



The CT Family Resource Center Alliance honored State Representative Cathy Abercrombie with their Annual Friend of the Family Award for leading the charge in protecting the centers and the families they serve. Cathy is congratulated by State Comptroller, Kevin Lembo.

Dear Neighbor,

As we turn the corner from recession toward economic recovery, I see opportunities to build on the successful business and job growth initiatives passed by the legislature this year.

Your input helped shape my votes during the last regular session of the General Assembly. I protected the services you expect and state aid to cities and towns that support our town's budget, repairs roads and helps keep your local property taxes down.

Balancing the budget isn't our only success. This report highlights legislation important to you. First, our highest priority was job creation and retention. Second, we saved taxpayer dollars by encouraging innovative approaches to regionalizing services. Some of our other legislative advances include; electric rate reform, education enhancements, health insurance reform and help for veterans, the environment and domestic violence victims.

I hope you find this report informative. I would be happy to answer any questions on these issues as well as any other concerns you may have facing our state. Together we can work to create a better future for our friends and families.

Sincerely,

Cathy

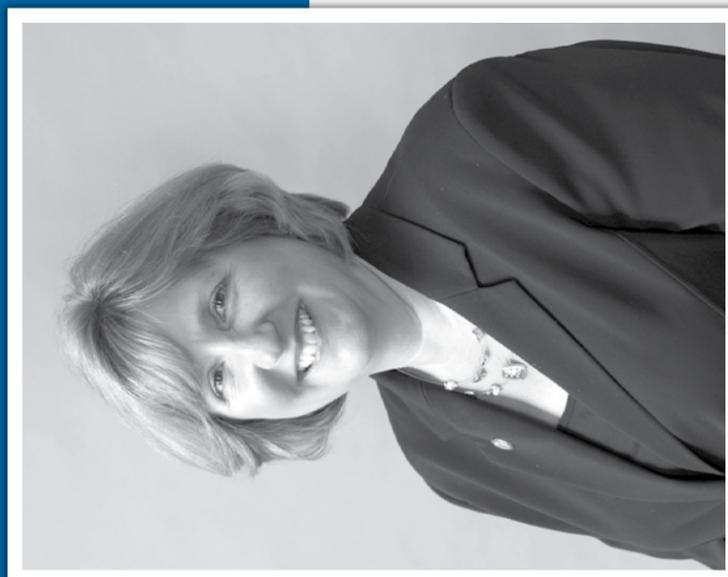
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State Representative

Catherine Abercrombie

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CAPITOL UPDATE 2012

State Representative
CATHERINE ABERCROMBIE

Legislative Office Building

Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Capitol: 800-842-8267

www.housedems.ct.gov/Abercrombie



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The Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies recognized Cathy as Family Legislator of the Year this past April. This annual award was given in appreciation for her dedication and tireless work on behalf of the families of Connecticut.

Health Care

Personal Care Assistants

This legislation will allow certain PCAs, along with child care workers and family care attendants, the right to collectively bargain with the state. Personal care attendants and day-care workers nurture our most vulnerable – the elderly, disabled and children. Allowing these workers to collectively bargain will give these industries more stability and attract more people to work in these fields. In many cases, personal care attendants and family childcare providers are underpaid, work limited hours and have no access to health benefits.



Representative Cathy Abercrombie and Congressman John B. Larson participated in informational forums at the State Capitol on autism services and legislation, Caring for Military Kids with Autism Act (H.R. 2288)

Job Growth

Jobs are Priority #1

We created new job opportunities for young people by funding the Youth Employment Summer Jobs program. We also supported adult evening education programs, as well as the Small Business Express program and a Connecticut Made initiative to promote products from local businesses.

Additional, high level job opportunities will result from economic development funding for the Jackson Labs project that builds on our decision to become a world leader in bioscience and biotechnology.

We recognize the challenges facing cities and towns and secured funding for municipalities, relieving pressure on local property taxes.

Reducing Domestic Violence

Connecticut state laws will be strengthened to better protect victims and hold abusers accountable. We gave police officers the tools they need to better identify and respond to domestic violence. We also improved access to and enforcement of protective and restraining orders to improve victim safety.

Veterans

Diversions Programs for Vets with PTSD & Legals Issues

So many of our service men and women return home and face a variety of challenges, not the least of which are legal issues and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. A federally funded pilot program for veterans dealing with these issues is helpful but limited, so we expanded the program to more locations throughout the state.

Custody Orders While on Deployment

In order to reduce the psychological trauma a parent feels when they leave a small child for an extended period of time, we protected parents' permanent custody orders in the event of deployment. We provided an opportunity for the military parent to create temporary custody orders that remain in effect only as long as they are away on deployment and for as much contact as possible between children and the parent who is absent while on military duty by providing contact by phone or email.

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Energy

Storm Response

This helps to insure Connecticut residents that they will not have to endure the hardships of last October's Nor'easter and Tropical Storm Irene with sweeping reforms to better prepare for future events and avoid wide-spread and lengthy loss of utility service. Utilities will be held to minimum performance standards for emergency preparation and response with corresponding penalties of up to 2.5 percent of an electric or gas company's annual distribution revenue, which could amount to millions of dollars in fines.

Price Gouging & Pain at the Pump

Skyrocketing gasoline prices are a result of global factors such as growing demand from expanding economies such as China, turmoil in the Middle East and oil market speculators. Faced with the reality of a global dilemma, the legislature acted in a bipartisan manner to be a part of the solution, by capping the state petroleum gross receipts tax (GRT) on motor fuels and enacting new price gouging laws to protect consumers from oil companies and gasoline dealers that try to exploit abnormal market conditions for profit.

Seniors

Preserving Medicare Eligibility

This legislation ensured thousands of seniors and people with disabilities could continue to use the Medicare Savings Program (MSP) to help pay for their Medicare co-pays and deductibles by raising the income limit for MSP to accommodate a 3.6 percent Social Security cost of living increase (COLA) which took effect January 1. It would have been a tragic irony if a welcome increase in Social Security made some Connecticut residents ineligible for these Medicare benefits.

I am proud to support these and other initiatives for our seniors. After working throughout their lives and contributing to society, seniors deserve our respect and assistance to help them enjoy their later years.

Grandparent's Rights

Family relationships are complicated and grandparents can sometimes be separated from their grandchildren's lives particularly when divorce or disagreements occur. This new law helps grandparents seeking visitation rights by providing guidance on evidence showing a parent-like relationship exists and that a denial of visitation rights could cause harm to the child. Decisions should be made in a child's best interests and this legislation helps do that.