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Rallying Support for Nonprofits

There are times when subtlety is needed to advance public policy objectives of charitable nonprofits. Then there are times when the calls for action need to be public, loud, and voiced by as many people as possible. Nonprofits in **Connecticut**, **Massachusetts**, and **New York** recently deemed it necessary to engage in mass mobilization to alert policymakers, the media, and the public to the need for funding increases and other legislative changes. Nonprofits showed up in large numbers to advance their common agenda. The events were as profound as they were impactful.



In Connecticut, the **CT Community Nonprofit Alliance** held a [Nonprofit Rally & Lobby Day](#) on May 24 to make sure funding increases for nonprofits performing services for governments are included in the final budget being debated. At least 1,000 nonprofit professionals and supporters attended and made the case for why these increases are necessary for communities in the state. Twenty-one lawmakers also spoke to the crowd, expressing their support.

To prepare attendees for the event, the CT Alliance created a [toolkit](#) with logistics and tips on how to request meetings with legislators and [Leave Behind forms](#) with legislative requests. They even ordered colorful, matching t-shirts to stand out when on the capital grounds. Building on the momentum from their event, The Alliance will engage in more [nonprofit advocacy at the Capitol](#) on May 30 for attendees to meet with legislators and ask them to increase funding for nonprofits.



Also in May, **Providers' Council**, Massachusetts' largest human services membership association, held its [annual Caring Force](#) rally in the Great Hall of the Capitol to advocate for its Pro-Workforce Legislative Agenda. [This year's rally](#) had nearly 500 participants (dressed in yellow!), featured nonprofit advocate speakers, and recognized two legislative champions. After the rally, attendees went to most legislative offices to discuss two bills that would create a [student loan repayment program](#) for human services workers, and another to [ensure a livable wage](#) for nonprofit human services workers. Providers' Council also launched a new website, [The Caring Force in the News](#), that highlights updates and testimonials from the sector. See the video of the event:

In New York City, more than 100 human service providers participated in "[A Day Without Human Services](#)," a campaign in which participating organizations paused their work on non-life saving activities so the city would see the results of continuously underfunding nonprofits. Nonprofits providing human services on behalf of the government are seeking a 6.5% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for the estimated 125,000 workers at nonprofits under city contracts and grants. Organizations were asked to consider [shutting down 30% of their programming](#) on the day of action in recognition that 30% is the estimated wage gap the city reimburses nonprofits compared to their counterparts in other sectors. More than six thousand people reportedly participated in a rally outside of City Hall as they demonstrated what a day without their services looked like.

These are just three variations on the theme of how nonprofits can demonstrate to policymakers that the services charitable organizations provide are essential, are enormously well supported by the public, and must be respected and properly funded.