



State Representative | Deputy Speaker

# BUDDY ALTABELLO

## The 2009 Session

Connecticut's families gained substantial protections through the passage of numerous, important bills during the past legislative session. Even while the national and state fiscal crisis dominated much of our work, the General Assembly fought hard for the people of Connecticut. From landmark health care reform legislation to bills protecting children, seniors, military families, homeowners and students, we are providing you with the support you asked of us.

Keeping in step with initiatives at the national level, Connecticut is preparing to lead on accessible, affordable, quality health care. New laws taking effect this year also include affordable elderly homecare and a Silver Alert system for locating missing seniors, a ban on toxic chemicals in baby bottles and food, safeguards against mortgage foreclosures, blight prevention, promotion of safe green cleaning products, health insurance coverage for autism treatments, and relief for military families, among many others.

## Foreclosures and Neighborhood Protection

The national foreclosure crisis has put many Connecticut families at risk of losing their homes. This year, House Democrats created safeguards around mortgage foreclosure, mortgage lending, and neighborhood preservation.

### FORECLOSURE PROTECTION

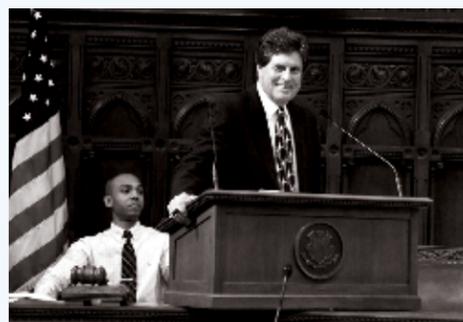
PA 09-209 | SB 948 – Effective: 07.01.09

- Implements federal reforms
- Improves licensing procedures for lending professionals
- Expands eligibility for state foreclosure prevention programs
- Makes the state's foreclosure mediation program mandatory

### NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION

PA 09-144 | SB 951 – Effective: 10.01.09

- Creates a registration system to track owners of uninhabited blighted properties
- Allows municipalities to enforce violations on deteriorating properties



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# CAPITOL NEWS

## 2009



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# Emil "Buddy" Altobello

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## Buddy Altobello

Deputy Speaker

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### PROVIDING FOR OUR ARMED FORCES MEMBERS & THEIR FAMILIES

The service and sacrifices of our Armed Forces members must always be valued and honored. This session we passed several new laws to aid them and their families.

#### RELIEF FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

PA 09-163 | HB 6394 – EFFECTIVE: 06.30.09

- Expands the CT Military Family Relief Fund
- Allows immediate relatives of members not on active duty to receive benefits
- Provides grants to pay for essential personal or household items when in hardship

#### SUPPORT FOR THE FAMILIES OF WOUNDED SOLDIERS

PA 09-70 | SB 710 – EFFECTIVE: 05.27.09

- Expands the State Family and Medical Leave Act to permit employees to take up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave from work to care for injured family members who are military personnel

### KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE & HEALTHY

Meriden’s children need our protection from the numerous harms that exist. This legislative session I worked hard with my colleagues to pass legislation to do just that.

#### BANNING TOXIC CHEMICALS

PA 09-103 | HB 6572 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- Bans bisphenol-A BPA, an industrial chemical with toxic properties
- Baby bottles and food and beverage containers will be safer for kids

#### PREVENTING CARDIAC ARREST IN SCHOOLS

PA 09-94 | SB 981 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- Requires each school to have an automatic external defibrillator AED
- Provides training to school staff for its use and for CPR

#### HEALTH INSURANCE FOR AUTISM TREATMENTS

PA 09-115 | SB 301 – EFFECTIVE: 01.01.10

Requires insurance coverage of critical treatments and benefits that will greatly help the lives of children with autism.

*These treatments are:*

- Diagnosis to determine if an individual has an autism spectrum disorder
- Behavioral therapies to children 14 years old or younger including, but not limited to, applied behavior analysis and cognitive behavioral therapy
- Prescription drugs
- Psychiatric and psychological services
- Physical and occupational therapy
- Speech and language pathology services

### LOOKING OUT FOR SENIORS

In recent years, the legislature has made safeguarding the independence, health and safety of seniors one of our top priorities. This year we passed several initiatives to improve the quality of life of seniors in our communities, including:

#### MAKING MEDICATIONS MORE ACCESSIBLE

PA 09-136 | HB 6540 – EFFECTIVE: 01.01.10

- As eye drops can be difficult to use, a thirty day supply can easily be depleted before the refill date so insurance companies are now required to provide refills if prescription eye drops run out before refill date

### LOCATING MISSING SENIORS

PA 09-109 | SB 451 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- Creates an emergency notification system known as the Silver Alert similar to the Amber Alert and allows law enforcement agencies to issue public alerts for missing seniors

### SENIOR DISCOUNT PROGRAMS

PA 09-53 | HB 5674 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- Provides seniors with greater access to senior citizen discount programs by requiring businesses to post and disclose details of programs and eligibility requirements



### REFORMING OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

PA 09-148 | HB 6600 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

Over 750,000 Connecticut residents went without health insurance at one point during 2007 or 2008. Healthcare costs everyone more each year and taxpayers pay more to supplement the people who do not have it. The SustiNet Bill creates a nine member board of healthcare providers and experts to prepare Connecticut for federal healthcare reform.

### PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Connecticut’s natural beauty is one of the state’s treasures that must be maintained and protected. This year, we took steps to protect our environmental heritage for future generations.

### PROTECTING LONG ISLAND SOUND

PA 09-151 | SB 1078 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- Creates a bi-state commission to review environmental, ecological, & energy issues
- Allows cooperative protection of Long Island Sound and the lower Hudson River Valley

### GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Making government functions more efficient is especially important during these difficult economic times.

### IMPROVING REGIONAL COOPERATION

PA 09-231 | HB 6585 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- Allows regions to enter into mutual agreements to promote regional economic development
- Allows regions to share property tax revenue from the new developments

### PROTECTING YOUR HOME, SAVINGS & CREDIT

We took action to aid consumers hurt by recent events and protect you from: future financial abuses such as:

- The recent sub-prime mortgage crisis
- Unscrupulous lending officials and money managers

### PROTECTING COLLEGE STUDENTS CREDIT

PA 09-167 | HB 6483 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- Requires the Board of Governors of Higher Education to adopt policies to regulate credit card marketing practices on public college campuses in order to protect students

### IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

**ConnPACE**  
1-800-423-5026

**Medicare Hotline**  
1-800-633-4227

**CT Partnership for Long-Term Care**  
1-800-547-3443

**Commission on Aging**  
1-860-240-5200

**Medicare Advocacy**  
1-800-262-4414

**Consumer Protection**  
1-800-842-2649

**CT Veterans Affairs**  
1-800-550-0000

**DSS Elder Services**  
1-866-218-6631

**Healthcare Advocate**  
1-866-466-4446