



Rep. Albis with the East Haven 89ers on opening day.

Helping Seniors

The legislature focused on improving the quality of life for our senior citizens by:

- Rejecting the Governor's proposal to significantly raise cost-sharing in the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders
- Expanding the state's Money Follows the Person program
- Establishing Nursing Home Grievance Committees at each facility

In addition, grandparent's rights will be the subject of a special study aimed at enhancing their ability to seek visitation rights.

I am proud to support these and other services for our senior citizens.

Tropical Storm Irene: What Did We Learn?

Recently I participated in the legislative hearings on the utility companies' readiness and response to Tropical Storm Irene.

Utility executives, public safety officials, municipal elected officials, including East Haven Mayor April Capone, and members of the public testified at the hearings.

Our goal was to examine the response of the utility companies and to learn how we can be better prepared for future storms. We found that the biggest problem was communication. Some of the recommendations the legislature made were:

- Creation of regional response plans for more efficient power restoration
- Restoring power early to cellular phone towers to allow for better communication between the utility companies (such as United Illuminating) and their customers
- More aggressive tree trimming standards to mitigate damage
- Creation of a non-public list of residents in each municipality of people with urgent medical needs, such as dialysis

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State Representative

James Albis

Proudly Serving East Haven | 99th District

HOUSE DEMOCRATS of CONNECTICUT

Legislative Office Building
Room 5005
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Capitol Phone 800.842.8267
www.house Dems.ct.gov/Albis



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Dear Neighbor,

In 2011, the legislature tackled one of the state's biggest challenges – finding ways to encourage job growth in the face of a slow economic recovery. With fewer resources for spurring business expansion and creating jobs, we are creating new ways to attract business development and implementing new measures to allow cities, towns and businesses to turn savings into jobs.

This year I'm proud to have promoted job growth with:

- Expanding job creation tax credits
- Cutting the business entity tax
- Creating a Subsidized Training and Employment Program where employers are paid to train and hire unemployed workers over a 6 month period
- Creating a "Small Business Express" package to help small businesses grow

I am also proud to say that I worked to stabilize your local property taxes by supporting \$20,346,820 in state dollars to East Haven. If not for this state aid, your mill rate would be 36.04%.

I hope this report is informative. I'm happy to answer any questions about these issues or any others facing our state this year. Together we can work to create a better future for Connecticut.

Thank you for the privilege of serving you!

CAPITOL REPORT 2011



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State Representative

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If you need additional assistance or have questions, please contact me:

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Representative Albis at a Judiciary Committee Public Hearing.

Affordable Health Insurance

The state is now closer to the goal of guaranteeing affordable health insurance for all Connecticut residents. The legislature:

- Opened the state employee healthcare plan to municipal employees and nonprofits
- Established the Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange where individuals and companies with up to 50 employees can compare and purchase health insurance
- Required insurance coverage of MRIs for breast cancer screening if a woman is found to have “dense” breast tissue

Condominium Rules Changed

Across Connecticut, residents care about their living conditions and want to improve housing at every level. This year, I fought to improve the quality-of-life and enhanced basic rights in condominium associations by drafting a bill that gave owners expanded rights and aimed to improve living conditions. This is an ongoing issue and I intend to make this a priority in the next legislative session. The new law:

- Prohibits an executive board member of a condominium association from accepting any item of value if it will influence the member’s vote
- Prohibits a community association manager from campaigning for a candidate for the executive board
- Requires an association to hold a hearing before bringing an action against a unit owner
- Permits a unit owner to request a hearing before the executive board to enforce an obligation against an association or another unit owner

Foreclosure Mediation

This year I worked with the Banks Committee to strengthen Connecticut’s Foreclosure Mediation Program, which helps lenders and homeowners achieve a mutually agreeable resolution to a mortgage foreclosure. Foreclosure mediation ends in settlement 80 percent of the time and in the end, 65 percent of homeowners STAY in their homes. For more information about the Foreclosure Mediation Program, please visit www.jud.ct.gov/foreclosure

State Funds to Cities and Towns Saved

Under a new budget agreement, towns avoided the proposed elimination of the Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment Exemption Program that provides for a 100 percent exemption of local property taxes on qualified, newly acquired manufacturing machinery and equipment. **I am also proud to say that I worked to stabilize your local property taxes by supporting \$20,346,820 in state dollars to East Haven. If not for this state aid, your mill rate would be 36.04 percent.**

This year we also took steps to cut costs and streamline government. Connecticut is being run more efficiently this year with:

- State agency consolidations
- Upgraded technology
- Over \$700 million in spending cuts
- No borrowing
- Fully funded pension obligations
- A commitment to staying below the constitutional spending cap

Preserving the Safety Net

Our most vulnerable residents, children and the elderly and those at risk for losing their homes, were protected from excessive cuts to programs and services. This session, I rejected proposals to shred the safety net, such as reducing Medicare funding by half-a-billion dollars. We also:

- Protected public school funding.
- Expanded the school breakfast program.
- Instituted the earned income tax credit.
- Protected service workers’ health and yours with paid sick days.
- Created the Connecticut Healthcare Partnership to protect and increase access to quality, affordable health care.
- Created a coordinated system for early childhood education.
- Strengthened school anti-bullying laws.

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Piloting Virtual Net Metering

This year I supported a pilot program of virtual net metering for municipalities. This allows towns to receive energy credits on their monthly bills for excess power produced by renewable sources.

East Haven recently installed solar panels at our Town Hall, Joseph Melillo Middle School, and Momauguin School. Previously, communities that produced electricity beyond their needs at a specific location could not credit those savings to other electric accounts. This new law now makes that possible. Encouraging and developing renewable resources is a gain for all of Connecticut.

Towns Save Money by Working Together

I am proud to have supported a bill that encourages municipalities to join together for the shared delivery of common services. Through this bill, sharing services will allow towns to save money.

This new law will:

- Make it easier for towns to explore shared opportunities
- Provide financial incentives to encourage cooperation
- Assist towns in implementing economies of scale by providing expertise on transitions

Energy Reform

Like you, I’ve reduced my electricity use, but it’s still too costly. The electric market deregulation enacted years ago hasn’t worked, so this year we passed a major act to help alleviate the burden on customers. This legislation would reduce energy costs by:

- Investing in energy efficiency and clean energy technologies in both homes and businesses
- Reforming state agencies to provide tighter controls over your energy costs
- Achieving long-term savings for all electric customers



Representatives Albis and Candelora meet with students from East Haven High School.

