

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DAVID ALEXANDER

PROUDLY SERVING THE 58TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT, ENFIELD

CAPITOL UPDATE 2015

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Throughout my time in the legislature, I have tried to be Enfield's voice in Hartford and not Hartford's voice to Enfield. This was a very difficult legislative session, but I hope that I have lived up to this principle in my attempt to fight for the residents of Enfield.

I felt it was especially important to voice my concern for taxpayers, middle-income earners, working families and small business owners trying to make ends meet in a difficult economy. I felt that the conversation I started was appropriate, and I hope that the concerns I spoke about will help the legislature address many pressing economic problems during the next legislative session.

I hope that you enjoy this legislative update. It is intended to highlight some of the issues that I worked on during this past legislative session. This year, we were able to continue our fight for a commuter-rail station in Thompsonville, stand-up for veterans, assist seniors and help the U.S. Marshal Service combat crime. I also worked on a litany of other issues that I was unable to mention in this update. Please visit my website for information regarding the past legislative and contact me with any questions, comments or concerns you may have.

It is a distinct honor to serve you in the Connecticut General Assembly. I am as excited to fight for your interests in Hartford as I was when first sworn into office. I hope that you have a safe and enjoyable autumn, and I look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,



State Representative David Alexander was named "Legislator of the Year" by Access Connecticut which is dedicated to restoring adoptee rights in Connecticut. Rep. Alexander with Access Connecticut President Karen Caffrey, Vice President Carol Goodyear and Treasurer Marion Conklin.

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DAVID ALEXANDER



Rep. David Alexander recently joined Sophie Krzys (left) and Trude Dorous (right) at the Enfield Senior Center. Seniors were invited to an information forum on the potential threats regarding identity theft and fraud.

PROTECTING THE ELDERLY

This legislative year, we passed more laws to protect our seniors from potential abuse. In situations where abuse or neglect is suspected, the Department of Social Services can now petition a probate court to gain access to that person’s home to make an assessment. For the purpose of these investigations, the definition of neglect has also been expanded to include elderly people who do not live alone, but whose caretaker fails to arrange for the necessary services to keep an elderly person healthy. We also passed laws that will keep nursing home and residential care home residents safer by requiring the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services to notify a resident’s designee of suspected abuse or neglect within 24 hours.

U.S. MARSHALS PEACE OFFICER STATUS

Last autumn it came to my attention that the U.S. Marshal Service was not operating with Peace Officer Status in Connecticut. This meant that U.S. Marshals were unable to enforce state criminal law when trying to bring dangerous felons to justice in our state. This session, I worked with the U.S. Marshal Service and the Co-Chairs of the Judiciary Committee to amend state statute to grant U.S. Marshal’s Peace Officer status. Now U.S. Marshals can operate unimpeded in their attempt to keep us safe in Connecticut.



David receiving an award from the U.S. Marshal Service

PATIENT-DESIGNATED CAREGIVERS

Some patients are re-admitted to hospitals soon after their original discharge because they had not been instructed properly about their follow-up care. As a member of the Public Health Committee, I supported a bill that requires hospitals to designate a caregiver in a patient’s discharge plan. It also requires hospitals to notify a designated caregiver about a patient’s discharge, and instruct the caregiver about any post-discharge tasks. This bill is especially important for our senior citizen community.



David speaking at the 14th Annual 9/11 Memorial Vigil at Enfield Fire Station 2

THOMPSONVILLE COMMUTER-RAIL

We made great strides this year to bring a commuter-rail station to Thompsonville on the proposed Hartford-to-Springfield line. As a member of the Bonding Subcommittee, I worked to get \$450 million approved in this year’s Bond Bill to fund, in upcoming years, the construction of a rail station in Enfield. This funding will coincide with the construction of other stations in North Central Connecticut. Through discussions with our Federal delegation, we were also able to secure a \$700,000 grant from the Federal Transit Administration that will study how transit-oriented development will benefit towns, such as Enfield, on this proposed rail line.

TAX EXEMPTING MILITARY PENSIONS

As a member of both the Veterans Affairs and Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committees, I worked to get a clause within the biennial budget that exempts military veteran pensions from state income taxation. As a veteran, I know how difficult it is to earn a military pension, and these veterans should be honored for their significant service to our nation. Economically, this policy is sensible because Massachusetts and New York do not tax military pensions. I know firsthand of veterans in North Central Connecticut who were contemplating moving to Massachusetts due to that state’s tax policy. Now these veterans will stay in Connecticut where they belong.



Enfield Railroad (Circa 2011)

MILITARY FUNERAL HONOR GUARD

Early in the legislative session it was decided that funding would be cut for the Military Funeral Honors Program within the biennial budget. As an American Legion member, I directly know the importance of this sacred ceremony and progressive state policy. I worked with multiple state veterans’ service organizations and legislative colleagues to aggressively fight this proposed cut. Although we were only able to reinstate \$469,533 out of the original \$471,526 for funding, we were successful in preserving this important program for two more years.

ENSURING VETS HAVE HOUSING

Since 1940, the Veterans’ Home in Rocky Hill has served our vets in need with a range of rehabilitative, medical, and vocational services. A new law implements several recommendations from a 2014 study on the Home including:

- Residents will have two seats on the Board of Trustees.
- A process will be developed for residents to file complaints.
- No veteran will go without housing should something happen to the Home.
- The General Assembly will be presented with a plan to implement other recommendations including more transitional housing, on-campus work programs, and greater privacy for residents.

