

The Connecticut General Assembly

House Democrats



For Immediate Release
February 1, 2023

Contact: Alberto Negron
(860) 240-8518

REPRESENTATIVE JILLIAN GILCHREST ENDOMETRIOSIS WORKING GROUP PRIORITIES

State Representative Jillian Gilchrest, House Chair of the Human Services Committee (D-West Hartford), and the Endometriosis Working Group held a press conference in the Legislative Office Building to discuss the Working Group and announce the release of their 2023 Policy Priorities.

For those with endometriosis, endometrial-like tissue grows outside the uterus. Nearby reproductive organs are often affected but the disease has been found in every major organ system. Tissue can grow on or around a person's ovaries, fallopian tubes, and beyond. Tissue growth can also spread to other organs, even if they're not related to reproduction. Some people have endometriosis on or around their bowels, rectum, bladder and, in some cases, tissue may spread as far as the chest cavity.

Beyond the physical pain that over 194 million individuals with the endometriosis experience, those suffering from the disease are often misdiagnosed, told the pain is normal, or accused of making up their symptoms. The Endometriosis Working Group has announced several priorities to create greater awareness and expand access to care.

Priorities Include:

- Establishment of Connecticut's Endometriosis Biorepository
- School Nurse Training
- Fertility Preservation
- Fertility Specialist Training and Screening
- Education for Students
- Menstrual Equity
- Access to Medical Care

"I am so grateful for the individuals who continue to share their experiences with Endometriosis Working Group," said Rep. Gilchrest. "It is through listening to their experiences that we have been able to identify areas where we can increase awareness and access to care."

“Endometriosis affects 10% of American women of childbearing age and on average takes 10 years to diagnose. Endometriosis symptoms and delayed diagnosis costs the American healthcare system and workforce productivity an estimated 22 billion dollars a year. I along with my colleagues at UConn Health are honored to be participating in the plan to initiate an Endometriosis data and biorepository program in Connecticut to promote better understanding and study of the disease and hopefully find more targeted therapies and early diagnostic markers,” said Dr. Danielle Luciano, Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, UConn Health.

“The lack of an effective treatment for endometriosis is due to poor understanding and little funding. I applaud Rep. Gilchrest’s proposal to establish this biorepository in Connecticut, which will combine surgical, clinical and biological information to provide crucial answers about this condition,” said Elise Courtois, Ph.D., interim director of Single Cell Biology at The Jackson Laboratory. “As an endometriosis researcher, I am honored to participate in this pioneering project and provide science-based solutions to the many individuals affected by this disease.”

###