

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

ANDRE BAKER

PROUDLY SERVING THE 124TH HOUSE DISTRICT | BRIDGEPORT

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to share with you this update on the recently concluded legislative session. Each year, our goal is to forge a path for a stronger Connecticut, and the 2017 session was no different.

As Connecticut’s largest city, it is vital that we do everything we can to invest in Bridgeport’s local infrastructure, economy and downtown. During the General Assembly’s 2017 regular session, the Bridgeport legislative delegation worked tirelessly to pass key bills that fortify the city’s standing as a local and national leader in cutting-edge technology and the entertainment industry.

These bills stand to have a positive effect on the city and its residents, and will help propel Bridgeport decades into the future.

I hope you find the enclosed information helpful. Our future is stronger when we work together, so please don’t hesitate to reach out to my office if I can ever be of help to you or your family. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your state representative.

Sincerely,



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ANDRE BAKER

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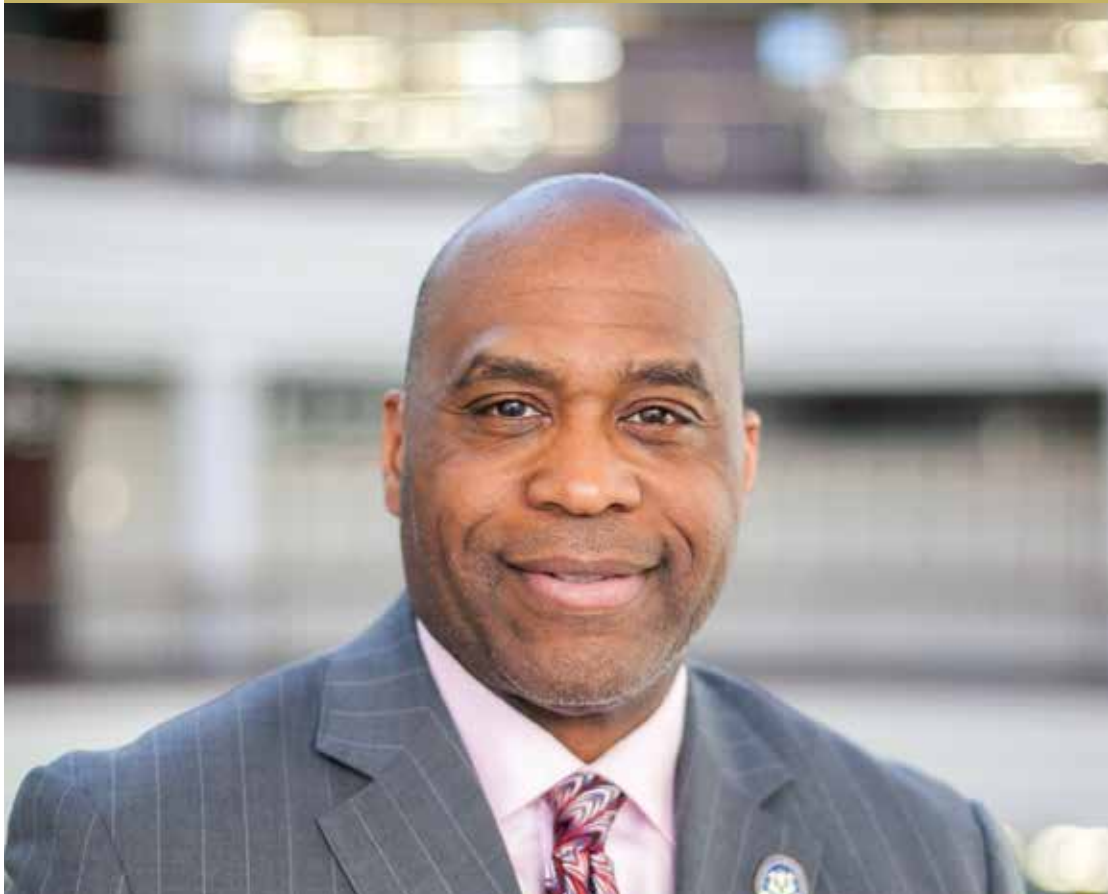
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CAPITOL UPDATE 2017



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BECOMING AN ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION

Foot traffic at Bridgeport's entertainment attractions will increase thanks to new legislation passed this year. Bridgeport stands to benefit from House Bill 6948, which will create a statewide entertainment council that will work to secure more concerts and events at Webster Bank Arena and the Ballpark at Harbor Yard. While these events will increase the number of patrons who visit the city's shops and restaurants, it will also help Bridgeport's bottom line. Last year, the legislature passed a bill that allows the city to collect a 5 percent service fee on all tickets sold at each entertainment venue.

DRIVING INTO THE FUTURE

Bridgeport has always been a city that embraces advanced technology. Now, the city has the opportunity to be at the forefront of the future of transportation. Under Senate Bill 260, a task force will be created to study the effect autonomous vehicles will have on the state. Bridgeport was also selected to establish a pilot program that will allow the city to test driverless vehicles locally. The combination of Bridgeport's metropolitan setting and the progressive technology available, will allow the city to determine the feasibility of using autonomous vehicles in both urban and suburban areas of Connecticut.

INVESTING IN OUR FACILITIES

In May, the Connecticut State Bond Commission approved \$3.19 million in funding for a construction contract for phase II of the parking garage repairs at Housatonic Community College, and \$2 million in aid which will allow the Southwest Community Health Center to replace its facility at the Marina Village public housing project.

This year, the commission also approved \$1 million in funding for the Bridgeport Public Library to construct a technology center and purchase technology equipment.

While the Bridgeport legislative delegation has made significant improvements to the city's local infrastructure, economy and entertainment venues, our work is not done. We remain committed to making sure the city receives the funding and direct aid it needs to maintain its quality of life.

FIGHTING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Connecticut has been grappling with an opioid epidemic for years. House Bill 7052 will help reduce addiction and overdoses by limiting the maximum opioid drug prescription for minors from 7 days to 5 days. It additionally requires health insurers to cover medically necessary, inpatient detoxification services for an insured diagnosed with a substance abuse disorder.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Starting with the class of 2023, there will be new requirements for high school students to graduate. Senate Bill 1026 will require students to complete nine credits in the humanities, nine credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, one credit each in physical education, world languages and health and safety education, and one credit mastery-based diploma assessment.

PRETRIAL BAIL REFORM

Adults who are accused of committing misdemeanors and are unable to afford money bail languish in jail for weeks or months, costing the state millions. House Bill 7044 aims to end this cash only bail for certain misdemeanors, saving the state approximately \$31 million over the next two years. The legislation additionally reduces the time for those being held in jail pretrial for misdemeanor charges from 30 to 14 days. This bill is an important step in making the Connecticut justice system fairer and more efficient.

UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL

Senate Bill 954 will create a new task force that will develop a plan for the provision of universal preschool to all children three and four years of age for the school year commencing July 1, 2022, and each school year thereafter.