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Dear Friends,

As the House Vice Chairman of the General Law Committee, I'm glad to report that we made positive strides in 2012. Our committee oversees a variety of issues related to consumer protection, fair trade and sales practices and occupational licensing.

This session, we worked in a bi-partisan fashion and passed a number of proposals that will benefit and protect consumers, help small businesses, and safeguard our children.

As always, if you have any questions or comments about these bills or any others, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you



HOUSE DEMOCRATS *of* CONNECTICUT

DAVID BARAM

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Relief At The Pump

On March 28th, the legislature took up emergency certified legislation aimed at helping consumers find relief from our ever-increasing gasoline prices and on April 3rd, Governor Malloy signed it into law. This new law, now known as Public Act 12-4, places a cap on the state gross receipts gasoline tax so that the state tax will NOT increase when the wholesale price of gas goes over \$3.00 a gallon. In addition to this reasonable change in the law, we also significantly increased the Commissioner of Consumer Protection's powers to prosecute gasoline sellers and wholesalers who take advantage of consumers by price gouging.



Keeping Kids Off Drugs

It is hard to believe, but under current law, minors can purchase cigarette rolling papers, water bongos, glass pipes, and other paraphernalia used for smoking marijuana and other drugs. SB 270 will make it illegal to sell such items to minors and the Commissioner of Consumer Protection will be required to maintain a list of items that fall into this category that must be kept out of kids' hands. This is a common sense proposal that protects kids from having easy access to products that promote drug use and addiction.

Real Estate Property Disclosure Form

We are making changes to help protect buyers without creating a hardship to the seller in real estate transactions. HB 5087 includes: 1. Inquire if the property is subject to association dues; 2. Ask if the seller is aware of litigation or administrative action, related to any hazardous substance; 3. Question if there was an underground storage tank on the property, was it removed, and if there is documentation; 4. Urges the Buyer to check with local building officials to verify that permits were issued for any work done; 5. Encourage that the property be inspected by a home inspector; and 6. Allow the seller to opt out of this report by giving the seller a \$500 credit.

Protecting Your Private Information

Too many applications ask for our Social Security numbers. These practices increase our chances of becoming victims of identity theft. SB 315 will greatly deter these practices by making it illegal to require a person's Social Security number except under specifically limited circumstances.

Increasing Medical Treatment With Technology

House Bill 5329, An Act Concerning The Use Of Telepharmacy By Hospitals, will allow hospitals to set-up satellite offices where patients can receive chemotherapy and other IV treatment. Using the latest real-time video and audio communication with a hospital, pharmacy technicians will be able to provide IV treatment to patients in more convenient, accessible and closer-to-home environments.



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