



Graduate! Connecticut

Seeking to complete your college degree ~ Associates, Bachelors, Masters?

Graduate!CT is designed to help adults complete their degrees. Speak with its advisors one-on-one and attend workshops to pick the right college, solve financial aid issues, and sort out a work, family, and school balance. Find out if on-line learning is right for you. The services are free!

As an initiative of the Metro Hartford Alliance- **Graduate!CT** is a partnership of Connecticut colleges, universities and allied agencies that is designed to help busy, hardworking working adults return to and complete their college learning.

From application through graduation and everything in between, advisors are there to help you succeed in and complete college.

Graduate!CT currently has partnerships with eight local accredited colleges and universities that offer courses that are flexible, focused and specific for adults. For more information, visit its website at www.graduact.org. or call 860-702-3800.

Creating Jobs

Number One Priority – Dig Out of the Recession

Working with the Governor, we passed a significant new jobs bill that will help put Connecticut on the road to economic recovery with:

- » Up to \$500,000 in loans and lines of credit for small businesses and nonprofits
- » Student loan reimbursement for careers in new and emerging fields
- » Income tax credits for investments in new technology businesses
- » Sales tax exemptions for machinery, supplies and fuel in renewable energy industries
- » Tax credits for small businesses of up to \$200 per month per new employee
- » Up to \$150,000 in pre-seed financing and technical services to businesses developing innovative concepts
- » Better environmental rules to speed up business permitting process

State Representative

CATHERINE ABERCROMBIE



sign up for email updates:
www.housedems.ct.gov/Abercrombie



find us on facebook:
www.facebook.com/CThousedemocrats



Legislative Office Building
Room 4023
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Capitol: 860.240.8500
Home: 203.634.8770
www.housedems.ct.gov/Abercrombie



State Representative | Assistant Majority Leader

Catherine Abercrombie

Proudly Serving Meriden Berlin and Kensington | 83rd District

STATE REPRESENTATIVE of the CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

www.housedems.ct.gov/Abercrombie



STATE REPRESENTATIVE of the CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Capitol Update

The 2010 legislative session has been one of both challenge and compromise as we worked to address the state budget deficiency. In the end, we saw real results as legislative leadership and the Governor worked together to craft a sound, responsible and fair state budget. I am proud that we were able to work together, across party lines, to create a compromise and close the 2010 and 2011 fiscal years with no deficit and a balanced budget that avoided both devastating cuts to services and widespread tax increases.

As we look ahead to the future, fiscal challenges remain. While I am truly optimistic about Connecticut's economic recovery, I remain realistic about the absolute necessity to prevent wasteful spending, limit borrowing and keep taxes in check. I will continue to work towards those goals as your voice in the State Capitol.

State Representative | Assistant Majority Leader

Catherine Abercrombie

Proudly Serving Meriden and Berlin | 83rd District



Catherine Abercrombie

Proudly Serving Meriden, Berlin and Kensington | 83rd District



CALL OR E-MAIL
ME FOR YOUR COPY OF:

- 2010 Senior Laws
- 2010 Education Laws
- 2010 Major Public Acts
- 2010 Laws Affecting Children
- 2010 Laws Affecting Business
- 2010 Laws Affecting Municipalities
- 2010 Laws Affecting Energy

860.240.8500
www.housedems.ct.gov



Protecting Families Responding to Domestic Violence in our Communities

Sadly, it seems hardly a week goes by that we don't hear of a tragic incident of family violence in our state. The legislature responded with the most sweeping reforms to our domestic violence laws in the past 25 years. I was proud to be a member of the task force that moved legislation forward:

- » Trains educators to recognize and respond to warning signs of domestic violence
- » Provides relief to victims who terminate their housing rental agreements to protect their safety
- » Increases staffing at domestic violence shelters
- » Creates a pilot GPS tracking program to monitor offenders
- » Improves enforcement of protective orders
- » Expands the use of dedicated domestic violence court dockets
- » Improves employment protections for domestic violence victims
- » Permits prosecutors to consider older and out of state crimes for persistent family violence offenders

Help for Families Hit by Recession

The recession has placed tens of thousands of Connecticut children into poverty. I was pleased to serve on a task force which created the first state laws in the country to address the most pressing needs facing children and their families during times of economic crisis.

The legislation:

- » Works to improve hunger, housing and employment services needed by children and families in an economic crisis
- » Creates a state leadership team to respond to children's issues when Connecticut's unemployment rate hits 8 percent
- » Seeks to ensure that Connecticut takes advantage of all available federal dollars
- » Seeks to make government more efficient, cost-effective and customer friendly for children and families during tough economic times
- » Helps families in the Care4Kids program by changing restrictive rules so that parents can get back into the workforce

Social Services Maximizing Federal Dollars

To increase the amount of federal funding that comes to Connecticut to provide programs for those in need; we passed a bill that will match federal dollars with private sector funding. Millions of federal dollars under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Emergency Contingency Fund (TANF) will be available to social service non-profits who also receive private dollars. The money will be disbursed through the state's Office of Policy and Management.

Meriden and Berlin Save by Working Together

Saving on School Busing

Every town in Connecticut can now save money on their school transportation costs.

- » A new grant is available for boards of education from multiple towns that work together to provide transportation services
- » This will be new money coming to the Meriden and Berlin school systems

Saving on Health Insurance

Cities and towns can now save money on health insurance costs.

- » Two or more towns or boards of education can join together to purchase health care benefits at lower costs
- » A larger group size can achieve lower premiums, better benefits for employees and more bargaining power for towns

Taxpayers Off the Hook for Evicted Property

- » Local taxpayers have been relieved of the cost of storing the belongings of evicted tenants
- » Tenant's rights will be protected because state marshals will be responsible for removal, delivery and storage of belongings

Lower-Cost Drugs

- » Municipalities can now take advantage of lower-cost prescription drugs through state discounts
- » The bargaining power, low administrative costs, and discounts negotiated by the state will save cities and towns money

Good News for Seniors

Reducing Costs for Homecare Services

Seniors using the CT Homecare Program for Elders will soon see a reduction in their monthly costs for critical in-home services, such as meal deliveries and personal care assistance. The budget reduces the percentage seniors pay for these services from 15% to 6% -- saving the average client nearly \$100 each month.

Supporting Services for Alzheimer's Patients

Last year's budget protected the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program, which provides small grants to family members caring for people with Alzheimer's to fund personal care, home health and adult day care services. Governor Rell closed the program in 2009, but working with advocates, the legislature was able to re-open the program in May, allowing Connecticut families to receive these important services.

Improving the Senior Driver Discount Program

New legislation encourages seniors to keep their driving skills sharp by making it easier to qualify for safe driver discounts. People age 60 and older will now be able to complete a shorter, 4-hour driving program to be eligible for a two-year discount of 5% or more on their automobile insurance.

Protecting Seniors from the Medicaid Spend-Down

New legislation will help seniors protect their assets when their spouse needs to enter a nursing home. Under current law, the spouse remaining at home must spend down half of his or her assets in order to allow the ill spouse to qualify for Medicaid coverage. This year, we increased the asset cap, so that the couple can keep assets up to \$110,000 and still qualify the ill spouse for Medicaid.

Saluting Our Veterans

- » Veterans in nursing homes can now use the VA as their pharmacy, saving money for veterans and taxpayers
- » Honorably discharged retired veterans with 30 years or more of service can now apply for "retirement promotions" and move up one grade in rank



Speaking on Autism Day at the capitol in April

- » Active duty service members out of state will get an extension for 30 days to renew their expired driver's licenses after their return to Connecticut
- » March 30th is now designated as the official Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Commemoration Day
- » Veterans can now use their military service experience and training as academic credit for certain technical certificates and licenses

Health Care

Moving Forward on Health Reform

The recent passage of the historic federal health care reform law will lead to welcome improvements in the quality, access and affordability of health care for Connecticut residents. This session, the legislature built on those improvements, taking steps to lower costs and enhance transparency and accountability in our health care system.

The new legislation:

- » Saves money for towns by allowing them to join the state in bulk purchasing of prescription drugs
- » Requires insurance companies to disclose denial rates so consumers can compare the quality of different plans
- » Extends state COBRA coverage from 18 to 30 months so laid off employees can keep their health insurance for a longer time as they look for new jobs
- » Requires insurance companies to refer consumers to the state Office of the Health Care Advocate for assistance with denials of coverage
- » Improves coverage for chemotherapy patients
- » Enhances patient safety by improving hospital reporting of medical errors



Berlin's Brianna Tulin was recognized on Fibromyalgia Awareness Day at the capitol for her work raising awareness for those suffering with this disorder.

Safer Sports Student Athletes & Concussions

Head injuries in school sports are often hard to diagnose and have too often turned tragic.

To avoid serious long-term injuries we enacted new protections:

- » Student athletes who sustain head injuries will need medical clearance before re-joining athletic activity
- » Athletic coaches will now be trained to recognize and respond to concussions
- » Anyone with a coach's permit issued by the state Board of Education will need to complete a training course by the start of their sports season next school year
- » The state school board can revoke a permit if any requirements are not followed



Receiving the "Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance Award" this past May.

