

State Representative
David Baram
Proudly Serving Bloomfield and Windsor

SENIORS

Helping Seniors Pay Their Rent

This year we re-opened the Renters Rebate program to eligible seniors and individuals with permanent disabilities, allowing partial rental payment reimbursements.

Long Term Care

Long-term care insurance carriers must now spread premium increases of 20 percent or more over at least three years and notify policyholders of options to lower premiums by reducing their benefits.

Alzheimer's Disease

A mandatory Alzheimer's and Dementia training program was created for those that provide direct care to patients (EMT's, probate judges, paid conservators, protective service employees, nursing home staff, home health agencies, and assisted living agencies).

Safety Zones for Seniors

We created a taskforce that will study how to keep registered sex offenders away from our seniors. The task force will study the establishment of senior safety zones and protection within their own homes.

EDUCATION

Sexual Assault on Campus

The law mandates reporting of incidences of intimate partner violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Colleges must provide victims of sexual assault with written information informing them of their rights.

Office Of Early Childhood

We formally established the Office of Early Childhood. It will administer programs and funding that affect our children from birth until they reach elementary school age.

Security Grants

We authorized \$22 million for security grants for our public schools. The sum of \$2.2 million has been set aside for private schools to be reimbursed at 50% of eligible costs.



Rep. Baram and Sen. Eric Coleman touring the Pepperidge Farm facility

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**CAPITOL
UPDATE 2014**

Dear Neighbor,

I am pleased to share with you this update on the recently concluded legislative session. Each year brings a new set of challenges, and the 2014 session was no different. The need to encourage economic growth, promote jobs, help working families, and make critical investments in the future of our children, as well as our state, was clear.

Meeting these priorities while also adopting a balanced budget with no new taxes took a lot of hard work, but I am happy to report to you that my colleagues and I were able to achieve our goals. We were also successful in protecting and increasing state aid to our towns for municipal and educational purposes.

As Co-Chair of the General Law Committee I was proud to present, debate, and explain on the floor of the House, over 20 consumer protection bills. Those bills include an array of consumer matters that will now provide regulation in many different areas; some are highlighted inside.

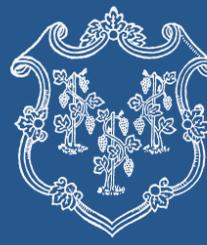
I hope you find the enclosed information helpful. I have tried to share with you some of the legislation passed this session which you might find of interest. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, feel free to contact me. Some of the best legislative ideas come from constituents!

It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your state representative.

Thank you,

David Baram





BUDGET AND JOBS

Budget Balanced, No New Taxes

We passed a balanced budget that protects working families, gives more support to our towns, and does not raise taxes.

Minimum Wage Increase

The minimum wage will increase in three stages: \$9.15 by January 1, 2015, \$9.60 by January 2, 2016, and finally to \$10.10 by January 1, 2017.

UTC

United Technologies Corp. (UTC) has committed to upgrade and expand its current facilities, and to invest in research and development. This will bring new jobs to CT.

More Money For Our Towns

Bloomfield's total municipal and educational aid for 2015 will be \$8,921,162. Windsor's total municipal and educational aid for 2015 will be \$14,819,573.

Help For Jobless Veterans

Connecticut veterans can now apply their military training toward occupational licenses.



David at the Foodshare Donation Ceremony

JUDICIAL SYSTEM

Guardian Ad Litem

Changes we made to the guardian ad litem (GAL) statutes related to the appointment of an adult to represent a minor child in legal proceedings include:

- Allowing parties to request a specific GAL or choose from a Court list
- The Court will disclose the GAL's specific duties and fee schedules, and develop a GAL code of conduct. Parties will be allowed to seek removal of a GAL.
- GAL fees cannot be paid from a minor child's college savings fund and fees will be calculated on a sliding-scale basis.
- The Court is required to specify the basis for its decisions.

Alternative to Foreclosure

Now a homeowner may work with the lender to request that a real estate agent sell their house at market price rather than enduring a foreclosure by public auction.

Minors with Alcohol

An adult who knowingly allows a minor to possess alcohol in their residence can be charged with a criminal violation.

Domestic Violence Orders

Courts may now grant financial orders as part of the civil restraining order process, such as maintenance of utilities and insurance for victims. Penalties for violators were also increased.

ENVIRONMENT

Water Plan

The Water Planning Council (WPC) will prepare a state water plan (with public input) and submit it to the legislature by January 2018.

Fracking

The byproducts of hydraulic fracturing (or "fracking") have been found to contain harmful chemicals. This year we banned the sale, manufacture, distribution, disposal or use of any fracking products.

Open Spaces

A land registry will be created to identify state lands dedicated to conservation and recreational purposes.

ANIMALS

Animal Safety

The courts may now grant temporary ownership of neglected or abused animals to another person, or to a shelter. Owners must either give up ownership, or post a surety or cash bond to recover the animal.

Humane Breeding

The Department of Agriculture commissioner will develop a standard of care applicable to in-state dog and cat breeders. Pet shop licensees will be prohibited from purchasing dogs or cats from breeders who have violated USDA animal welfare regulations and the fines for violators will increase.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Pharmacy Rewards

Pharmacies are now required to use plain language in their disclosure of terms and conditions, and to advise if HIPAA rights are being waived when signing up for a rewards program.

Drivers at Gas Stations

Gas stations will be required to post information at each pump informing drivers as to whether debit cards are treated as cash. They will also be required to post cashier/attendant information so that handicapped drivers can request fueling assistance.

Electric Customer Protection

Suppliers will be prohibited from offering short-term "teaser" energy contracts with low rates, then switching to higher rates. Termination fees would be capped at \$50 and consumers can switch back to the standard rate charged by UI or CL&P within 72 hours.

E-Books

We created a statewide platform that the State Library Board will use to distribute eBooks to public libraries, making eBooks available for patrons without significant costs to individual libraries.

Do Not Call Registry

We increased the penalty for violating the Do Not Call List to \$20,000 and added text messages. To register, call toll-free from the phone you want on the list: 1-888-382-1222.



Rep. Baram and Sen. Beth Bye at the 4-H Education Center at Auer Farm in Bloomfield

Hospital Facility Fees

Doctors offices affiliated with a hospital must disclose "facility fees" in advance to allow patients time to see if such fees are covered by insurers or to choose a medical practice that does not charge such fees.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Concussion Prevention

A new consent form must be returned to the school prior to athletic activity. Also a task force will study the occurrences of concussions among youth during athletic activities and make recommendations.

Connection between Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty

This year, we strengthened the system to cross report child abuse and animal cruelty.

Birth Certificates

To help adoptees access their medical history, we required the Department of Public Health (DPH) to give adults whose adoptions were finalized after October 1, 1983 copies of their original birth certificate upon request.

Anti-Overdose Medication

We provided protections from civil liability and criminal prosecution to those administering naloxone (brand name Narcan), a drug that can reverse a life threatening opioid overdose.

E-Cigarettes

This year we made it illegal for a minor to buy or possess an e-cigarette, and for anyone to sell, give or deliver one to a minor.



David with Rep. McGee and Archbishop LeRoy Bailey, Jr. at First Cathedral

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses

New legislation enables Advance Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) to diagnose and treat patients independently. APRNs who have been practicing in collaboration with a physician for at least three years, and for at least 2,000 hours, will be allowed to practice independently.

Medication Protection

All sterile compounding pharmacies must be licensed by the Department of Consumer Protection. A doctor must label a prescription "brand medically necessary" or "no substitution" when the doctor feels the brand name drug is required.

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