



State Representative  
**BETTY BOUKUS**

**Health Care**



As the national debate about health care continues, we took an important first step toward offering health insurance to the estimated 750,000 Connecticut residents without health insurance by passing the SustiNet Plan. SustiNet establishes a Board of Directors to develop detailed recommendations to expand affordable health-care coverage to more residents, contain costs, promote preventive care, create multiple coverage pools and benefit options, and implement electronic medical records.

To address the increasing cost of prescription drugs, we passed legislation that creates a working group directed to develop a plan for the bulk purchasing of prescriptions for state employees and members of health-care programs operated by the state. The bulk-purchasing plan will enable the state to utilize its bargaining power to negotiate lower prices and save taxpayers' dollars.

**Early Breast Cancer Detection**

Women with dense breast tissue have a higher risk of cancer. To facilitate early cancer detection PA 09-41 requires that mammography reports include breast density data so that women can identify their risk level.

**General Government**

The legislature approved three significant changes in the way state government works for its citizens.

The first will reduce the burden on local property taxpayers by promoting regional cooperation through the creation of economic development districts to encourage regional projects and for sharing any tax revenue resulting from such new projects.

Another bill consolidates the number of probate courts. Beginning in 2011 probate judges will have to be a member of the Connecticut Bar.

Finally, new legislation requires a special election to fill a vacancy created by the resignation or death of a United States Senator from Connecticut. Exceptions are provided for national emergencies and vacancies occurring during the last 14 months of a Senator's term.



State Representative  
**Betty Boukus**

Proudly Serving the 22nd Assembly District



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State Representative | Deputy Majority Whip

**Betty Boukus**

**CAPITOL  
NEWS 2009**



Dear Friends,

This year's legislative session was the most difficult I have experienced in my eight terms as your State Representative. Because of the widespread recession, Connecticut's revenues spiraled downward and we were faced with huge operating budget deficits as well as a staggering \$8.5 billion hole in the next biennial budget. We have passed a budget that attempts to meet the needs of our constituents while positioning us for economic recovery as we go forward.

During the session, many bills passed that helped to gain substantial protections for Connecticut's residents, including initiatives protecting children, senior citizens, military families, students and homeowners.

If you would like to obtain detailed information on legislation passed: Laws Affecting Seniors; Municipalities; Children; Education; Environment; Health Care; Veterans & The Military; Insurance; Real Estate; and Energy & Utilities; please feel free to call my office at (860) 240-8585.

As always, it has been an honor to represent you in Hartford. A special thanks to all who have shared opinions and concerns to guide my decisions!

Sincerely,

*Betty Boukus*

Representative Betty Boukus  
Deputy Majority Whip

Proudly Serving the Plainville, New Britain & Bristol



## Keeping our Children Safe and Healthy

### Banning of Bisphenol-A

PA 09-103 | HB 6572 – EFFECTIVE: 01.01.09

This session legislation was passed that will ban the manufacture, sale or distribution of infant formula and baby food stored in containers made with bisphenol-A, starting October 1, 2011. It also bans reusable food and beverage containers made with bisphenol-A in this state. We must do all we can to make sure the products used by children are safe.

### School Safety

We passed legislation that will require schools to have on the premises an automatic external defibrillator (AED) and school staff trained in its use to the extent funding is available. The bill also allows school boards to accept donated AED's as well as gifts, donations, and grants for AED acquisition and staff training. We also passed legislation that grants immunity from liability to those who use life-saving AEDs in good faith.

### Clean and Green

Legislation was passed which will promote the use of green cleaning products in schools instead of the hazardous cleaning chemicals currently used.



Representative Boukus teaches students from Toffolon School about the legislative process through hands on experience during a visit to the State Capitol.

### Health Insurance for Autism Treatments

PA 09-115 | SB 301 – EFFECTIVE: 01.01.10

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimate that 1 in 150 individuals are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. To ensure a higher quality of life for people with autism, we passed legislation requiring insurance coverage of critical treatments and benefits that will greatly help the lives of people with autism. We expect this coverage will decrease the lifetime costs of treatment as well. I am proud to say Connecticut has become the 12<sup>th</sup> state to require this comprehensive coverage.

### Improved Outcomes for Lyme Disease Patients

PA 09-128 | HB 6200 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- » Gives doctors and patients a new treatment option for chronic Lyme disease
- » Permits the use of long-term antibiotic therapy to treat infection and symptoms

### Prompt Treatment of Allergies in Schools

PA 09-155 | SB 755 – EFFECTIVE: 08.15.09

- » Permits some students with asthma or allergies to carry inhalers and epi-pens in school
- » Allows students to self-administer with proper authorization
- » Adds licensed athletic trainers to the list of school personnel permitted to administer medication



## Assisting Our Seniors

Improving the lives of seniors so they may be healthy, safe, and economically secure is a central role of our state government. To improve their overall quality of life, we passed several new legislative initiatives.

### Affordable Elderly Homecare

PA 09-64 | SB 814 – EFFECTIVE: 04.01.10

- » Expands access to affordable homecare support services
- » Helps seniors remain independent in their own homes rather than nursing homes
- » Expands personal care assistance services to more of our seniors

### Certified Financial Advising

PA 09-174 | HB 6231 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- » Requires the insurance commissioner to adopt regulations pertaining to the sale of life insurance or annuities to seniors
- » Prohibits anyone directly or indirectly involved in sales from falsely identifying themselves or their credentials

### Patients Rights at a Nursing Home

PA 09-168 | SB 455 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- » Expands the Nursing Home Bill of Rights to prohibit the solicitation of donations or gifts as a condition of admission
- » Extends protections to third parties, such as families and friends

### Senior Discount Programs

PA 09-53 | HB 5674 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- » Provides seniors with greater access to senior citizen discount programs
- » Requires businesses to disclose details of programs and eligibility requirements

## Consumer Protection

Ensuring your privacy and security is a responsibility I do not take lightly. This year, the legislature passed important measures with your best interests in mind.

### Repair shops

PA 09-237 | SB 457 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- » Prohibits an automobile insurance carrier from requiring an insured to use a specific repair shop or stating that repairs will be delayed or unguaranteed if the insured chooses his or her own repair shop

### Combating identity theft

PA 09-239 | SB 858 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- » Increases criminal penalties for identity theft and the dissemination of personal information

## Veterans

Recognizing the challenges faced by many Connecticut families whose members have served gallantly in United States Armed Forces, the General Assembly adopted three bills providing important assistance.

One measure expands the Family and Medical Leave Act to allow a covered employee to take up to 26 weeks in unpaid leave from work to care for an immediate family member or next of kin who is a current member of the armed forces, reserves, or National Guard and is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise undergoing outpatient

treatment, or is on the temporary disability retired list.

A second measure enables veterans returning from the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts to receive transitional behavioral health services.

The third makes immediate relatives of armed forces members, including the National Guard, who are not on active duty, eligible for grants from the state's Military Family Relief Fund to help pay for household goods or services if paying for them is a hardship because of the member's military service.

## Public Safety

### Protecting Your Home, Savings and Credit

The legislature took action to aid consumers hurt by recent events and protect you from the recent sub-prime mortgage crisis and corrupt money managers.

### Protection College Students Credit

PA 09-167 regulates credit card marketing practices on public college campuses and protects young consumers from being unfairly targeted.

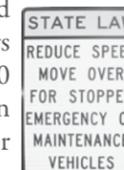
### Safeguards Against Mortgage Foreclosures

PA 09-209 implements federal reforms; creates safeguards against future mortgage foreclosures to better protect homeowners; regulates the mortgage lending process; and expands eligibility for state foreclosure prevention programs.

PA 09-219 expands eligibility for the Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program; and assists more families so that their loss of income due to illness or job-loss won't result in a family losing their home.

### Move Over

The "move over" law went into effect October 1st. The new law requires a motorist approaching stopped emergency vehicles on or alongside a three-plus-lane highway to slow down and move over one lane. Violators could be fined up to \$2,500 or, if injury or death of an emergency vehicle operator results, up to \$10,000.



### Improving Bicycle and Pedestrian Access

PA 09-154 | SB 735 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- » Requires funding to be set-aside by the Department of Transportation
- » Enhances bicycle and pedestrian use in our neighborhoods
- » Increases funding to municipalities for bikeways and sidewalks with curb cuts or ramps
- » Establishes a board to create new policies and procedures that improve the bicycling and walking environment in Connecticut