasons."

— *Find out more about candidate for governor Dan Drew [here](#).*

Having healthcare is a personal issue for him. The GOP healthcare plan currently makes organ donation a pre-existing condition, a status that Drew, who donated a kidney to one of his constituents, could gain if the GOP proposal is passed.

"Our health is a right," he said. "And the only way to guarantee that everyone has that right is through a single-payer system provided at the state level."

Drew is also a supporter of free higher education in Connecticut's state and community colleges. He believes in tailoring higher education to the growth needs of industry. Defense contractor Pratt and Whitney was raised as an example.

"They have a trillion dollars in back orders from the Pentagon [...]," he said. "Those companies have tremendous workforce needs they need to fulfill right now."

Drew favors initiatives aimed at educating workers for jobs in demand in Connecticut, and incentivizing businesses to come to Connecticut by easing regulations and red tape.

He is also a supporter of the legalization of recreational marijuana and increasing the state's minimum wage.

Dan Drew's Experience in Government and Beyond

Drew has been the mayor of Middletown for almost seven years. During that period, city departments were reorganized, and restoration projects changed the waterfront and public parks. To lower healthcare costs for elderly residents, he instituted a prescription drug discount program.

He also negotiated FedEx's purchase of a 264-acre site in Middletown after Aetna left. The construction of the facility is projected to bring over 1,000 jobs to the town.

Drew was an emergency medical technician at age 18; after graduating from the University of Connecticut, he became a journalist who broke stories on political corruption. He has also worked at Middletown's Community Renewal Team, where he developed a welfare-to-work program providing job training to single mothers.

Despite Connecticut's problems, Drew is optimistic about the state's prospects.

"We have incredible people here, we have extraordinary values here," he said. "We can be committed to an extremely bright future if we just make some adjustments that set us down the right pathway."