

STUDENT LOAN BILL OF RIGHTS

Student loan debt is an issue that impacts many Connecticut families. Sixty-four percent of college graduates in our state have student loan debt. This year, Connecticut became the first state in the nation to create a Student Loan Bill of Rights, which establishes an Office of the Student Loan Ombudsman. This office will regulate student loan servicers, compile data on borrower complaints, develop a financial literacy education course for students, and will help student borrowers and their parents navigate the loan process.

In addition, the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA) took historic steps toward increasing college affordability by announcing that it will offer its lowest fixed interest rate yet at 4.95%, down from its current rate of 6.75%. This rate is also significantly lower than the upcoming Federal PLUS loan rate of 6.84%.



Joe at the Student Loan Bill of Rights press conference during the 2015 session.



Joe at the Hope for Heroes fundraiser during the 2015 session.



Joe at the Memorial Day Parade.

HELP FOR OUR VETERANS

This year, the legislature supported and advanced legislation that recognizes the important sacrifices veterans have made while defending our country. We established the Women Veterans Program to help better connect female veterans to services available to them, and the Veterans to Agriculture Program, which will give tax credits to vets working in agricultural production. We also created the Incarcerated Veterans Reintegration Council to help incarcerated vets reintegrate back into their community.



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STATE REPRESENTATIVE | HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER
JOE ARESIMOWICZ
PROUDLY SERVING THE 30TH DISTRICT, BERLIN & SOUTHTON

CAPITOL UPDATE 2015



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Dear Neighbor:

During this legislative session, we faced the extraordinary challenge of creating a balanced budget while facing a billion dollar deficit.

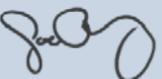
I heard from hundreds of friends and neighbors who were alarmed by proposals to cut funding for libraries, before- and after-school programs, services for those with mental health issues and developmental disabilities, and other vital programs that are important to our most vulnerable residents. At the same time, many of you expressed your desire for a budget that lowers the middle class tax burden while investing in our economy and transportation infrastructure.

I listened to you and advocated for a budget that meets these concerns. Difficult choices were necessary to accomplish these goals, but I am proud to say that the final budget reflects the priorities that you expressed to me. This budget:

- Reduces property taxes;
- Invests in our transportation infrastructure;
- Reduces spending while preserving essential services for our most vulnerable citizens; and
- Creates a more fair tax system.

When facing the tough decisions that need to be made at the legislature year after year, I always remember who I represent and what you need. Even in difficult years like this one, I still feel honored to be able to represent the residents of Berlin and Southington. I will continue to stay focused on what is important to you, and I strongly encourage you to call me at (860) 240-8489 or email me at joe.aresimowicz@cga.ct.gov with your suggestions, questions and concerns.

Sincerely,



State Representative Joe Aresimowicz

STATE REPRESENTATIVE | HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER

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HISTORIC TAX CUTS

The newly adopted biennial budget provides historic tax relief for families, businesses and veterans by:

- Providing hundreds of millions of dollars in additional state funding to cities and towns to provide property tax relief;
- Capping municipal spending;
- Capping the car tax; and
- Fully exempting federally taxable military retirement pay from our state income tax.

Berlin will receive \$1,427,466 in additional aid for property tax relief.



Joe touring AMCO Precision Tools' newly expanded facility made possible with the help of a state-funded loan.

CUTTING SPENDING & RESTORING FAIRNESS

Our locally-owned grocery and hardware stores in Berlin report all of their profits in Connecticut. Large corporations pool their profits across states and report their Connecticut profits to places like Delaware - a haven for corporate tax avoidance. Our budget will put our locally-owned stores on a level playing field with large corporations in the next fiscal year.

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN SPENDING CUTS

We cut spending by almost \$600 million in FY 16 and more than \$800 million in FY 17. This includes cuts of \$200 million from state employee salaries, positions and overtime over the next two years.

CONNECTICUT'S FAMILIES & BUSINESSES

Some of the largest corporations in the world pay little or no taxes in Connecticut while our state's small and medium-sized businesses and middle-class families bear the burden.

Mandatory combined reporting brings fairness to our tax system. Our small businesses can't hide profits across multiple states the way large corporations do. Large companies will need to provide a detailed assessment of what earnings are tied to this state.

LOCAL HOSPITALS

I worked to ensure that funding was restored to our local hospitals, which will allow them to qualify for additional federal matching funds and help ensure that we keep important local jobs.

RESPONSIBLY INVESTING IN...

TRANSPORTATION

We made a once-in-a-generation investment of an additional \$2.8 billion in transportation infrastructure over the next five years to grow jobs, boost the economy and improve the quality of life for all Connecticut residents.

This investment tackles the need to improve our transportation infrastructure with a long-term plan, along with a way to pay for it. One half of one percent of the sales tax will now be set aside for transportation improvements. The funds will be protected so that they cannot be used for other purposes.

CRITICAL FUNDING FOR OUR STATE'S MOST VULNERABLE CITIZENS

This budget protects essential funding for families that need it most, including social services, libraries, before- and after-school programs, and state parks.

The budget also enhances funding for mental health services and preserves critical services for seniors and residents with developmental disabilities.



Joe working with legislators during the 2015 legislative session.

BERLIN

STATE AID FOR FISCAL YEARS 2016-2017

Education Cost Sharing	\$12,763,203
PILOT: State Owned Property	\$26,032
Pequot/Mohegan Revenue Sharing	\$106,547
School Transportation	\$194,770
Local Capital Improvement Program	\$251,366
Town Aid Roads	\$664,680
Adult Education	\$27,960
Grants For Municipal Projects	\$1,572,792
Sales Tax Revenue	\$1,213,548

Total State Funds to BERLIN

\$16,820,897

DELIVERING FOR BERLIN

I would like to thank everyone for the thoughtful and heartfelt feedback I received during the budget process and for the privilege of serving the residents of Berlin these past 11 years. I have worked extremely hard to ensure we receive the funding we need to support and grow the town that we love. **During my time in office Berlin has received more than \$8.5 million in bonding and grants, and nearly \$50 million in school construction funds.**

State funding sent to Berlin directly impacts your property taxes. **That's why I fought hard to increase state funding for Berlin by \$1,427,466.** This table shows the funding for Berlin in the next two-year state budget.

State Representative Joe Aresimowicz

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