

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**MATT BLUMENTHAL**  
PROUDLY SERVING STAMFORD AND DARIEN

Dear Neighbor,

The past year has been difficult for families in our community. But the legislation we passed this year will help empower and protect everyone in our district.

This session I successfully advocated for nation-leading measures to **fight gun violence**, promote **smart criminal-justice policies**, and provide **additional support for our seniors, schools, and small businesses**.

I worked with my colleagues to pass a **bipartisan budget** that will strengthen our economy and invest in our **infrastructure, sustainability, and education**. Because of that budget, our district will see **historic increases in funding** for both Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023. It contains **no income or sales tax increases** – and we continue to responsibly pay down our long-term obligations. It's a budget that will help our community recover and thrive as we move out of this pandemic.

As always, please never hesitate to reach out to me on any matter.

Sincerely,

Matt Blumenthal  
State Representative



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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**MATT BLUMENTHAL**

PROUDLY SERVING STAMFORD AND DARIEN | 147TH DISTRICT



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**CAPITOL UPDATE 2021**



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# STATE REPRESENTATIVE MATT BLUMENTHAL

## A BUDGET THAT INVESTS IN CONNECTICUT

Our budget contains **historic increases in education and municipal aid** for Stamford and Darien. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, the 147th District will receive **\$15,529,943 in total education aid** and **\$16,735,117** in FY 2023. In total aid, the 147th District will **receive \$24,585,782 in FY 22 (\$5.23 million increase)** and **\$25,790,956 for FY 23 (\$6.44 million increase)**. These momentous increases in state aid to Stamford and Darien will be critical to offsetting the local property tax burden, funding local services, and improving our schools.

Our budget also makes significant investments in our state's pandemic recovery, workforce development, nonprofits, and more:

- It **increases the state's earned income tax credit**, providing aid to working families;
- **Expands and incentivizes workforce training** for employees and employers that relocate to Connecticut;
- Provides **COVID-related relief to businesses** in need; and
- Allocates **funding to key nonprofit organizations**, including the Connecticut Women's Business Development Council, Cradle to Career Stamford, the Boys & Girls Club of Stamford, the Stamford Public Education Foundation, and the Stamford Fire Training School.

## STANDING UP FOR SENIORS

This session, we passed legislation that:

- Allows towns to offer more seniors a break on property taxes;
- Ensures nursing-home residents virtual visits and monitoring;
- Fights age discrimination in the workplace by limiting the use of age and other relevant dates on job applications; and
- Reforms nursing home staffing, safety policies, and inventory in response to Covid-19.

## LEGALIZING ADULT-USE CANNABIS

After years of debate and hard work, we crafted and passed a comprehensive and responsible program to legalize, regulate, and tax adult-use cannabis. This program will provide for increased resources, right historic wrongs, and institute protections to keep our roads safe. Measures include:

- Legalizing the use and possession of cannabis for adults age 21+ as of July 1, 2021 (retail sales summer 2022);
- Allowing adults age 21+ to engage in limited homegrow, provided they take certain measures to keep it out of the hands of minors, beginning July 1, 2023;
- Establishing an equity fund, criminal justice reforms, and economic opportunities to address the effects of the War on Drugs;
- Investing in public health, prevention, mental health, and addiction services; and
- Training specialized police officers to recognize and protect against impaired driving.

## ON THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

### Reducing Gun Violence

"Red Flag" laws, also known as Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) laws, separate people who are a danger to themselves or others from firearms. In 1999, Connecticut passed the nation's first "Red Flag" law. It's saved hundreds of lives from violence and suicide. I was proud to help write and lead passage of our updated ERPO law, which incorporates best practices and lessons learned from 19 states around the country, making Connecticut's the strongest in the nation.

### Preventing Domestic Violence & Empowering Survivors

I was honored to help pass legislation that will strengthen protections for domestic violence victims and survivors. We updated the definition of domestic violence to include abusive behavior other than physical abuse, instituted protections against litigation abuse, expanded protections for children, and provided increased access to social services for survivors.

### Fighting Online Hate and Harassment

Hate crimes and harassment are on the rise online. I was proud to write and lead passage of a law that will combat this scourge, especially "Zoom-bombing" and "Doxxing."

## STRENGTHENING OUR DEMOCRACY

I was glad to help lead efforts to expand voter access in Connecticut. This session, we passed a resolution proposing a constitutional amendment to allow **in-person early voting**. Voters will have the chance to approve it in the 2022 general election. We also passed a resolution for a constitutional amendment to allow **no-excuse absentee voting** in Connecticut. If passed again in 2023, voters will be able to approve it in November 2024. We also passed a law to increase voter access by **extending expanded absentee-ballot access, making ballot dropboxes permanent**, providing for **electronic absentee ballots** for certain disabled individuals, and other measures.



## 147TH DISTRICT STATE AID

	FY 22	FY 23
EDUCATION AID	\$15,529,943	\$16,735,117
NON-EDUCATION AID	\$9,055,839	\$9,055,839
TOTAL	\$24,585,782	\$25,790,956

## HOLDING UTILITIES ACCOUNTABLE

Over the past year, we passed and improved upon the Take Back Our Grid Act, which **holds Eversource accountable for service and storm performance, and fights high energy rates**. Under these authorities, PURA has already recovered money for ratepayers and stopped rate increases. Our legislation **bans cancellation fees** by electric companies, **prevents unpredictable variable rates, and mandates consumer-friendly notifications**.

## PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

I was honored to support our **improved "Bottle Bill"**. This long-needed legislation will help make recycling pay by increasing and expanding bottle deposits and providing more money to towns and redemption centers to ensure recyclable products don't wind up as litter or in a landfill. We also passed a measure to **eliminate most uses of PFAS**, a dangerous "forever chemical" that can contaminate our water and harm our health. We also passed bills updating our plan to meet the **ecological needs of the Long Island Sound** and empowering towns to better **manage their stormwater needs**.