



Congresswoman Elizabeth H. Esty 2014 Annual End-of-Year Report

In her first term in office, Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty focused on finding commonsense solutions that move Connecticut and our country forward. Whether it was passing her bills supporting local clean energy and STEM education or playing a major role in successful infrastructure improvement efforts, Congresswoman Esty has effectively reached across party lines to get things done in Congress.

Here at home, she helped secure over \$68.8 million in federal grant money for local communities. She also helped individuals cut through government bureaucracy, returning over \$3 million to folks in central and northwest Connecticut in earned benefits and refunds, including over \$1.1 million in owed Social Security benefits and over \$780,000 in veterans benefits. Congresswoman Esty will continue to work tirelessly to find commonsense solutions in Congress and support 5th District residents.

Listening to and Working for Central and Northwest Connecticut

Over the last two years, Congresswoman Esty made it a priority to spend time listening here at home and then bring her constituents' ideas and concerns down to Washington. She traveled across central and northwest Connecticut, visiting with small business owners and manufacturers, and hosting numerous roundtable discussions and "Congress on Your Corners" to hear directly from folks about their priorities.

By the Numbers

- **447** days spent in central and northwest Connecticut
- **96,298** responses to constituent contacts by email, mail, telephone, or fax
- **17** "Congress on Your Corner" events
- **52** town halls, public forums, workshops, and roundtable discussions hosted by Congresswoman Esty on topics including manufacturing, workforce development, veterans issues, agriculture, environmental protection, immigration reform, the federal budget, and gun violence prevention
- **44** visits to local manufacturers and small businesses
- **304** visits to social service organizations, schools, senior centers, and other community sites in the 5th District.
- **Nearly 21,000** 5th District residents signed up for Congresswoman Esty's biweekly e-newsletter

Serving Families in Central and Northwest Connecticut

Congresswoman Esty has made offering quality constituent services a priority during her first term in Congress. Whether it is securing earned benefits for a veteran or recovering owed Social Security benefits for a senior, Congresswoman Esty helps folks cut through the red tape of government bureaucracy. Since taking office two years ago, Congresswoman Esty has brought back over \$3 million in savings to folks in central and northwest Connecticut. Congresswoman Esty holds regular workshops and “Congress On Your Corners” where she and her staff are available to help folks looking for assistance with a government agency.

By the Numbers

- **\$3 million in savings** that Congresswoman Esty’s office secured for constituents from federal and state government agencies
 - Social Security: \$1,260,000
 - Veterans Benefits: \$800,000
 - Medicare: \$447,000
 - IRS: \$230,000
 - Housing Assistance (HUD and financial institutions): \$27,000
- **2,154 total constituent cases**, resolved or currently in process by Congresswoman Esty’s office
- **\$68.8 million in federal grants** Congresswoman Esty helped bring back to the 5th District, including a major \$14.4 million infrastructure development grant for the City of Waterbury
- **10 constituent workshops** held to provide information on issues such as Medicare, Social Security, health insurance, student financial aid, and identity theft protection for seniors
- **36 medals** secured for 5th District veterans
- **54 5th District high school students** nominated to U.S. Military Academies
- **152 American-made U.S. flags**, including 98 flown over the U.S. Capitol Building, ordered for constituents
- **560 tours** planned for constituents in Washington, D.C.
- **50 internships** provided to students in Congresswoman Esty’s New Britain and Washington, D.C. offices

Constituent Corner: Real Stories of Services

Congresswoman Esty launched her Constituent Corner webpage, which highlights positive stories from folks who have worked with her office. With over 2,400 cases completed or in progress, Congresswoman Esty shares success stories so that others know to reach out for help.

Securing Veterans Benefits Owed Through Service

Congresswoman Esty's office expedited veterans benefits for a World War II veteran from Waterbury, allowing him to stay in his assisted care facility and get the medical care he needed.

"Thank you Congresswoman Esty and your staff for all the support and for getting us answers so quickly. My father's VA benefits help sustain the high costs of 24-hour medical care and stay in his assisted care facility. We appreciate your recognition and support of deserved and needed veterans benefits for my father and other veterans like him who made sacrifices in order to protect all of us." – Thomas Sirois, Wolcott

Helping Folks Stay in Their Homes

A Danbury family reached out to Congresswoman Esty's office after falling behind on their mortgage. Her office helped modify their monthly mortgage payments, which saved them \$5,100 and allowed them to stay in their home during the cold winter.

"Congresswoman Esty helped us save our home when no one else would help us. We were hanging on by a thread. Her help was constant, supportive, and life changing." – Gail Sirico, Danbury

Assisting with Visas and Immigration Services

A woman in Cornwall was having trouble securing a visa for her fiancé so that he could travel from Egypt to the United States for their wedding. Congresswoman Esty expedited the process to help her fiancé obtain his visa just in time for the wedding.

"Thank you so much Congresswoman Esty for your help throughout this stressful process. My husband and I greatly appreciate the work and effort of your team." –Shorouk Elseraft, Cornwall

Facilitating Enrollment in the Affordable Care Act and Saving Money

Congresswoman Esty's office assisted a Canaan resident with enrolling in the health insurance marketplace, saving her almost \$1,500 a month on her insurance premiums because insurance companies could no longer discriminate against her pre-existing conditions as a breast cancer survivor.

"My chronic illness can no longer be used against me. I've worried for 28 years about this and now I won't have to. Thank you Congresswoman Esty for your help." –Suzie Clayton, Canaan

Standing up for Connecticut's Priorities in Washington

Congresswoman Esty's work in Congress is driven by the priorities of central and northwest Connecticut. As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Congresswoman Esty is working on efforts to support good-paying jobs and boost economic growth. She supports policies to revitalize American manufacturing and support workforce development as well as science and math education so that students and workers have appropriate skills for jobs in demand.

On the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Congresswoman Esty is working to ensure smart investments to fix our failing bridges and upgrade our rail system. She knows that a 21st century transportation infrastructure system is key to creating good-paying jobs now and laying a foundation for sustainable job growth in the future.

Congresswoman Esty, the representative for the town of Newtown, has made commonsense gun violence prevention reforms like comprehensive background checks and cracking down on illegal gun trafficking a priority. She serves as Vice Chair of the U.S. House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, where she helped develop comprehensive policy principles designed to reduce gun violence while respecting the 2nd amendment rights of law-abiding gun owners.

Committee and Task Force Assignments

- Member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (Rail, Highways, and Aviation subcommittees)
- Member of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology (Research and Technology subcommittee)
- Vice Chair of the House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force

By the Numbers

- **18** bills and resolutions introduced based on input from folks in the 5th District
- **2** bills introduced by Congresswoman Esty that have been signed into law
- **3** bills introduced by Congresswoman Esty passed by the House of Representatives
- **12** major bills passed by the House of Representatives that Congresswoman Esty fought to improve
- **21** amendments offered by Congresswoman Esty in the House of Representatives and in committee, including several bipartisan amendments

Initiatives Led by Congresswoman Esty Promoting Connecticut's Priorities

Supporting American Manufacturing, Workforce Development, and STEM Education

American manufacturing is on the rebound, and Connecticut has a real opportunity to grow good-paying manufacturing jobs. Congresswoman Esty has worked to address challenges with Connecticut's aging workforce and closing the skills gap to boost manufacturing in our state. She has also helped secure a \$1.7 million federal grant for Naugatuck Valley Community College to support manufacturing training as well as a \$1.1 million U.S. Department of Labor "Ready to Work" grant for Capital Workforce Partners' YouthBuild Project in New Britain.

Supporting Teachers and Enhancing Manufacturing (STEM) Jobs Act, H.R. 3243

After hearing from manufacturers about the need for skilled workers and from educators about the importance of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education, Congresswoman Esty introduced a bill to expand teacher training and professional development opportunities for K-12 teachers in the STEM fields.

- **Status Update:** Major provisions of the bill unanimously passed in the House of Representatives on July 14, 2014, as part of the STEM Education Act, which Congresswoman Esty introduced with Chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee Lamar Smith (R-TX).

STEM Education Act, H.R. 5031

The STEM Education Act is based largely on Congresswoman Esty's STEM Jobs Act, H.R. 3243. In addition to expanding professional development opportunities for K-12 teachers in the STEM fields, this bill improves computer science education grants and supports grants for STEM learning outside of the classroom.

- **Status Update:** The bill passed unanimously in the House of Representatives on July 14, 2014.

First Supporting Training for Employment Potential (STEP) Act, H.R. 3244

After hosting a roundtable on workforce development with manufacturers and hearing about the difficulty employers have with finding employees with high-tech manufacturing skills, Congresswoman Esty introduced the First STEP Act to ensure that students in our state's technical high schools, community colleges, and apprenticeship programs can earn nationally-recognized credentials to match their skill sets with jobs in demand.

- **Status Update:** Provisions of the bill were incorporated in the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act, a major workforce development bill.

Manufacturing Universities Act, H.R. 5526

To further address the skills gap, Congresswoman Esty introduced the bipartisan Manufacturing Universities Act with Congressman Chris Collins (R-NY). Her bill would establish

Manufacturing Universities programs at colleges and universities to prepare engineering students with the right skill sets for innovative careers in manufacturing. Colleges and universities with existing engineering programs would be eligible to apply for the Manufacturing University designation, which would award up to \$5 million annually for four years to improve engineering programs to emphasize manufacturing, increase the number of joint projects with manufacturing firms, and support students who participate in cooperative projects with these firms.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Women in Entrepreneurship Act, H.R. 5527

Congresswoman Esty's Women in Entrepreneurship Act supports entrepreneurial programs for women in STEM professions. Connecticut is home to some of the greatest scientists and engineers in the world—both women and men—and this bill will expand opportunities for women in the STEM fields to develop their talents and skills in research and industry settings.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Economy, Energy, and Environment (E3) Initiative Evaluation Act, H.R. 2873

Congresswoman Esty has been hearing from manufacturers across the district about the need for a stronger and better coordinated federal system of support to encourage sustainable manufacturing. She introduced the E3 Initiative Evaluation Act to fix the bureaucracy and improve the current E3 initiative, which is important for local partners like CONNSTEP, a nonprofit that works to promote sustainable manufacturing in Connecticut.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the following House Committees: Energy and Commerce; Science, Space, and Technology; Education and Workforce; Small Business, and Agriculture.

Assisting Our Veterans

As a daughter of a Navy veteran, Congresswoman Esty believes that one of her greatest honors as a Member of Congress is the opportunity to serve veterans and servicemembers. Whether it is recovering owed benefits for disabled veterans, working to support family caregivers of veterans, or successfully passing provisions to support suicide prevention services and reintegration programs for servicemembers, Congresswoman Esty is working to keep our commitment to veterans and their families.

Department of Defense Appropriations Act Amendments, H.R. 2397

Congresswoman Esty successfully passed two amendments to the Department of Defense Appropriations Act that support efforts to prevent military suicide and reintegration services for members of the National Guard and Reserve. Her amendments added \$10 million for suicide prevention awareness and outreach as well as \$5 million to strengthen the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, which helps National Guard and Reserve servicemembers and their families connect with local resources before, during, and after deployments. Her amendments were paid for by offsets in the bill and received strong bipartisan support.

- **Status Update:** Her amendments were successfully included in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, H.R. 2397, which was passed with bipartisan support and was signed into law.

Proper Replacement of Medals and Performance Tracking (PROMPT) Act, H.R. 2354

- While helping local veterans replace medals they had earned through service, Congresswoman Esty learned that some veterans had been waiting months or even years to receive the replacements. To ensure timely replacements, Congresswoman Esty worked with Congressman Joe Heck (R-NV) to introduce the PROMPT Act, which would establish standards and improve oversight. **Status Update:** Major provisions of the PROMPT Act were successfully included in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, H.R. 2397, which was passed with bipartisan support and was signed into law.

The Caregivers Expansion and Improvement Act, H.R. 3383

After hearing from families about the high costs they face caring for their veteran family members, Congresswoman Esty introduced a bill to expand participation in the existing VA caregiver program to include veterans from all generations, which is particularly important for Connecticut where World War II veterans make up a larger share of the veteran population than any other state.

- **Status Update:** Congresswoman Esty pushed to bring the bill up for a vote on November 13, 2013. The Senate version of her bill, S. 851, passed the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs on September 17, 2013.

Military Justice Improvement Act, H.R. 2016

With an estimated 26,000 cases of sexual assault in the military in 2012, and over 80% of them unreported due to fear of repercussions, Congresswoman Esty cosponsored the bipartisan Military Justice Improvement Act to increase resources for sexual assault survivors and take the system of reporting outside of the military chain of command.

- **Status Update:** The Senate blocked a vote on the bill twice, including most recently on December 14, 2014. House leadership has refused to allow the House of Representatives a single vote.

Support the Families of Fallen Heroes Semipostal Stamp Act, H.R. 5085

After meeting with Gold Star families in Waterbury over Memorial Day, Congresswoman Esty introduced a bipartisan bill to create a Families of Fallen Heroes Semipostal Stamp, which would provide a sustainable funding stream for the Families of the Fallen Support program.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the House Committees on Armed Services and Oversight and Government Reform.

Advocating for Gun Violence Prevention and Supporting Mental Health

As the representative for the brave town of Newtown, Congresswoman Esty has made commonsense gun violence prevention reform like comprehensive background checks and cracking down on illegal gun trafficking a priority. She serves as Vice Chair of the U.S. House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, where she developed comprehensive policy principles designed to reduce gun violence while respecting the 2nd amendment rights of law-abiding gun owners. She is also working to increase support for mental health services and has helped secure over \$16 million in federal funds to help the Newtown community heal in the aftermath of the tragedy.

Public Safety and Second Amendment Rights Protection Act, H.R. 1565

Congresswoman Esty knows that background checks save lives, which is why she cosponsored the bipartisan Public Safety and Second Amendment Rights Protection Act to close the gun show and internet loophole and expand background checks to all commercial gun sales. With over 90% of Americans supporting comprehensive background checks, Congresswoman Esty is working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to build support and pass the bill.

- **Status Update:** The bill was blocked by Senate Republicans on April 17, 2013, and House leadership has refused to allow the House of Representatives a single vote.

NICS Amendment to Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, H.R. 4460

Congresswoman Esty co-authored a bipartisan amendment to strengthen funding for the National Instant Criminal Background Checks System (NICS). The amendment would increase funding for NICS by \$19.5 million to meet the growing demand from states for financial assistance in updating the NICS database. Our current NICS system has incomplete data, allowing felons, people convicted of domestic abuse, and other restricted individuals to illegally buy firearms. The increase in NICS funding proposed by Congresswoman Esty will go a long way in making sure that states have the resources they need to compile thorough and accurate data.

- **Status Update:** Her amendment passed the House of Representatives with broad bipartisan support. Ultimately, an increase of \$14.5 million in NICS funding was included in the omnibus appropriations bill for fiscal year 2015, H.R. 83, which was signed into law.

Promoting Healthy Minds for Safer Communities Act, H.R. 4783

To improve the current mental health system, Congresswoman Esty co-authored the Promoting Healthy Minds for Safer Communities Act, which would improve prevention and early intervention, increase support for mental health research, and provide law enforcement with the tools they need to make sure individuals who may be a danger to themselves or their community cannot get access to guns.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the House Committee on the Judiciary and the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

The Helping Communities Rebuild after Deadly School Shootings and Other Traumatic Events Act, H.R. 2102

To support the community of Newtown in its healing process and rebuild Sandy Hook Elementary School, Congresswoman Esty joined the Connecticut Congressional delegation in introducing a bill to expand the current U.S. Department of Education SERV grant to include funds available for site construction. Congresswoman Esty's bill was introduced in accordance with a long established role for the federal government to help rebuild communities after unanticipated tragedies.

- **Status Update:** Congresswoman Esty offered this bill as an amendment to the Student Success Act, H.R. 5 in July 2013. She testified before the House Rules Committee to advocate for a vote on the amendment, but the House Majority blocked her amendment. Senators Murphy and Blumenthal introduced a Senate companion bill, S. 1025, which is being considered by the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Working to Improve Transportation and Infrastructure

As a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Congresswoman Esty is working to increase investments to improve our railroads, highways, bridges, and other transportation infrastructure, creating immediate good-paying construction jobs and laying a foundation for sustainable job growth in the future. She also co-founded the bipartisan Corrosion Prevention Caucus and helped secure a \$14.4 federal TIGER grant to assist Waterbury in a major redevelopment project to revitalize its downtown.

Water Resources Reform and Development Act, H.R. 3080

On the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Congresswoman Esty worked extensively on the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA), a major water infrastructure bill that upgrades waterway and port infrastructure and supports effective flood protection and environmental restoration. The bill also de-authorizes \$12 billion in old, inactive projects, freeing up funds for new projects like those pending here in Connecticut.

- **Status Update:** WRRDA passed Congress with strong bipartisan support and was signed into law.

Rail Safety Enforcement Act, H.R. 4576

Following unacceptable accidents and service delays on Metro North, Congresswoman Esty co-authored comprehensive legislation to enhance rail safety standards and ensure implementation of alerters and Positive Train Control.

- **Status Update:** As a member of the House Subcommittee on Rail, Congresswoman Esty is continuing to work to gain bipartisan support for her bill. The Positive Train Control provision was included in the 2015 Transportation-Housing and Urban Development House Appropriations bill.

Stop Corporate Expatriation and Invest in America's Infrastructure Act, H.R. 4985

Due to congressional inaction, the federal Highway Trust Fund is dwindling, threatening current construction projects and hindering improvements in the future. Congresswoman Esty co-authored a long-term funding solution to restrict “corporate inversions” or tax benefits for corporations planting money overseas and use the savings to fund the Highway Trust Fund.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the House Committee on Ways and Means.

National Infrastructure Development Bank Act, H.R. 2553

Congresswoman Esty joined Congresswoman DeLauro to co-author the National Infrastructure Development Bank Act, a new national financing mechanism to invest in transportation and infrastructure projects. The federal government has an important role to play in partnering with states in investing in infrastructure, and a national infrastructure bank would leverage necessary private funds for long-term investment.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the following House Committees: Energy and Commerce; Transportation and Infrastructure, Financial Services, and Ways and Means.

Boosting Economic Growth and Ensuring Predictability for Local Businesses

Congresswoman Esty is working to ensure that Congress supports policies that boost economic growth and give local businesses the predictability they need to thrive. She voted for and advocated for budgets that reflect Connecticut's priorities and worked to stop the irresponsible government shutdown. She also led efforts to incentivize brownfields remediation and helped secure a \$200,000 brownfields remediation grant for the City of Meriden to fund clean-up efforts at the former HUB site.

Fair Budgets for Connecticut Families

Congresswoman Esty voted for Rep. Chris Van Hollen's (D-MD) budget, which funds priorities like education and protects Social Security and Medicare. She voted against Rep. Paul Ryan's (R-WI) budget, which would replace the Medicare guarantee with a voucher system, forcing seniors to pay more out-of-pocket; cut transportation & infrastructure funding by 20%; and slash college student aid and wipe out the entire Pell Grant college affordability program, which provides need-based grants to low-income students to pay for higher education.

Brownfields Redevelopment Tax Incentive Reauthorization Act, H.R. 4542

Congresswoman Esty hears from local leaders and business owners about how critical brownfield clean-up efforts are to revitalizing our cities and towns. Many cities and towns throughout central and northwest Connecticut have proud industrial histories and are in the process of transitioning to new sources of economic growth. Congresswoman Esty introduced a bipartisan bill with Congressman Chris Gibson (R-NY) to encourage investment and spur redevelopment efforts by allowing business owners, developers, and local leaders to deduct the high initial costs of brownfields remediation.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, H.R. 15

Whether from dairy farmers in Canaan or high-tech manufacturers in Danbury, Congresswoman Esty continues to hear from businesses all across central and northwest Connecticut about the importance of fixing our broken immigration system. Congresswoman Esty co-authored the comprehensive immigration reform bill that creates an earned path to citizenship, requires full payment of back taxes, protects workers, and keeps families together.

- **Status Update:** The bill passed the Senate on June 23, 2013. Congresswoman Esty has voted repeatedly to bring up the bill for a vote in the House of Representatives, but the House Majority blocked these efforts.

Fair Minimum Wage Act, H.R. 1010

Congresswoman Esty believes that no one should work full time and have to raise their family in poverty. She co-authored the Fair Minimum Wage Act to raise the federal minimum wage up to Connecticut's \$10.10 per hour. Raising the federal minimum wage will help Connecticut so that it is not punished by other states that may be in a race to the bottom with lower minimum wages.

- **Status Update:** Congresswoman Esty voted to bring up the bill for a vote in the House of Representatives, but House Majority blocked efforts to raise the minimum wage.

Protecting Our Environment and Generating More Local, Clean Energy

Congresswoman Esty believes our country must craft comprehensive policies that reduce carbon emissions, create good-paying jobs, and move us towards a clean energy future. She effectively cut through red tape for local communities, like her bill that was signed into law to support the town of Canton's efforts to create local, clean energy, and she has brought best practices from Connecticut to Congress, like her Green Bank Act modeled after Connecticut's first-in-the-nation green bank.

Collinsville Renewable Energy Production Act, H.R. 316

Working with Canton First Selectman Dick Barlow, Congresswoman Esty introduced the Collinsville Renewable Energy Production Act, which would permit the town of Canton to operate two small, currently inactive hydropower dams and generate locally-produced power. The upper and lower Collinsville dams were built in the 18th and 19th centuries to power the Collins Company and are expected to produce enough power for more than 1,500 homes.

- **Status Update:** The bill passed with broad bipartisan support and was signed into law on June 30, 2014.

The Green Bank Act, H.R. 4522

Modeled after Connecticut's successful first-in-the-nation green bank, Congresswoman Esty's Green Bank Act will help finance critical alternative energy projects through public-private partnerships.

- **Status Update:** The bill is being considered by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

The Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic River Act, H.R. 2555

To help protect the Farmington River, Congresswoman Esty co-authored a bill to designate a 6.2 mile portion of the Farmington River and parts of Salmon Brook as a U.S. National Park Service Wild and Scenic River. The designation would allow for federal resources to help maintain the river and promote eco-tourism. The Upper Farmington River received a Wild and Scenic designation in 1994.

- **Status update:** The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources' Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing on the Senate companion bill, S. 1253. Congresswoman Esty and Congressman Larson sent multiple letters formally requesting a hearing in the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Working to Ensure the Health and Safety of Our Children and Families

As a mother of three, Congresswoman Esty knows how important it is to keep our children safe and healthy. In Congress, Congresswoman Esty has taken a leadership role on combatting the heroin epidemic and increasing safety restrictions on e-cigarettes, whose use has gone up drastically among children and teens. She has also helped secure federal grants to improve health care in Connecticut, including almost \$2 million for Danbury Hospital to expand their graduate medical education and primary and preventive care training and over \$200,000 to expand services at the Torrington Community Health & Wellness Center.

Opioid Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, H.R. 5587

After hosting roundtable discussions and hearing directly from families, medical professionals, and law enforcement officials about the devastating increase in heroin and other opioid abuse, Congresswoman Esty co-authored a bill to reduce barriers to in-patient rehabilitation and treatment for opioid addiction.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Health.

Protecting Children from Electronic Cigarette Advertising Act, H.R. 4325

Congresswoman Esty is concerned about the lack of federal regulation over e-cigarettes, particularly given the drastic rise in use among children. E-cigarette companies target children with advertisements that highlight flavors like bubblegum and promote cartoon characters. In response, Congresswoman Esty introduced a bill to prohibit advertising, promoting, or marketing e-cigarettes to children, just as we do with traditional cigarettes.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Health.

Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act, H.R. 5486

The refill vials of liquid nicotine for e-cigarettes are visually attractive and the flavors such as bubblegum and chocolate mint particularly appeal to children. Calls to poison control centers for liquid nicotine poisonings have skyrocketed, and a boy in New York recently died after ingesting liquid nicotine. To prevent unnecessary deaths and harm to children, Congresswoman Esty introduced a bill to require safer, child-resistant packaging for liquid nicotine products.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Health. On September 17, 2014, Senate companion bill, S. 2581, unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Promoting Equality

Congresswoman Esty believes that all Americans, no matter their gender or sexual orientation, deserve equal rights and opportunities under the law. In Congress, she has opposed attacks on a woman's right to choose and has sponsored legislation to protect all Americans right to love who they love without fear of discrimination.

Paycheck Fairness Act, H.R. 377

Congresswoman Esty believes women deserve equal pay for equal work, which is why she is a co-author of the Paycheck Fairness Act. Currently, women earn 77 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterpart. The Paycheck Fairness Act strengthens and closes loopholes in the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to provide women with more tools to advocate for pay equity and protect against discrimination.

- **Status Update:** Congresswoman Esty voted to bring the bill up for a vote, but the House Majority refused to allow a debate.

Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act of 2014, H.R. 5051

In response to the misguided *Hobby Lobby* decision by the Supreme Court, Congresswoman Esty co-authored legislation to overturn the decision. Congresswoman Esty believes that a woman's healthcare decisions should be made by the woman, her family, and her doctor—not by her boss.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being reviewed by the House Education and the Workforce Committee, the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and the House Ways and Means Committee.

Social Security and Marriage Equality (SAME) Act, H.R. 4664

Despite the Supreme Court overturning Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act, many same-sex couples still cannot receive the benefits they are entitled to through marriage. After hearing that some legally-married couples were denied Social Security survivor benefits when they moved across state lines, Congresswoman Esty and several colleagues introduced the SAME Act, which would amend the Social Security Act to ensure that all same-sex spouses receive equal treatment when applying for and receiving Social Security benefits regardless of which state they reside in.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), H.R.1755

Congresswoman Esty believes that no one should be discriminated against on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. This legislation prohibits this discrimination in the workplace.

- **Status Update:** The bill is currently being considered by the following House Committees: Education and the Workforce Committee, the Administration Committee, the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, and House Judiciary Committee.