

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**ANDRE BAKER**  
PROUDLY SERVING BRIDGEPORT

Dear Neighbors,

This year's legislative session has concluded. We passed new legislation that will shape our state for years to come. The key to the session was the passage of a bipartisan budget, the second in two years.

We worked on policies that support small businesses, workforce development and make our state a place that we can proudly raise our families. I am committed to fighting for you to build a bright future for Connecticut and Bridgeport.

I hope you find the enclosed information helpful. Please don't hesitate to reach out to my office if I can be of service to you or your family. It is such an honor to serve our community.

Sincerely,



Andre Baker  
124th District

### BIPARTISAN BUDGET

- No income, sales or other state tax increase.
- Increases state aid for Bridgeport schools by over \$1.3 million more than we received last year.
- Prevents municipal aid cuts (this includes securing \$5 million to reimburse Bridgeport for the Car Tax Transition Grant).
- Restores funding to the Medicare Savings Program and Renter's Rebate, which will now remain the responsibility of the state.
- Restores \$12 million to the Husky A healthcare program which assists more than 13,000 people, many living here in Bridgeport.
- Prevents cuts to the Greater Bridgeport Transit system.
- Restored partial funding to the Energy Efficiency Fund, juvenile justice programs and developmental services.
- Maintains reserves in the "Rainy Day" Fund at the highest level in over a decade (over \$1 billion for the biennium).

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## CAPITOL UPDATE 2018

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## ISSUES THAT MATTER TO BRIDGEPORT

### CAR TAX REIMBURSEMENT

As Bridgeport's legislative delegation, earlier in April we were able to secure \$3.1 million in supplemental car tax reimbursement money from the Office of Policy and Management. According to a previous agreement passed last year, municipalities with car tax rates above 39 mills would be made whole for the difference between the cap and the higher tax rate. In addition, as a part of the budget adjustment bill passed in May, we secured \$5.3 million for the car tax transition grant for fiscal year 2019. This additional state funding will allow Bridgeport to stabilize its property taxes and make further investments in city services, infrastructure and education.

### CASINO PROPOSAL

This legislative session, the Bridgeport delegation and I led the passage of a bill in the House of Representatives that would create an open and competitive process for private or tribal entities to submit qualifying bids to develop and operate a casino gaming facility in our state. This could include a proposed location in Bridgeport that some estimate could lead to the creation of over 7,000 jobs. The bill failed to be called for a vote in the Senate, but we hope to build on momentum to further invest in the revitalization and restoration of our state's largest city.

### JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

For Bridgeport to be the economic driver our state needs to thrive, it is vital that we continue to invest in economic development and creating jobs. This session, we successfully lobbied for seven Bridgeport census tracts including our downtown, Steelpointe Harbor, Bridgeport's West End Eco-technology Park and the Cherry Street Loft area to be designated as Opportunity Zones, making them eligible for federal tax incentives. This designation, coupled with legislation we passed to encourage brownfield revitalization and investments in the growing industries of advanced manufacturing and bioscience should encourage increased investments in real estate and businesses here in Bridgeport.

### WATER POLLUTION CONTROL BILLING

Responding to complaints from residents, we passed legislation that will create more oversight for the Bridgeport WPCA. PA 18-174 allows the Bridgeport City Council to lower the interest rate on delinquent sewer bills as WPCA collection practices have come under criticism. The bill also places the WPCA under oversight by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority.

### PAY EQUITY FOR WOMEN

Women, and especially women of color, still earn less than men and this inequity is perpetuated by the practice of asking for salary history during the hiring process, effectively ensuring that women who were underpaid at their first job continue to be underpaid. This session we strengthened our pay equity laws by preventing employers from asking about wage history.

# STATE REPRESENTATIVE ANDRE BAKER

PROUDLY SERVING BRIDGEPORT -124TH DISTRICT

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*Rep. Baker speaks at a press conference on gun violence prevention held with Project Longevity and You Are Not Alone (Y.A.N.A.).*



*Rep. Baker along with members of the Bridgeport Legislative Delegation who worked together to secure key pieces of legislation for the city this year.*



*Rep. Baker speaks in support of legislation on the floor of the House of Representatives during session.*

### BANNING BUMP STOCKS AND SCHOOL SAFETY

The tragic mass shooting in Las Vegas last year demonstrated the ability of bump stocks to dramatically increase a gun's destructive power, effectively turning semi-automatic firearms into a weapon that can shoot as fast as a machine gun. We responded by making it a crime to own or sell a bump stock, or similar device. Schools must also be safe places to learn, so we increased funding for school security measures by \$15 million. Districts can use these resources for entrance upgrades, bullet-proof glass and security cameras.

### PROTECTING AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

If you are a victim of domestic violence, you shouldn't have to fear being arrested if you call the police. However, nearly 20 percent of the time when a victim of domestic violence calls the police they are arrested along with their abuser. This is nearly three times the national average. This year we've updated the law to discourage this practice and will now direct police to arrest the person who they identify as the dominant aggressor; however police may still arrest both parties when necessary.

### REDUCING THE COST OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Recognizing that prescription drug prices are the number one driver of rising healthcare costs, we passed legislation to hold pharmaceutical companies accountable by increasing transparency and requiring them to explain large price increases for drugs that have a substantial cost to the state. Additionally, insurance companies must now submit information about which drugs are most frequently prescribed and which are provided at the greatest cost. By collecting more data and holding drug companies accountable, we can get closer to lowering drug costs for Connecticut residents.

### MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT

This year we put into law proposals from the Minority Teacher Recruitment Task Force. These policies are aimed at developing a thriving and diverse teacher workforce in our state. The State Department of Education will work to develop new alternative routes to certification for paraprofessionals, charter school teachers and veterans. Additionally, they will work with vendors to allow certain teachers to retake their licensure test for free if they do not successfully pass the first time.

### GOOD NEWS FOR THE LOWER EAST SIDE BRANCH LIBRARY

Rep. Baker attending a State Bond Commission meeting along with (left to right) leadership of the Bonding Subcommittee, Ranking Member, Rep. Livvy Floren, and Co-Chairs Sen. Marilyn Moore and Rep. Patricia Billie Miller. At the meeting \$2.43 million was approved for the Lower East Side Branch of the Bridgeport Public Library for renovations and improvements.

