

Connecticut Probate Courts

APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 24, 2026

Overview

Connecticut's Probate Courts protect the rights of individuals and ensure care, safety, and community-based solutions for thousands of our most vulnerable residents and their families in times of need.

Connecticut's Probate Courts:

- **assist** low-income seniors to age in place in their own homes;
- **supervise** the care and finances of individuals who cannot care for themselves;
- **support** individuals with mental health conditions to live in the community instead of institutional care; and
- **help** children stay in familiar surroundings with family and friend guardians rather than being placed in foster care.

Probate Court Jurisdiction

Connecticut Probate Courts have jurisdiction over a wide-ranging area of matters that affect the daily lives of our residents.

Less than half of all Probate matters are in the traditional area of decedent estates and trust matters. The fastest growing area of petitions is in conservatorships.

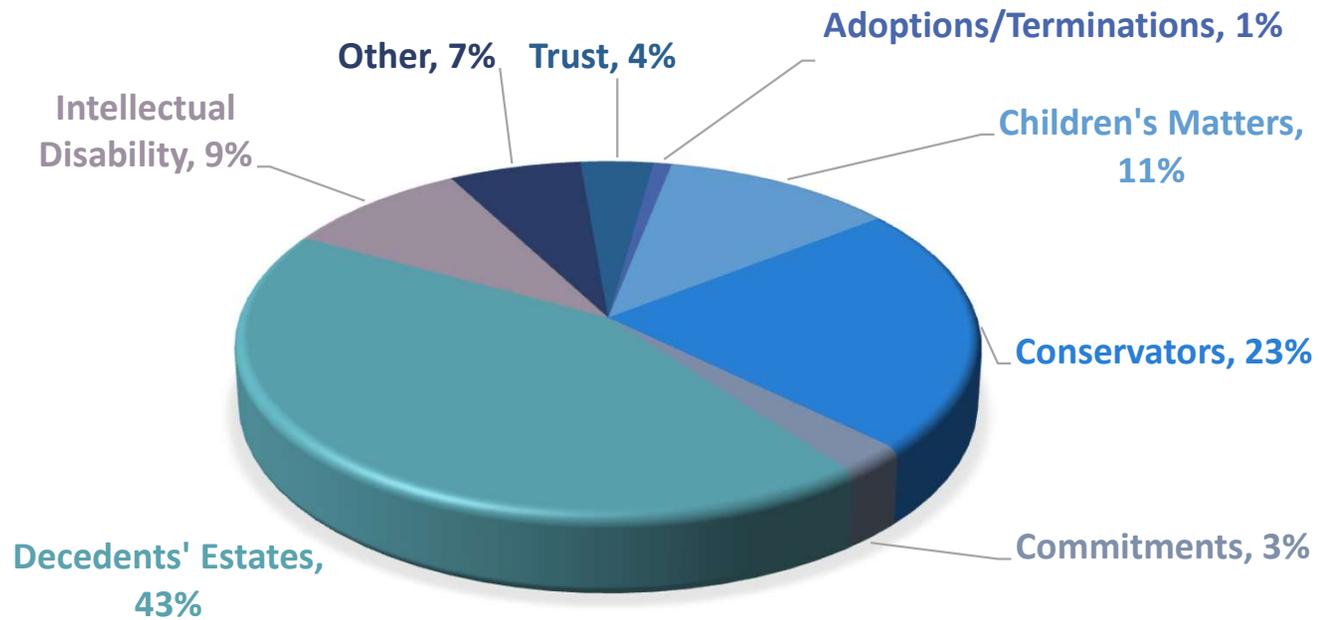
Fast Facts

- In FY24, 46% of Probate Court cases involve decedent's estate matters
- Probate Courts protect more than 23,000 conserved persons, a 25% increase from 2014
- 42% of these conserved persons are indigent, requiring mandated services including the right to a court-appointed attorney
- New conservator cases have remained at about 4,000 per year; however, the total number of indigent conserved persons has increased dramatically, by 224%, since 2014
- Probate Courts enable more than 6,000 children annually to stay in familiar surroundings with adults they know, instead of foster care
- Efforts of guardians and conservators to arrange community-based or at-home care saves more than \$2 billion by avoiding more costly care

Probate Courts assist vulnerable individuals

- **Psychiatric commitments** for children and adults
- **Custody & guardianship of children** when parent is not capable or abandons child
- **Voluntary & involuntary conservatorships**
- **Guardianships (limited & plenary) of adults with intellectual disability**
- **Name changes**
- **Special Immigrant Juvenile Status**
- **Plus...**

Probate Court Jurisdiction FY25



Increasing Volume of Activities*

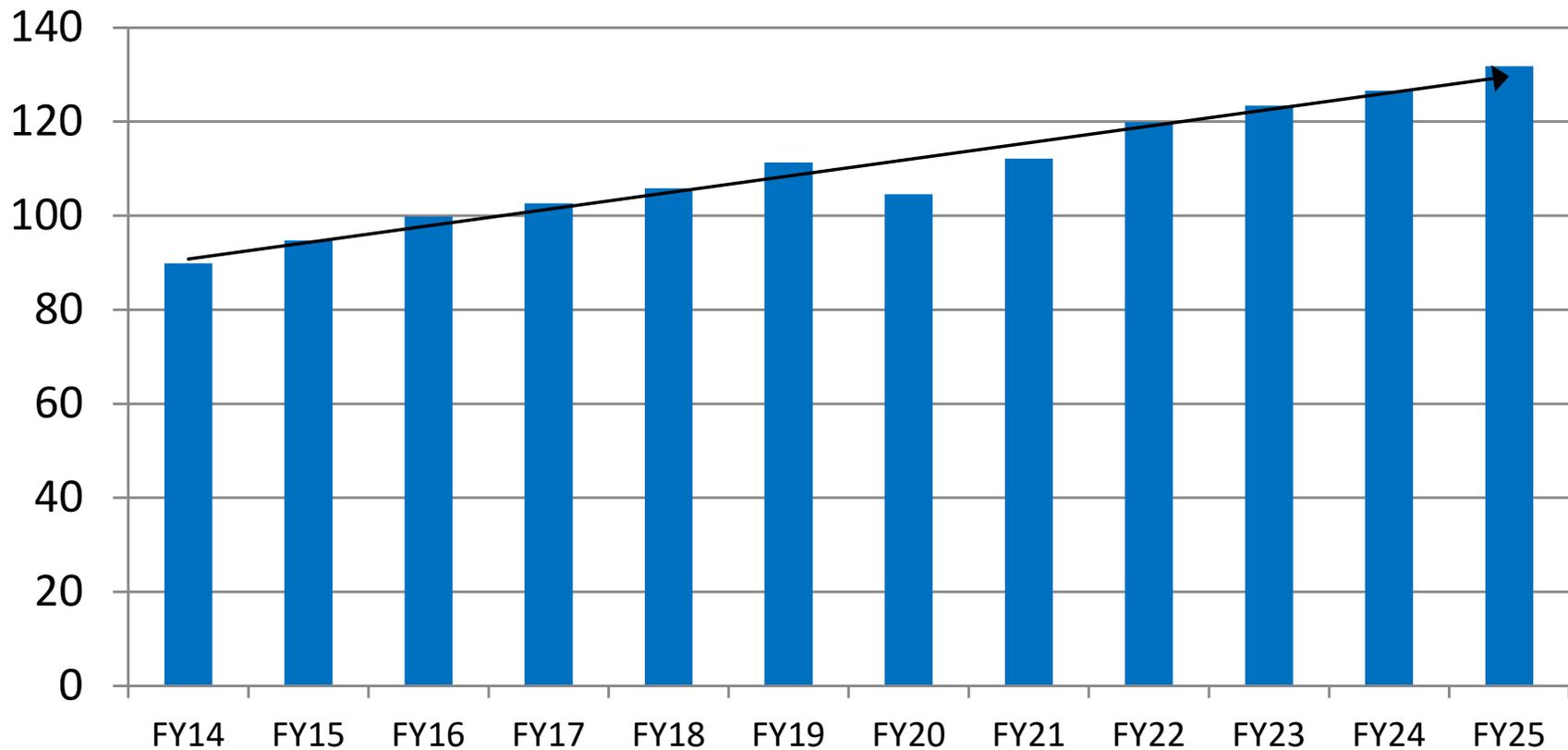
(*petitions filed)

FY14 – 89,897 activities

FY25 – 128,233 activities

= 43% increase

Activities Before Connecticut's Probate Courts *(in thousands)*



General Fund Request for FY27

The Probate Court system is requesting a General Fund Appropriation for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2027:

\$18,000,000

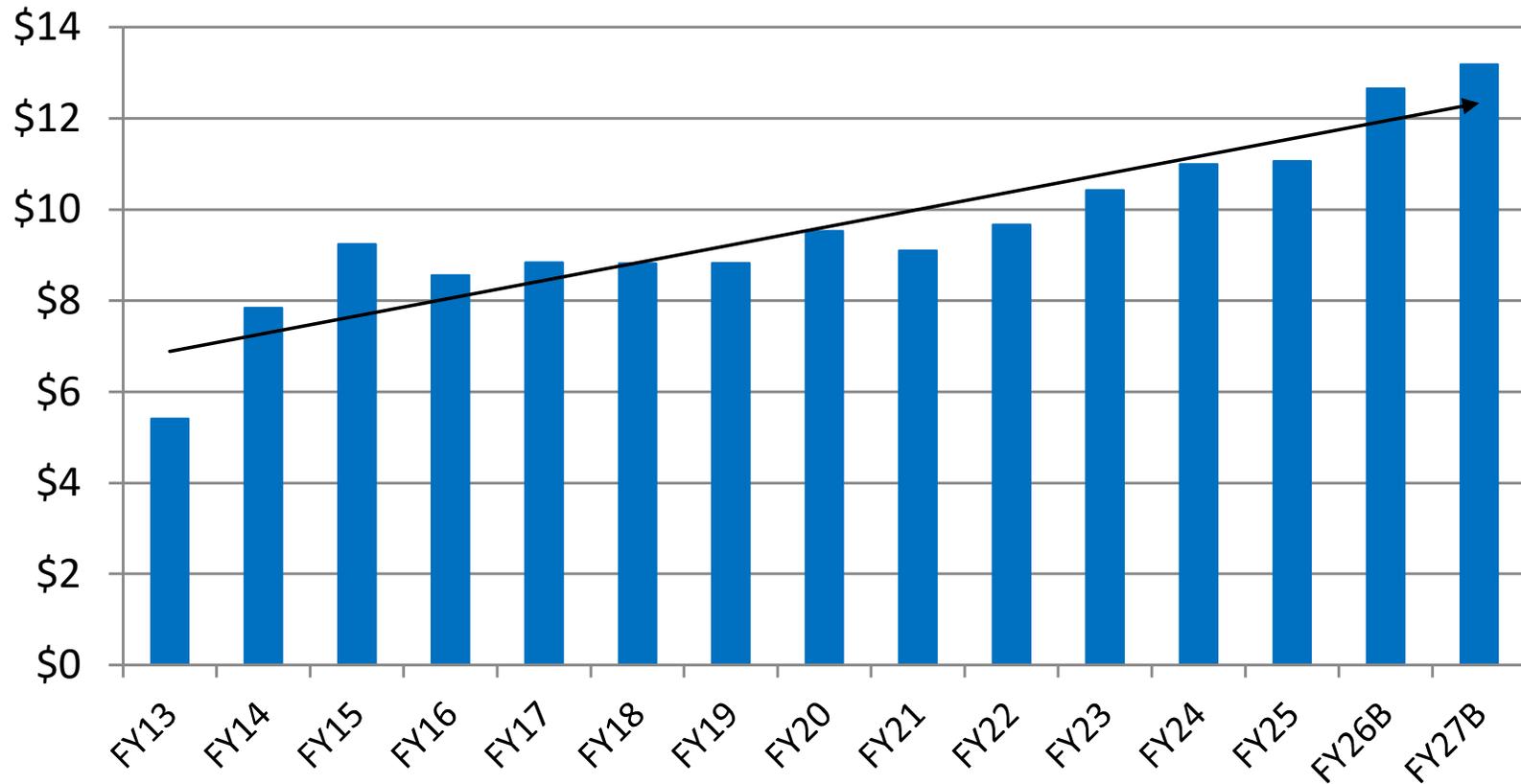
The budgeted need to cover indigency expenses and initiatives for vulnerable persons:

\$18,516,285

Critical Needs of Indigent and Vulnerable Persons

	FY27
Conservators for indigent conserved persons	\$8,692,085
Attorneys for indigent parties	2,268,000
Kinship and Respite grants for children	2,000,000
LEP Interpreter Services and Court Reporters	260,000
Regional Children's Probate Courts	5,296,200
Total	\$18,516,285

Indigency Expense *(in millions)*



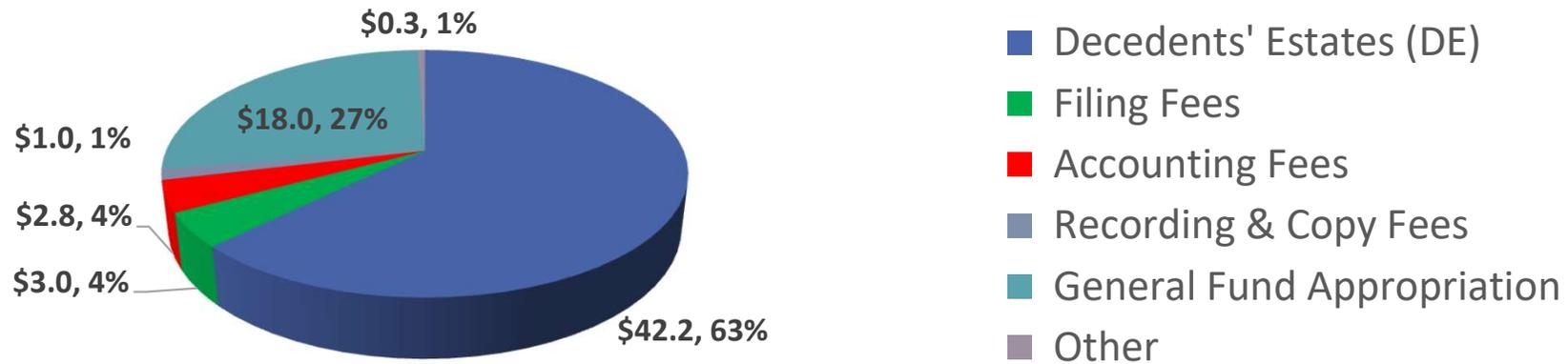
FY13-FY25 Actuals
FY26-FY27 Budget

Funding Volatility

- The Probate Court system is the only state agency dependent on its own revenue for operations
- Probate Courts are largely funded – in excess of 75% - from Probate fee revenue, the majority of which is derived from estate tax filings
- Probate fee revenue is impacted by market fluctuations, downturns and unforeseen circumstances like the coronavirus pandemic
- The General Fund appropriation provides a critical buffer against this volatility

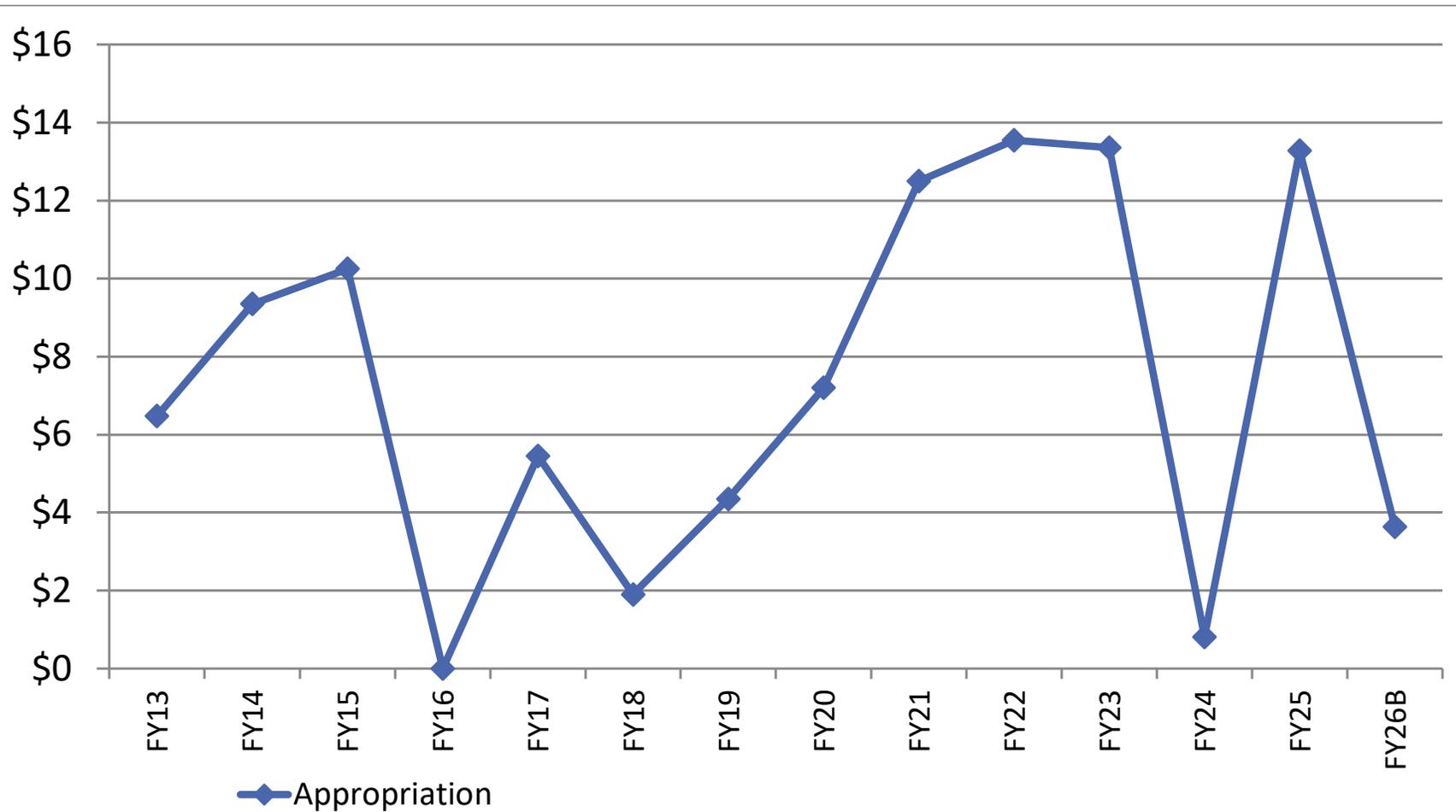
Revenue (\$ in millions)

FY27 Budget



General Fund Appropriation History

(in millions)



FY13-FY25 Actuals

FY26 Budget

Fiscal Year	Total Expenses	General Fund Appropriation	% of Expense
FY14	38,715,211	9,350,000	24%
FY15	41,260,184	10,250,000	25%
FY16	41,790,157	-	0%
FY17	41,429,555	5,450,000	13%
FY18	43,916,350	1,900,000	4%
FY19	49,890,740	4,350,000	9%
FY20	47,203,406	7,200,000	15%
FY21	51,370,737	12,500,000	24%
FY22	48,927,371	13,554,771	28%
FY23	51,330,781	13,359,024	26%
FY24	54,680,668	81,024	0.1%
FY25	57,271,748	13,281,024	23%

Expense vs. Appropriation History

Streamlined and Effective Operations

- Enhancements to court access save time and money, and promote consistent, effective, convenient court services
 - Implementation of enhanced cybersecurity measures and technological advancements in court case management system
 - Expansion of eFiling and eBilling
- 2011 Probate Court system consolidation continues to save the state close to \$5 million per year
- Probate Court system subsidizes services for the poor, including right to counsel for low-income respondents and \$2 million in direct grants to help guardians pay expenses for children in their care

Expense History

Expense	FY14	FY25	Increase		
			Amount	%	Avg/Yr
Personnel	\$ 28,253,648	\$ 40,621,758	\$ 12,368,110	43.8%	4.0%
Indigency	8,145,629	11,297,640	3,152,011	38.7%	3.5%
Other	2,304,864	5,352,351	3,047,487	132.2%	12.0%
Total	38,704,141	57,271,749	18,567,608	48.0%	4.4%
Court Staff FTE	272.5	279.6	7.1	2.6%	0.2%

Funding Scenarios

		FY27		
		Approved Budget	Proposed Budget	Governor's Proposal
ANALYSIS OF REVENUE & EXPENSE				
	Probate Fee Revenue	48,900,000	48,900,000	48,900,000
	General Fund Appropriation	3,634,932	18,000,000	0
	Extended Fam. Guardianship/CIP	150,000	150,000	150,000
	Other	200,000	200,000	200,000
	TOTAL REVENUE	52,884,932	67,250,000	49,250,000
EXPENDITURES				
		68,765,981	68,765,981	68,765,981
	Net Income (Loss)	(15,881,049)	(1,515,981)	(19,515,981)

Fund Balance

ANALYSIS OF FUND BALANCE

Fund Balance, July 1, 2026
 Net Income (Loss)
 Ending Fund Balance
 Transfer to General Fund*
Fund Balance, June 30, 2027

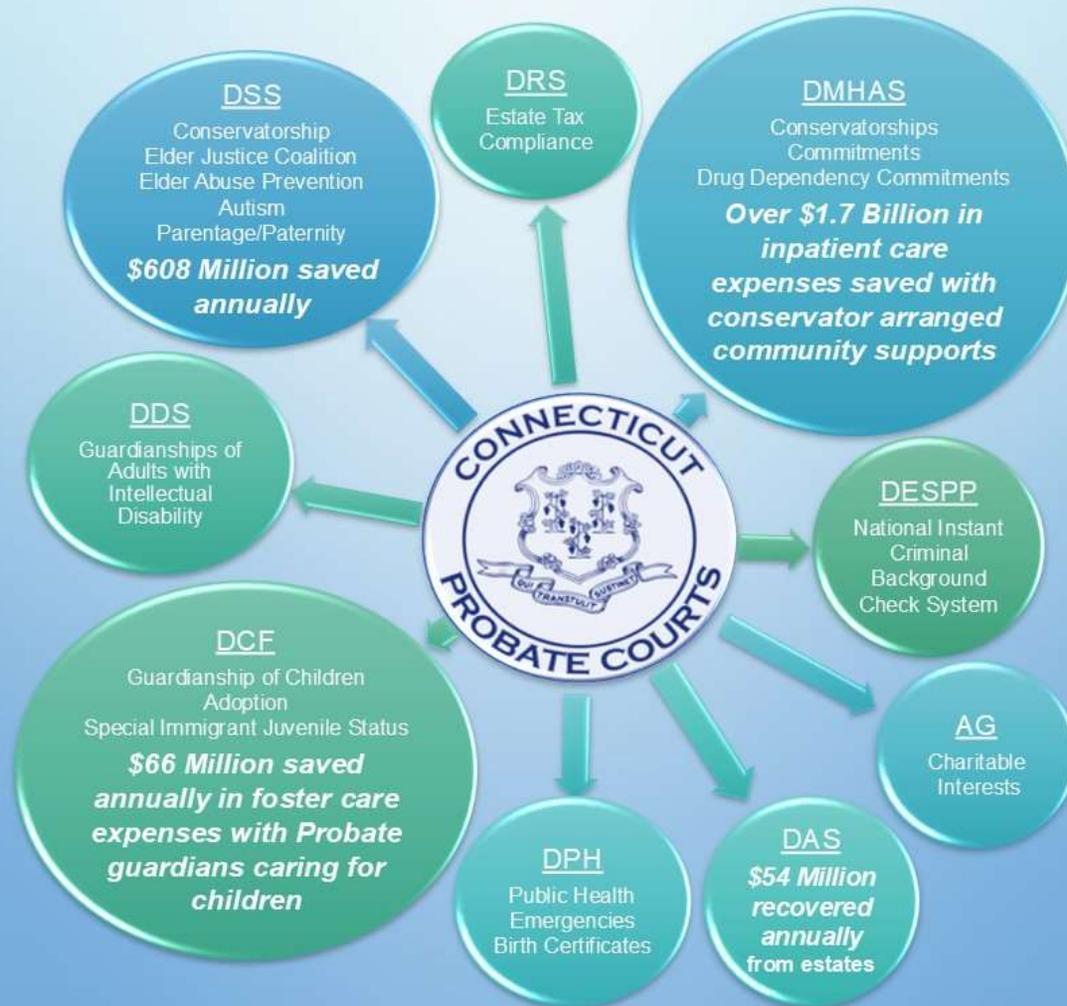
FY27		
Approved Budget	Proposed Budget	Governor's Proposal
13,753,196	13,753,196	24,023,224
(15,881,049)	(1,515,981)	(19,515,981)
(2,127,853)	12,237,215	4,507,243
0	0	0
(2,127,853)	12,237,215	4,507,243

*Section 181 PA 24-174 increases the amount of funds exempt from the statutory sweep from 15% to 20%

PROBATE COURTS AND STATE AGENCIES:

Meeting Needs Creates Significant Savings

Probate Courts facilitate family-centered solutions to meet the needs of seniors, children and individuals with intellectual disability and mental illness. The efforts of guardians and conservators to arrange care at home or other community-based settings **save the state over \$2.4 billion each year** by avoiding more costly state services.



Revised 02/2026

Biennium Funding Request

FY27

- Probate Courts proposed budget for 25% normalized funding:
 - \$18,000,000