

HEALTH

Limiting Copayments for Breast Ultrasound Screenings and Occupational Therapy

Out-of-pocket medical costs discourage patients from seeking treatment. This law limits copays for breast ultrasound screenings and occupational therapy, two important services that lower long-term health care costs and improve outcomes. Health insurance policies that are required to provide ultrasound coverage will be prohibited from imposing a copayment of more than \$20 for breast ultrasound screening. Coverage is required in certain cases, including when a patient is at increased risk for breast cancer because of family history or genetic testing. Certain health insurance policies may not impose a copayment of more than \$30 per visit for in-network occupational therapy services. Federal law limits these new requirements to fully insured policies, which are regulated by the state.



Julie Peters presenting the 2014 Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut Public Policy Award to Rep. Abercrombie

Protecting Consumers from Disreputable Heating Oil Companies

Over the past few years, some heating oil companies have gone out of business, taking their customer's money and not delivering their oil. In order to protect consumers, we created a moratorium on selling fuel oil contracts during the peak heating season (between November 1 and March 31). Dealers that offer prepaid contracts will also be required to disclose details of the offer, including how the contract will be secured. The Department of Revenue Services commissioner will notify the Department of Consumer Protection annually of any outstanding tax delinquencies a heating fuel dealer owes to the state.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

CATHERINE F. ABERCROMBIE

PROUDLY SERVING THE 83RD DISTRICT • MERIDEN, BERLIN, KENSINGTON

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HARTFORD, CT
Permit No. 3937



STATE REPRESENTATIVE CATHERINE F. ABERCROMBIE

PROUDLY SERVING THE 83RD DISTRICT • MERIDEN, BERLIN, KENSINGTON



[Facebook.com/StateRepAbercrombie](https://www.facebook.com/StateRepAbercrombie)

Dear Neighbor,

The 2014 legislative session ended recently and I want to update you about what I have been up to in Hartford. This year was a short three-month session, but I am proud of the work that we got done in such a short period of time.

My colleagues and I were appalled to hear about the lack of response to sexual assaults on the University of Connecticut's campus, and I was honored to co-sponsor a bill that mandates reporting of sexual assaults on campus. This bill, now law, also makes sure that students who report a sexual assault are immediately notified of their rights, and the response by the university is handled by law enforcement who have been specifically trained to deal with these crimes.

In an effort to continue to help Connecticut's struggling economy, I was pleased to support a minimum wage increase, which will rise to \$10.10 an hour on Jan. 1, 2017. Working parents simply cannot afford to support their families at the current minimum wage, and deserve a livable wage. The legislature also passed a law that keeps United Technologies, who owns Pratt & Whitney and Sikorsky, here in Connecticut for at least the next 10 years. During this time, the company estimates it will contribute more than \$400 million to the state's economy. This is also great news for the employees of UTC, who now know that their jobs will remain in Connecticut for the foreseeable future.

I hope you find the information in this newsletter helpful. Please don't hesitate to reach out to my office if I can ever be of help to you or your family!

Sincerely,

Cathy Abercrombie

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
CAPITOL: 860-240-8500
CATHERINE.ABERCROMBIE@CGA.CT.GOV

CAPITOL UPDATE 2014

AUTISM DAY AT THE CAPITOL

Autism Advocacy Day is an annual event that I am proud to support at the state capitol. Each year, lawmakers, state leaders and families get together to draw attention to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). I have been hosting this day since 2005 and each time, I learn something new and encouraging from our amazing guests. As more families are impacted with new cases on a daily basis, we must continue our support and commitment to spreading the word on behalf of our loved ones. Autism is characterized by impaired social interaction, problems with verbal and nonverbal communication, and unusual, repetitive, or severely limited activities and interests. To learn more about autism and ways you can make a difference in this cause, please visit www.autismspeaks.org.



*Rep. Abercrombie and
Dylan Trowbridge of Meriden*

SENIORS

Helping Seniors Remain in Their Homes

Most seniors would prefer to live in their own homes for as long as possible. We have taken steps to help make this happen. This year we created a \$6 million grant program for home modifications and other assistive technology that will allow people to remain in their homes longer.

The program is open to seniors and individuals with disabilities who are at risk of being unable to live independently without the modifications.

We also required the Commission on Aging to recognize communities that are implementing livable community initiatives, which include affordable and accessible housing, community and social services, planning and zoning regulations, walkability, and transportation-related infrastructure. The Department on Aging and the Department of Social Services will hold quarterly meetings with nutrition service providers in order to improve elderly nutrition services.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

CATHERINE F. ABERCROMBIE

PROUDLY SERVING THE 83RD DISTRICT • MERIDEN, BERLIN, KENSINGTON



ENERGY & UTILITIES

Electric Customer Consumer Protection

This year we added much-needed transparency to an issue that we heard about from many state residents regarding predatory energy providers and confusing energy bills.

A state market analysis released in March by the Office of Consumer Counsel estimated Connecticut consumers were overpaying for electricity by an estimated \$13.7 million a month. Many consumers, who counted on paying less for energy after signing up for low introductory rates from suppliers, soon discovered that their rates jumped and they were paying more.

Energy suppliers will now be prohibited from offering consumers short-term “teaser” energy contracts with low rates, then switching to much higher variable rate contracts within weeks. Termination fees would be capped at \$50 under the law, and a consumer could switch back to the standard rate charged by UI or CL&P within 72 hours.

More transparent billing practices and faster switching, so a customer can fire a company quickly and easily, and prohibitions of coercive and deceptive sales practices, will empower consumers.



*Meriden Youth Researchers met with Meriden lawmakers
during their visit to the State Capitol in April*

VETERANS AND MILITARY SERVICE

Helping our Vets Find Work and Housing

The Veterans’ Opportunity Pilot Program will utilize specialists in veterans’ employment and homelessness to assist nonprofit agencies secure work and housing for our vets. At the state level, our Department of Labor will manage a statewide network of employment services for veterans and utilize federal grants to lower the number of homeless veterans in our state.

Help for Jobless Veterans

This session we worked to streamline the state licensing process for our job-seeking veterans. Connecticut veterans can now apply their military training toward occupational licenses, including public safety positions and a variety of trades. In addition, college credits can be awarded for specialty training and apprenticeship credits applied to specific trades.

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES TO GROW AND TRAIN WORKERS

Small manufacturers in Connecticut are an important source of jobs and the engine of economic growth. We work hard to provide support to these businesses through programs like the Manufacturing Reinvestment Account (MRA). The MRA is designed to help small manufacturers fund capital investments and train their workers. This year, we made it easier for businesses to take advantage of the program by increasing the number of eligible employees from 50 to 150.



LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
CAPITOL: 860-240-8500
CATHERINE.ABERCROMBIE@CGA.CT.GOV



[Facebook.com/StateRepAbercrombie](https://www.facebook.com/StateRepAbercrombie)

PRINTED
IN CONNECTICUT