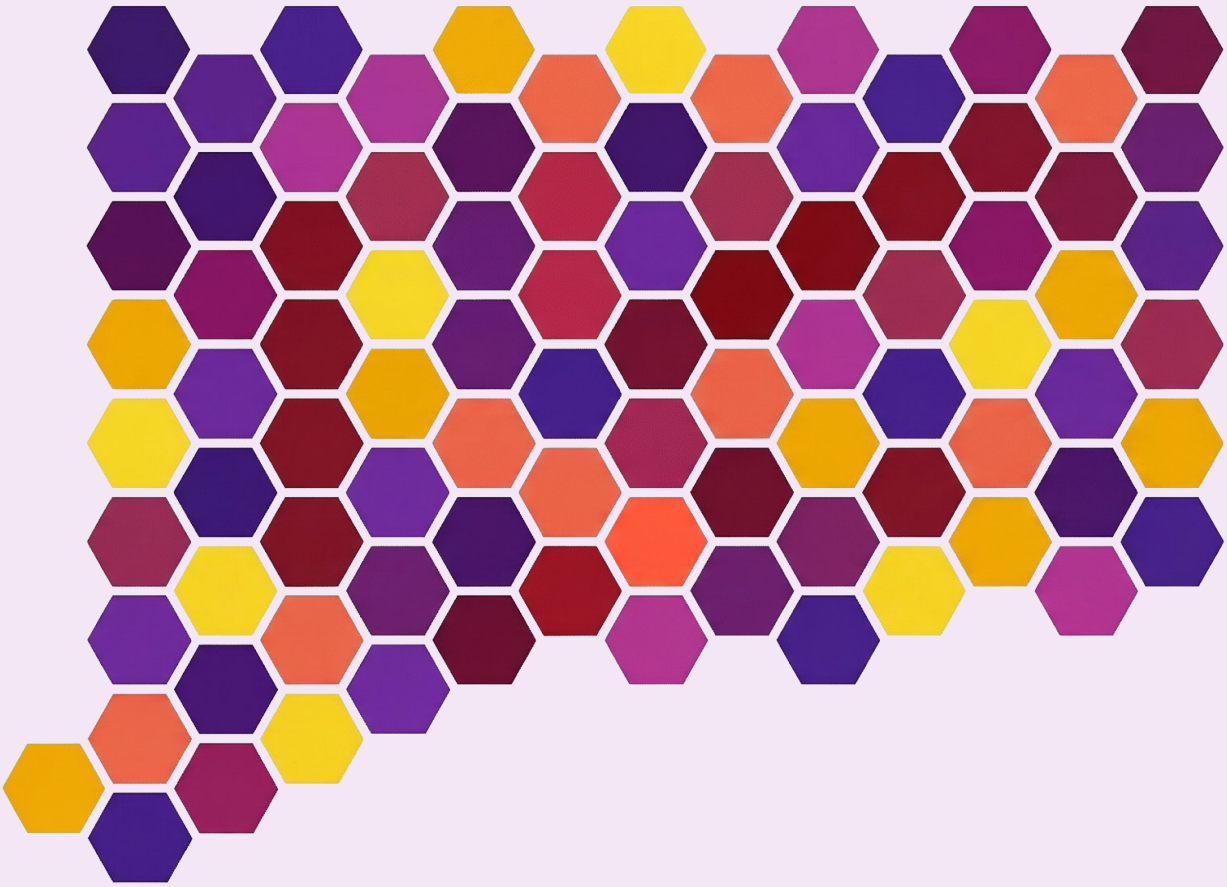
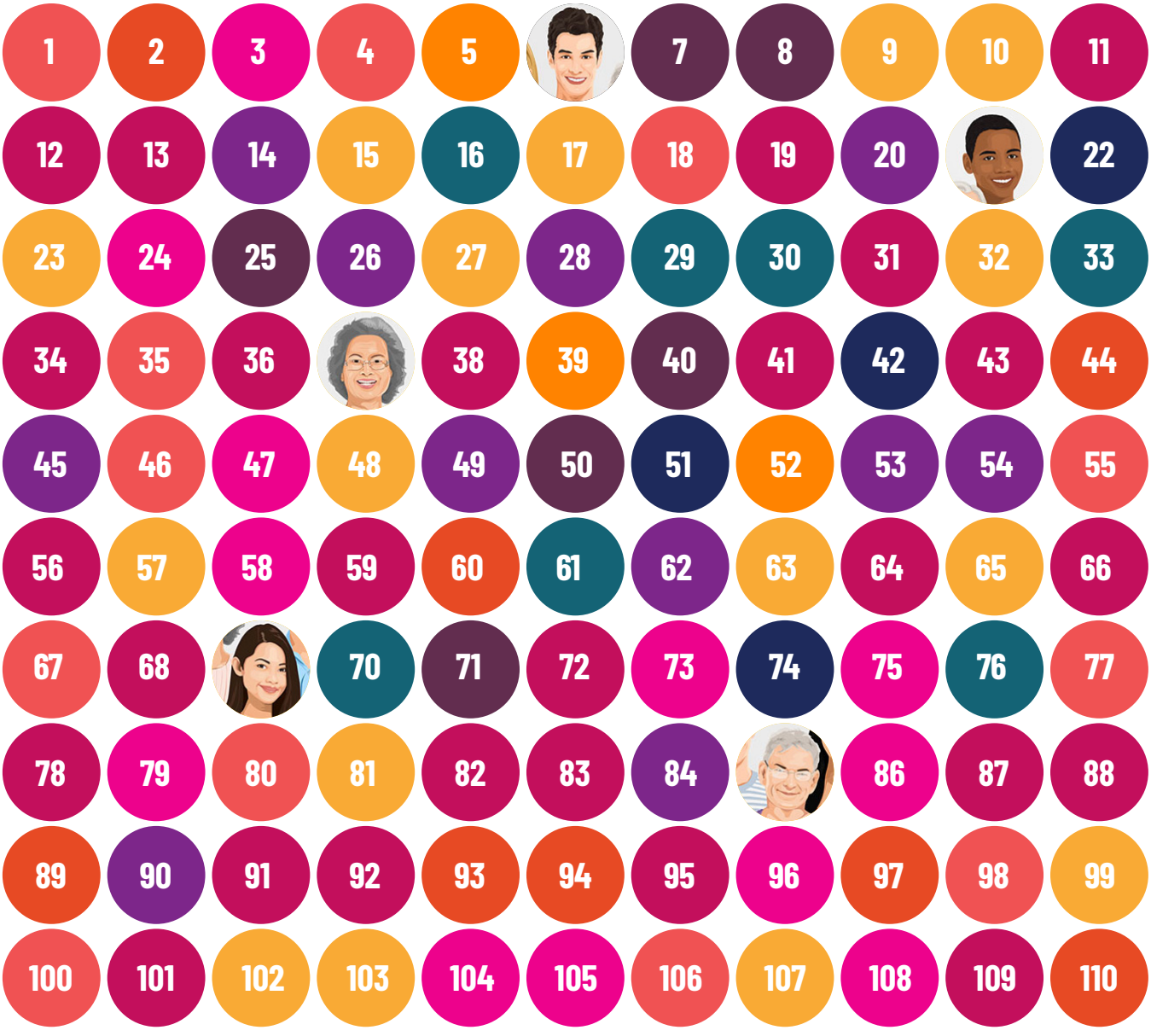


Welcome Kit

CONNECTICUT
CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON PROPERTY TAXES



Congratulations!

We are pleased to confirm that you are 1 of 110 members randomly selected to participate on the Connecticut Citizens' Assembly on Property Taxes.

Serving on a Citizens' Assembly is a special responsibility.

Together, you and your fellow members will learn, discuss, deliberate, and create recommendations.

It is up to each member to work in good faith on behalf of all Connecticut residents whom you will endeavor to represent and serve.

CONNECTICUT CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

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CONNECTICUT CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

Dear Assembly Members,

Congratulations, and thank you for your commitment to serving on the Connecticut Citizens' Assembly on Property Taxes.

You have been selected to participate in a historic initiative that brings together residents from across Connecticut to examine one of the most important and enduring public policy challenges facing our state. Over the next four months, you will work alongside fellow Assembly members to learn about Connecticut's property tax system, hear from experts and stakeholders with diverse perspectives, engage in thoughtful deliberation, and develop recommendations for policymakers to consider.

Property taxes affect every Connecticut resident and play a critical role in funding local services, schools, and community infrastructure. At the same time, they have long been identified as a significant contributor to affordability challenges for families, businesses, and communities throughout the state. Your work will help explore potential solutions and provide informed, citizen-driven recommendations for the future.

Your role in this process is both important and unique. As members of the Assembly, you are not expected to arrive as experts. Rather, you have been selected to represent the diverse experiences, backgrounds, and viewpoints of Connecticut residents. Through respectful dialogue, careful consideration of evidence, and collaboration with your fellow participants, you will help shape recommendations that reflect the values and priorities of communities across our state.

Citizens' assemblies have been successfully used around the world to address complex public policy issues and build public trust through inclusive, transparent decision-making. The Connecticut Citizens' Assembly on Property Taxes represents an important opportunity to demonstrate how residents can come together to tackle difficult challenges and contribute meaningfully to the policy-making process.

Throughout this journey, a team of facilitators, researchers, and support staff will be available to assist you. Whether helping you understand materials, coordinating logistics, or ensuring productive discussions, they are committed to supporting your work every step of the way.

As organizers of this Assembly, we are dedicated to maintaining a process that is fair, balanced, transparent, and respectful of all viewpoints. We are confident that the recommendations you develop will make a valuable contribution to Connecticut's ongoing conversation about property taxes and affordability.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve. We look forward to working with you and witnessing the thoughtful deliberation, civic leadership, and collaboration that will define this historic effort.

Sincerely,

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The Mandate of the Citizens' Assembly

Mandate of the Citizens' Assembly

Connecticut Citizens' Assembly should help state and municipal leaders understand what residents consider fair, workable, and legitimate in the financing and delivery of local services.

As a member of the Assembly, you will:

- Learn about how property is assessed, local services are funded and what alternatives exist in funding models in the northeast region and around the country;
- Understand different perspectives on issues such as the delivery of public K-12 education, and delivery of non-education services such as police, fire, and road maintenance, the purpose and impact of unfunded mandates imposed on local governments, and more;
- Consider how various opportunities and outcomes will affect people from urban, suburban, and rural communities;
- Have the opportunity to learn from and speak with experts, academics, municipal administrators, and more. You will also work with your fellow members to understand new perspectives, identify common values, consider the issues and priorities, and develop recommendations.

The Outputs of the Assembly

The Citizens' Assembly will detail their work and guidance in an interim and a final report which will be presented to state and local policy makers. The final report will include the Assembly's recommendation(s) on the funding and delivery of local public services.

The Outcome of the Assembly

The Assembly is one stage in a process. Following the completion of the recommendations, Assembly participants will be given the opportunity to advocate for their proposal with candidates seeking legislative seats and the office of Governor and will have the ability to advocate their proposals during the regular session of the 2027 CT General Assembly.

Membership

The 110 members of the Connecticut Citizens' Assembly have been randomly selected by a blind draw called a Civic Lottery. The participants are from across the state with rough proportional representation to their region. Other demographic factors, including age, income, racial identity and community demographics (urban, suburban, rural), have been considered to compose a final assembly that is roughly proportional to Connecticut's general population as a whole.

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Guiding Principles of the Assembly

The Connecticut Citizens' Assembly on Property Taxes will conduct itself according to these nine principles:

1. **Openness and Transparency**
   The Assembly will regularly share its learning and deliberations with the public on an ongoing and predictable basis.

2. **Accountability and Legitimacy**
   The Assembly will work within a defined mandate and budget on behalf of the residents of Connecticut.

3. **Effective Representation**
   The Assembly will be charged with the responsibility of representing the needs and interests of the residents of Connecticut. The members of the Assembly will be selected to broadly represent the demographics of the state.

4. **Accessibility**
   The Assembly will provide reasonable supports to address barriers that may prevent a member of the Assembly from participating successfully.

5. **Independence**
   The Assembly will have full independence to determine how to best fulfill its mandate, under the advisement of an experienced, third-party consultant who will facilitate the Assembly process.

6. **Well-Informed**
   The Assembly's recommendations will be informed by a range of perspectives and sources of expertise including the technical report.

7. **Balance**
   The Assembly will consider a diversity of voices and perspectives in its deliberations. The Chair will work to ensure that there is room for all voices.

8. **Collaborative Decision-Making**
   The Assembly will work towards consensus when drafting their recommendations, while also respecting and documenting differing perspectives among its members.

9. **Respect**
   The Assembly will strive to be conscientious and fair-minded in their deliberations and in their consultations with the residents of Connecticut.

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About Citizens' Assemblies

A Citizens' Assembly is a representative group of residents brought together to learn about, deliberate on, and develop recommendations for complex public policy issues. In Connecticut, the Citizens' Assembly on Property Taxes will provide a structured, transparent process for residents to engage directly in shaping solutions to one of the state's most pressing challenges.

Participants will reflect the diversity of the state and will be supported by neutral facilitators and subject matter experts to ensure balanced, fact-based discussions.

Why a Citizens' Assembly?

Connecticut's property tax system is widely recognized as complex, inequitable, and difficult to reform through traditional processes alone. A Citizens' Assembly:

- Creates space for thoughtful, informed public input;
- Moves beyond politics to focus on practical, consensus-driven solutions;
- Builds public trust through transparency and independence;
- Elevates the voices of everyday residents in shaping policy.

How It Works

- Representative Selection: Participants are randomly selected and stratified to reflect the state's demographics and geography;
- Learning Phase: Members hear from a range of experts and stakeholders with diverse perspectives;
- Deliberation: Facilitated discussions allow participants to weigh trade-offs and explore solutions;
- Recommendations: The Assembly produces a final set of actionable recommendations for policymakers and the public.

Key Messages for Media & Stakeholders

- A New Model for Problem-Solving: This is a fresh, proven approach that brings people together to tackle complex issues thoughtfully and constructively;
- Independent & Balanced: The process is designed to ensure neutrality, with safeguards in place to prevent bias or outside influence;
- Informed Decision-Making: Participants are equipped with credible, balanced information before forming conclusions;
- Real Public Voice: The Assembly reflects Connecticut residents, not special interests or political agendas;
- Action-Oriented Outcomes: Final recommendations will provide clear, practical pathways for policymakers to consider;
- Building Trust: Transparency and openness are central, helping restore confidence in how decisions are made.

What This Means for Connecticut

An opportunity to:

- Break through longstanding gridlock on property tax reform;
- Generate broadly supported, community-informed solutions;
- Strengthen civic engagement and public confidence in government.

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What to Expect During Assembly Sessions

Meeting Times and Location

Each Assembly session will begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. and will adjourn no later than 5:00 p.m. for in-person sessions and 1:00 p.m. on virtual session days. Coffee, tea and a light breakfast will be served beginning at 8:30 a.m. on mornings of the in-person meetings.

Meetings will be held primarily in New Haven. We will communicate the locations as soon they are confirmed, by email and phone. Our team will help ensure you are able to get to every meeting, regardless of location.

An Assembly Meeting

During each meeting, you will move between:

- Presentations which offer the opportunity to learn from a wide variety of guest experts providing a range of perspectives;
- Question and answer sessions following each presentation, and throughout the process;
- Plenary discussions in which everyone is listening and participating in the same discussion;
- Small group discussions, in which members have the chance to examine one topic or idea more closely.

Along the way there will be breaks for meals, refreshments, and reflection.

What to Bring and Wear

The Assembly will not be formal, so please dress comfortably. Consider bringing a light layer in case the venue is chilly.

We will provide pens, paper, other work materials, and printed copies of the documents when you arrive. We also recommend bringing a reusable water bottle and coffee mug to help cut down on waste at the event.

Other Members

During an Assembly, you will meet people you like and immediately agree with, and you will also meet people who hold very different views, and have had very different experiences from yours. This is normal — after all, an Assembly is meant to represent everyone.

To help everybody get to know each other a little bit better, we will work with all participants to facilitate short introductory exercises and offer plenty of time for networking around topical sessions.

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What to Expect from Each Other

We are excited to bring everyone together to talk about these important issues and make recommendations that will help decide how Connecticut plans for the future.

During the course of the Assembly, we may discuss sensitive subjects. While engaging in these discussions, **we don't always need to agree, but we do need to disagree respectfully.** Please keep the following in-mind:

Listen with the same passion with which you want to be heard. Please listen carefully and seriously to the perspectives and opinions of your fellow members. Please refrain from interrupting your fellow members.

Share talk time. Everyone should be able to have their say. Sometimes a few voices can be louder than others, which prevents us from hearing everyone's perspectives. Facilitators will work hard to make sure that everyone is heard, but you can help by being conscious and considerate of who hasn't had a chance to speak.

Consider those who aren't part of the Assembly. Only 110 members of the community could be selected for this Assembly, so we ask that all the members think about the perspectives of your neighbours, colleagues, friends, and fellow residents who aren't present for our discussions. As we start to think about recommendations, for example, your facilitators will ask, "How would this action affect others in the community?"

Give people the benefit of the doubt. We are likely to discuss sensitive subjects that people will feel strongly about. We ask that everyone assume the best of others' intentions and meanings, and be forgiving.

That said, **we absolutely will not tolerate hateful or discriminatory views or language.**

Every member of the Assembly belongs on the Assembly. Every member of the Assembly has a wealth of experience living and working in this region, which means that every member has valuable perspectives to contribute and learn from. Everyone has the right to be heard and belong in this space.

Creating a welcoming space is everyone's responsibility. Please help ensure that every member has the ability and opportunity to be comfortable in shared spaces by:

- Avoiding wearing strong perfumes, colognes, or scented products that could trigger allergies or sensitivities;
- Listening attentively when others are speaking;
- Respecting personal boundaries and avoiding unnecessary physical contact.

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Participant Information

Meeting Venues

Each venue will be local, accessible, comfortable, brightly lit, inviting, and provide a great space to listen and work.

Travel

The majority of in-person meetings will be held in New Haven (Note: the final meeting where Assembly members vote on their full set of recommendations may be held near or in the State Capitol in Hartford). Convenient parking will be provided to each participant. Be sure to look for information provided by your assigned concierge prior to each meeting.

If you have any difficulty arranging travel to the Assembly meetings or concerns about cost, please let the Assembly team know and we will attempt to resolve any barriers for you.

Lodging for Two-day Weekends

All Assembly members are invited to stay overnight at the OMNI New Haven Hotel at Yale (155 Temple Street) on the Saturday evening of our two-day weekend sessions. All room and onsite parking charges will be covered; incidentals will be the personal responsibility of the guest. Reservations for Saturday, July 11 will be confirmed during the onboarding process and submitted through a master rooming list. Unless there are incidental expenses, a personal credit card will not be required for check-in. Reservations for July 11 must be confirmed by June 24. (We will be confirming hotel reservations for August 29 at a later date.)

JULY 11–12	**2-Day In-Person Session** New Haven — Yale Campus
JULY 25	**1-Day In-Person Session** New Haven — Yale Campus
AUGUST 8	**1-Day Virtual Session** Online
AUGUST 29–30	**2-Day In-Person Session** New Haven — Yale Campus
SEPTEMBER 19	**1-Day Virtual Session** Online
SEPTEMBER 26	**1-Day In-Person Session** Hartford

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Participant Information, continued

Please note that penalty fees for no-shows or cancelations could be deducted from your final stipend payment.

During the July 11-12 weekend, most of our meeting sessions will be held at the OMNI, so this will be a convenient option for participants since we are asking you to stay for dinner and begin early on Sunday morning with breakfast at 8:30 and our first work session at 9:00 am.

Parking

We will be arranging free parking for all Assembly members at the meeting venues. We will provide detailed parking directions one week before the days of the Assembly.

Meals and Snacks

For each in-person meeting day, you will be provided with coffee, tea, a light breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. During the two-day weekends you will be provided dinner and lodging on Saturday.

Please tell us about any food allergies or dietary restrictions when you fill out the onboarding form. Reach out to us with any specific questions or concerns.

Virtual Meetings

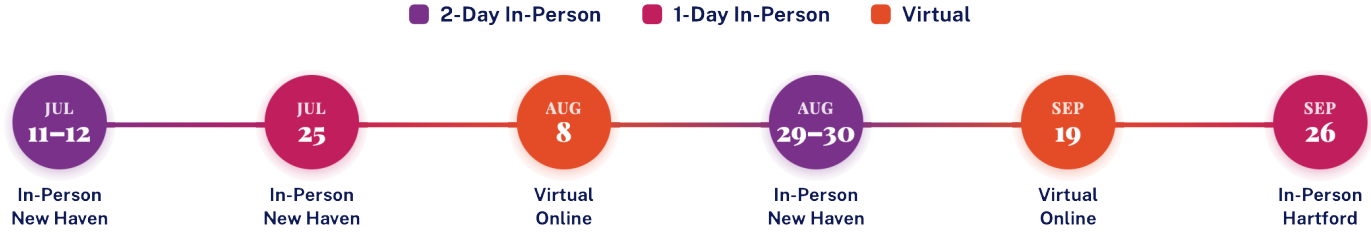
A virtual platform with clear participant log in instructions will be provided in advance of the two virtual sessions.

Barriers to Participating

It is very important that all Assembly members be afforded the opportunity to participate in every session. Therefore, if you face any barriers to full participation whether those be in the area of family care, transportation or virtual connectivity please let your assigned concierge know and we will work directly with you to ensure you have the support required for full participation.

Social Media

We ask everyone to refrain from posting on social media about the proceedings of the Assembly. This shows respect to other members and helps to encourage candor and the free exploration of different topics during your deliberations.



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Citizens' Assembly FAQ

Who do I contact if my question is not listed on this document?

Contact your concierge at either ctca.concierge@gmail.com or at their phone number, the number that called you for your Onboarding call.

Who is my personal Civic Concierge?

Your Civic Concierge is an Assembly team member whose job is to make sure that you are safe, comfortable, and prepared to participate in the Assembly. If you're not sure who your personal Concierge is, you can check the emails you've received about the Assembly since June 12th — your Concierge's name should be in all emails sent directly to you.

How can I request additional accessibility accommodations?

Please communicate all of your accessibility needs in the Onboarding Form, or otherwise contact your Civic Concierge to discuss them.

Do Assembly members need expertise in property taxes?

No. Participants are selected because they are Connecticut residents, not because they are experts. Throughout the process, Assembly members will receive educational materials, hear from subject matter experts, ask questions, and deliberate together before developing recommendations.

Who decides what information the Assembly receives?

Assembly members will hear from a wide range of experts, practitioners, researchers, local officials, and stakeholders representing different perspectives. Members will also have the opportunity to request specific information and/or expert presentations. Information provided to the Assembly is reviewed to ensure it is balanced, factual, and relevant to the issues being considered.

Are Assembly meetings open to the media?

Media opportunities will be provided at key milestones throughout the process. Details regarding observation opportunities, interviews, and public events will be announced as they become available.

Will the Assembly make decisions about taxes?

The Assembly does not have the authority to enact laws, set tax rates, or implement policy changes. Its role is to develop recommendations based on informed deliberation.

Why focus on property taxes?

Connecticut relies more heavily on property taxes than many other states to fund essential local services, including education, public safety, and infrastructure. This creates significant challenges for homeowners, renters, businesses, and municipalities alike, making property tax reform one of the state's most important public policy issues.

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Citizens' Assembly FAQ, continued

Why was the Citizens' Assembly created?

Property taxes are one of the most significant financial burdens facing Connecticut residents, businesses, and municipalities. Despite decades of discussion, meaningful structural reform has remained elusive. The Citizens' Assembly was created to provide a trusted, transparent, and resident-driven process to explore solutions and identify recommendations for consideration by state and local leaders.

How is the Assembly different from a public hearing?

Public hearings often allow individuals to provide brief testimony. A Citizens' Assembly gives residents time to learn about complex issues, hear multiple viewpoints, deliberate with one another, and develop recommendations over an extended period.

Can the public observe the Assembly process?

The Assembly is committed to transparency. Information about the process, agendas, educational materials, and key milestones will be made publicly available through the Assembly's website. Portions of the process may also be available for public observation.

What will Assembly members do?

Assembly members will:

- Learn about Connecticut's property tax system;
- Hear from experts with diverse perspectives;
- Review data and research;
- Discuss challenges and opportunities;
- Deliberate with fellow residents;
- Develop recommendations for policymakers.

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The Core Assembly Team

Sean Scanlon

State Comptroller
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Connecticut State Comptroller Sean Scanlon has committed to endorse the assembly process and bring its recommendations to a dedicated legislative hearing, leveraging his constitutional authority on financial issues.

Joe DeLong

Executive Director
CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES

Joe DeLong serves as Executive Director of CCM and brings extensive experience in Connecticut municipal policy, local government, and statewide civic engagement.

Joshua Kalla

Professor of Political Science & Statistics
YALE UNIVERSITY · ISPS FELLOW

Joshua Kalla is an expert in political behavior and field experimentation, bringing rigorous empirical methods to the study of civic engagement and public opinion.

Hélène Landemore

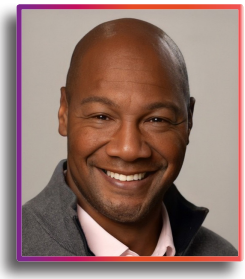
Chair, Interim Expert Governance Committee
DAMON WELLS '58 PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, YALE UNIVERSITY · ISPS FELLOW

Hélène Landemore is a leading scholar of deliberative and participatory democracy and will serve as Chair of the Interim Expert Governance Committee.

Michael E. Morrell

Associate Professor of Political Science
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Michael Morrell researches deliberative democracy, political psychology, and civic participation, with deep expertise in how citizens engage with complex policy questions.



Kenya Rutland

Facilitation Team Lead, KJR CONSULTING

Kenya is a passionate and trustworthy consultant who increases the confidence, motivation, and performance of others. He is a persuasive facilitative leader who uses his keen business acumen to build commitment and accountability among staff at all levels of any organization. Kenya has more than 20 years of experience delivering results-oriented consulting and facilitation to a diverse client portfolio.

Pam Greene

Project Manager

Pam comes to this project after more than 35 years at Yale's Institution for Social and Policy Studies where she played many roles in managing events, coordinating communications, and administering research projects. Before working at Yale, Pam served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the West African country of Mali from 1985-1987, and spent a fellowship year at Georgetown University's Kennedy School of Ethics studying ethics and public policy with a focus on international environmental issues.

Gryffin Wilkens-Plumley

Assistant Project Manager

Gryffin has been a project manager and design lead for the Connecticut Citizens' Assembly from its inception during summer 2025. He has experience working for Missions Publiques as a strategic consultant on their initiative for a Global Citizens' Dialogue on AI, and has presented on deliberative democracy and technology at conferences in Geneva, Washington, at Yale, and more. Gryffin also participated in design and facilitation for a Yale Citizens' Assembly in 2024–2025.