



A BALANCED BUDGET

Working cooperatively with Governor Dannel Malloy, we crafted a historic budget, as our economy continues to recover. It is critical that we balance our state budget with no new taxes while maximizing Connecticut taxpayer dollars that come back from Washington. Throughout this process, I have been committed to avoiding cuts to our city, investment in education, and maintaining the safety net for our most vulnerable residents.

This 2013-2014 budget passed by the General Assembly and signed by Governor Malloy:

- Includes major investment in science and technology at the University of Connecticut
- Provides funding for the landmark public education reforms passed in 2012
- Continues Economic Development Programs
- Maintains aid to cities and towns

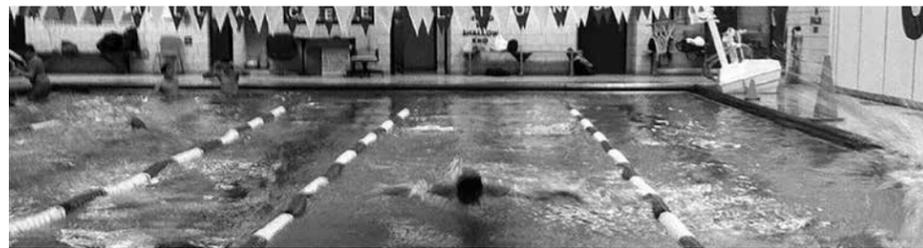
Cities and towns across Connecticut are increasingly hard-pressed to generate resources necessary to support essential public services and educational systems.

This year's budget secures an additional \$5.3 million for Waterbury. Without this state aid, Waterbury's mill rate would be much higher.

AN ACT CONCERNING POOL SAFETY AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Ensuring the safety of our children at school was a priority this session, especially after hearing of accidents related to school swimming pools. The law we passed and I co-sponsored establishes statewide safety standards for all public school swimming pools, requiring that a "qualified educator," "qualified swimming coach" or "qualified lifeguard" be present in addition to the individual who is instructing the group. By July 1st, 2014 all schools will be required to develop comprehensive pool safety plans.

(HB 5113/PA 13-161)



SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS IN RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Helping to give residents more peace of mind regarding home safety was one of the primary goals of this legislative session. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors have proven time and time again to save lives – we therefore took a step this year to make sure that properties that are transferred during a sale are certified to be in compliance with new standards and working detectors. A seller who does not provide an affidavit that details a one or two-family dwelling is in compliance with the law will have to credit \$250 to the new owner at the time of closing. **(HB 6160/PA 13-272)**

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CAPITOL UPDATE 2013

BRINGING YOUR STATE TAX DOLLARS HOME

Despite the difficulties surrounding our biennial budget debate, I am proud to have not only maintained, but increased funding for Waterbury. The overall budget process was both good and bad. However, I was committed to preserving the safety net our community depends on while keeping property taxes down and we were able to accomplish both these goals. Below are the budget appropriations for Waterbury.

WATERBURY FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015 AID

Education Cost Sharing	\$125,472,257
Priority School Districts	\$2,635,515
PILOT: State Owned Property	\$3,732,505
PILOT: Colleges & Hospitals	\$5,439,695
Pequot/Mohegan Revenue Sharing	\$3,039,951
School Transportation	\$1,497,451
Local Capital Improvement Program	\$1,243,340
Town Aid Roads	\$1,086,325
Adult Education	\$2,368,252
DECD Tax Abatement and MRSA Payments	\$2,558,909
Total State Funds to Waterbury	\$149,074,200

AUTHORIZATION OF STATE GRANT COMMITMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS AND ROOF PITCH REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUILDINGS

This legislation approves \$780.3 million in new state grant commitments for school construction projects. These grants are funded through General Obligation bonds and help create construction jobs while improving the conditions of our children's schools. The law also makes technical changes to certain projects that were already approved in previous years. This means \$25 million for Kennedy High School and program changes needed for work at Jonathan Reed Elementary School. **(SB 876/PA 13-243)**

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Children's Community School visit to the Capitol.



MORE Commission with Representative Tim Larson.



The new Carrington neighborhood School 80% funded by the State.



MATTRESS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Each year municipalities spend more than \$1.3 million collecting and disposing of discarded mattresses. To save taxpayers money, we created a mattress stewardship program that requires producers to establish and join a nonprofit mattress recycling council funded through a fee on mattresses sold in the state. The program provides convenient and accessible locations across the state for Connecticut residents to dispose of their mattresses. *(HB 6437/PA 13-42)*

STATEWIDE TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS BLIGHT

Blighted properties have a negative effect on entire neighborhoods and communities, bringing down property values and causing blight to spread. This legislation creates a statewide task force that will develop model municipal blight ordinances and propose legislation to help municipalities to address blight more effectively. *(HB 6235/PA 13-135)*

HOMEMAKER COMPANION AGENCIES AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Protecting our most vulnerable citizens is always a main concern of the legislature, especially those that require assistance in their homes. To help defend against unscrupulous personal aides, we passed a measure requiring homemaker companion agencies to notify clients in writing that comprehensive background checks were performed on their employees before sending anyone to a client's residence for the first time. *(HB 5345/PA 13-88)*

INCREASING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

This legislative session we reaffirmed our commitment to affordable housing with the most significant gains for affordable housing in decades. With greater investment in CHFA, a newly established Department of Housing, and across the state development projects, we are investing in the people and communities that drive our economy. *(SB 845/PA 13-65)*

SMALL BUSINESS EXPRESS PROGRAM EXPANDED

The Small Business Express program that provides loans and matching grants to businesses with 100 or fewer employees has been a resounding success. This session, we added more funds that will be made available for this program that has helped many small businesses in the state to expand and create jobs. *(SB 801/PA 13-2)*

WATERBURY HOSPITAL MERGER

A bill that would have cleared the way for Waterbury Hospital to be converted into a for-profit venture was VETOED by the Governor. Waterbury area delegation members will continue to meet with Waterbury Hospital, Vanguard and all other interested parties in this venture. These talks will continue as we work to find a resolution for the potential sale of the hospital and a significant investment in Waterbury healthcare.

MORE COMMISSION CAR TAX ELIMINATION PROPOSAL

As Chair of the Municipal Tax Authority Subcommittee of the Municipal Opportunities and Regional Efficiencies (MORE) Commission, I played a major role in recommending the eventual elimination of one of the most regressive taxes in our state. Connecticut is the only state in the union to tax vehicles according to the respective town's mill rate. This is an onerous method of taxation the result of which is the same vehicle make, model and year being taxed at different rates across the state. The legislation passed in the House of Representatives, but unfortunately did not pass the Senate. However, we won't give up and plan to try again next year.

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY TRAINING AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR STATE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

As people serve in the various branches of the military, they gain valuable experience and skills that can be applied to secure employment, and these skills should be recognized. This act establishes a task force that will be responsible for reviewing military occupational specialty training experience to determine if any such training is equivalent to that required for state licensing purposes. *(HB 5387/SA 13-5)*

DISPLAY AND PLACEMENT OF THE STATE OR NATIONAL FLAG

Recognizing the sacrifices that our members of the military have made for our freedoms is of the utmost importance. In response, the legislature took steps to make sure that our members of the military who have been killed in battle are properly recognized. The state now conforms with federal law by allowing the governor to issue a proclamation ordering all state government buildings, public schools, and military bases to fly the national and state flag at half-staff when a member of the military or a state official has passed. People will also now be allowed to place flags on the graves of veterans on the Friday prior to the Memorial Day holiday. *(HB 6349/PA 13-107)*

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

In response to several high profile prosecutions of human traffickers in recent years and the rise of exploitative/sexual trafficking of adults and minors in and through Connecticut, we took steps to address human trafficking crimes. The new law gives prosecutors more tools to bring criminals to justice such as increasing the risk of arrest or jail time for sexual soliciting of minors under the age of 18, forfeiture of assets derived from exploitation of minors, a public awareness campaign and increased penalties for criminals involved in human trafficking. The law also protects victims by permitting anyone convicted of prostitution to apply to the Superior Court to vacate a conviction because he or she was a victim of trafficking. *(HB 5666/PA 13-166)*

GOLF INDUSTRY IN THE STATE OF CT



Representative Berger promoting the Golf industry in the State of CT with CSGA.

PREVENTING MEDICAID FRAUD

In order to control fraud in the Medicaid program, we passed legislation requiring the Department of Social Services, in coordination with the Chief State's Attorney and Attorney General, to annually submit a report to the Human Services and Appropriations committees on the state's efforts to prevent and control fraud, abuse, and errors and to recover overpayments. Each agency must also post the report on its website. *(HB 6514/PA 12-293)*

BROWNFIELDS PROGRAMS AND POLLUTION REPORTING

The new law changes the standards for determining whether the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection must be notified when technical environmental professionals or property owners become aware of pollution causing a significant environmental hazard and the requirements for further investigation, mitigation, and monitoring. It also establishes a new form of an environmental use restriction, called a notice of activity and use limitation.

