



Dear Neighbors,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family in good health and good spirits. Once again, my family and I thank you for the opportunity to represent you in the Connecticut General Assembly. The General Assembly is currently hard at work crafting legislation to better serve you, the people of Connecticut and the 83<sup>rd</sup> District.

As always, my number one priority is to represent you at the Capitol to the best of my ability. To that end, this newsletter will highlight some of the initiatives through legislation that I have introduced. Please do not hesitate to contact me for more information, to voice your concerns or share your ideas. I value your participation as we endeavor to help improve life in this great state.

Sincerely,

Catherine Abercrombie  
State Representative 83rd District

### EDUCATION FUNDING

The Education Cost Sharing formula is how the state determines how much education funding to distribute to each town's public schools. Many towns throughout Connecticut are struggling with rising costs of education, and the unhappy solution of either raising local taxes or cutting services. A fairer and better-funded ECS formula will help address the problem.

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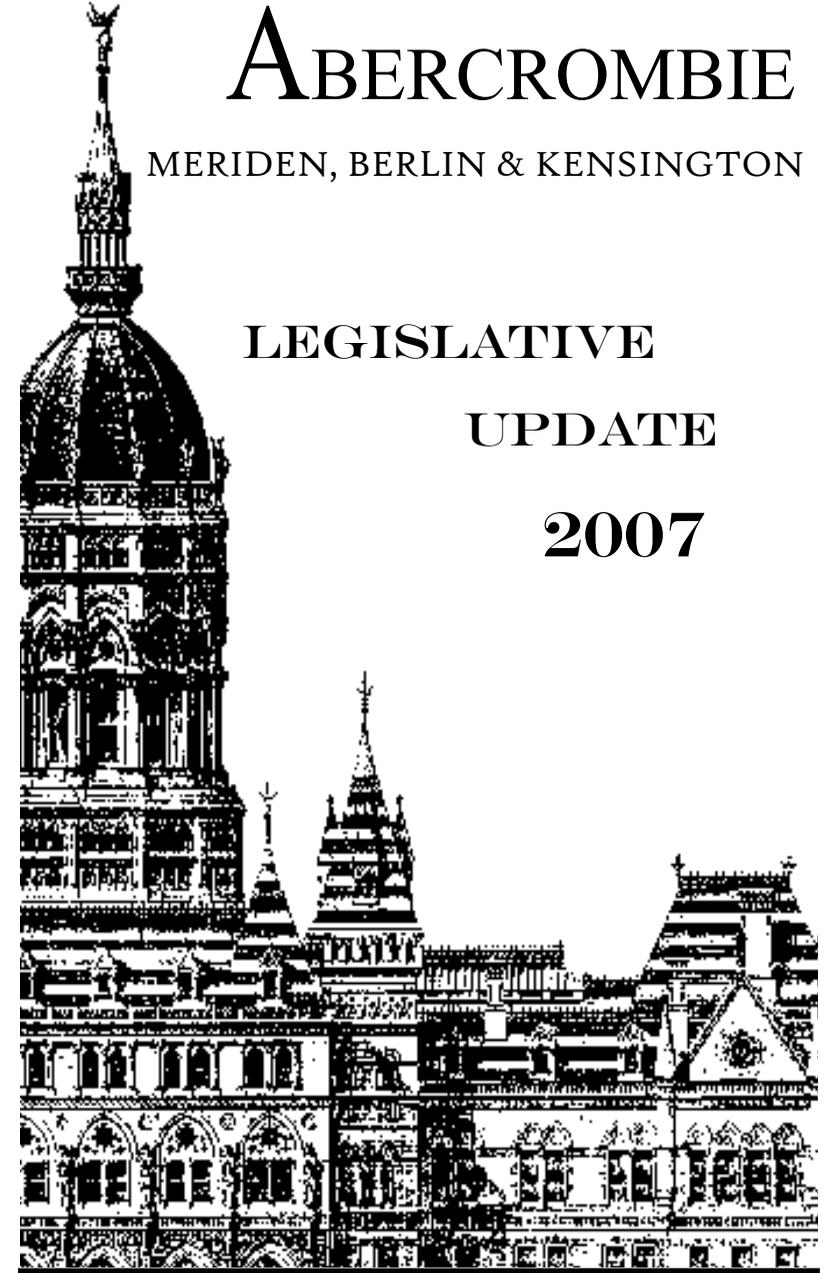


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LEGISLATIVE  
UPDATE  
**2007**



## Can we lead the way to health care coverage for all?

Health care coverage for Connecticut residents is a serious issue for far too many people in our state. We will consider proposals for a single-payer system that offers universal coverage, expansion of our successful HUSKY Program for children to allow more adults to participate, and tax incentives to encourage people to purchase insurance.

In the absence of a federal solution for everyone, I believe we will make more progress towards universal coverage this year, but full coverage will more likely be a ways down the road. Any suggestions you have to add to this debate will be most welcome.



### Autism Pilot

One of my priorities is bringing recognition to the needs of adults with Autism. We are working hard to establish a pilot autism program. This expansion will help to ensure that all children who are eligible for the Medicaid program are able to access services provided by a home health agency in the child's home or a substantially equivalent environment. provide a coordinated system of support and services including case management for adults with autism spectrum disorder.

### Relative Caregiver verses Foster Care



There is a tremendous fiscal responsibility when raising a child these days. Grandparents are now shouldering the financial burdens in the upbringing of their children's children because of unfortunate circumstances. We are currently working on legislation to give parity between what relative caregivers receive versus what the foster care parent receives in financial support. Presently grandparents would have to obtain a foster care license and meet DCF standards to be subsidized for higher monthly state payments than grandparents who become guardians of their grandchildren.

## Can we find a way to reduce soaring energy costs and promote alternative fuels?

While most people now agree that the deregulation of our utilities failed in its mission to spur competition and stem rising costs, a workable solution to our energy crisis is still a work in progress. The solution could include allowing electric companies to re-enter the generation market, changing the way electric rates are set, adopting new generation and energy conservation efficiency standards, and developing alternative fuel initiatives.



The short and long-term benefits of alternative and renewable fuels are being carefully considered, as well as an extremely aggressive conservation effort.

There is a lot at stake and it is imperative that we craft a plan that works for ratepayers and allows businesses to retain a competitive edge.

### Ophthalmic Design & Dispensing Program

Middlesex Community College (MxCC) is the only college offering optician curriculum in Connecticut. It is an educational facility that offers students experience in managing, ordering, and manufacturing in the eye-care business. Through the Ophthalmic Design & Dispensing Program at MxCC, people who cannot afford eye-care or who have no eye-care insurance are provided free or reduced-cost eyeglasses. Because the Ophthalmic Design & Dispensing Program at Middlesex Community College is a state-run facility, it offers to fill prescriptions at discount on an essential need basis. The combination of offering a special educational opportunity to students as well as providing a service to the local community makes the program markedly valuable.

## Legislation I support:

*I believe it is important that all children who are eligible for the Medicaid program are able to access services provided by a home health agency in the child's home or a substantially equivalent environment. I fully support H.B. 7233, An Act Concerning Health Care Access For Children With Special Health Care Needs.*

*I am also in favor of keeping the integrity of our neighborhoods intact by supporting H.B. 6993, An Act Concerning The Zoning Of Adult Establishments.*

### CLIP AND SAVE!

#### Important Telephone Numbers

ConnPACE	1-800-423-5026
Medicare Hotline	1-800-982-6819
CT Partnership for Long-Term Care	1-800-547-3443
Elderly Services Division of the Department of Social Services	1-860-424-5274
Medicare Advocacy	1-800-262-4414
Connecticut Legal Assistance	1-800-413-7796
New Car "Lemons"	1-860-713-6120
Consumer Protection	1-800-842-2649
Tax Department	1-800-382-9463
Unclaimed Property Hotline	1-800-833-7318
CHOICES	1-800-994-9422
Poison Control Center	1-800-343-2722
Infoline	211
No Call List for Telephone Solicitors	1-888-382-1222
Saving for College	1-888-799-CHET (1-888-799-2438)
Insurance Consumer Complaint Line	1-800-203-3447