



Rep. Boukus met with Plainville Middle School students at the Capitol. The students received an award from the State Department of Education for a service project they created called "The Military Mailroom".

Education

Education Reform

The state's commitment to education is strong. The landmark education reform bill (SB 458) included an additional \$50 million in education funding for public schools across the state - yielding significant additional funding for Plainville, New Britain and Bristol.

Our boards of education have struggled mightily to find funding to cover increasing education costs. The additional state funding will help cover the costs associated with our local investment in young children.

The education bill contains funding increases for vocational schools, charter schools and magnet schools as well as the creation of a new kindergarten through 8th grade science initiative and 1,000 school readiness slots for preschoolers.

Elections

"No-excuse" Absentee Balloting and Early Voting

Our State Constitution currently prevents us from making absentee voting easier for men and women in uniform, caregivers or even working parents with busy schedules. When people have more flexible voting options and access to absentee ballots without providing a reason, more votes get cast and counted on Election Night.

Increased voter turnout and participation builds a stronger democracy with each vote cast. That's why we took the first steps to amending the State Constitution to allow "no-excuse" absentee ballots and early voting.

According to the Office of the Secretary of the State, 35 states that have implemented early voting or no-excuse absentee ballots have experienced higher voter turnout and less confusion for election officials on Election Day.

22nd Assembly District
Proudly Serving
Plainville,
New Britain
& Bristol

State Representative | Deputy Majority Caucus Chair
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State Representative | Deputy Majority Caucus Chair

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CAPITOL NEWS 2012

Dear Friends,

This legislature assisted citizens across our state in many ways in 2012, from jobs to education to improved response time to natural disasters.

It started last October when the legislature passed comprehensive, bipartisan jobs legislation that invested in small businesses and gave firms hiring incentives. Additionally, we aligned education programs with jobs-in-demand, encouraged entrepreneurship and innovation, and eliminated red-tape for growing companies.

This spring, we balanced a budget by keeping our funding promise to cities and towns. Historic changes were made to our educational system so our children can succeed. We made it easier for people to exercise voting rights, and demanded that utility companies respond better when storms and crises hit.

I have highlighted a few of the most recent laws taking effect. If you would like to obtain detailed information on legislation passed affecting: Seniors, Municipalities, Children, Education, Environment, Health Care, Veterans and Insurance - please visit:

www.cga.ct.gov/olr/actsaffecting.asp or contact my office at (860) 240- 8500.

I hope this report is informative. I'm happy to answer any questions about these issues or any others facing our state or your family. Together we can create a better future for our families, and thank you for your calls, emails and written correspondence.

Sincerely, *Betty Boukus*

Proudly Serving Plainville, New Britain & Bristol



Rep. Boukus with firefighters after the announcement that funding would be available for fire training schools.



Seniors

Hospice Care Improves

With just two licensed hospices in the state, this new law will provide smaller hospice facilities the opportunity to provide high quality services that allow patients to stay closer to family and friends. This bill will help our state to ensure that residents have access to health care services across the full continuum of care.

Aging in Place

A 15-member task force was created to map out a strategy to help shift our culture toward widespread home care, where most seniors undeniably prefer to be, and then ensure the home care available is safe and affordable.

If you have suggestions or input for the task force, please send them in writing to my office by September 1, 2012. I will gladly pass them on to the task force on your behalf.

State Representative

Elizabeth "Betty" Boukus

If you need additional assistance or have questions, please contact me:

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Rep. Boukus and friends at the Plainville Senior Center Health Fair.

Job Growth

Jobs are Priority #1

New legislation will help create new job opportunities for young people by funding the Youth Employment Summer Jobs program. It also supports adult evening education programs, as well as the Small Business Express program and a Connecticut Made initiative to promote products from local businesses.

I recognize the challenges facing our cities and towns. I have worked to secure funding for projects relieving pressure on the need to increase local property taxes. These projects have resulted in job opportunities for our work force.

Additionally, high level job opportunities will result from economic development funding for the Jackson Labs project that builds on our decision to become a world leader in bioscience and biotechnology.

Jobs for Connecticut

A new jobs bill would focus on initiatives designed to create a climate in Connecticut that is ripe for maintaining, attracting and creating jobs. This bipartisan effort identifies five key areas:

- Small Business Growth: Investing \$180 million over two years
- Regulatory Environment: Streamlining, expediting permitting processes and create new public-private partnerships
- Innovation: Establishing new startup company loans, investments and grants
- Workforce Development: Aligning state educational programs to jobs-in-demand through training and curriculum design



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Public Safety

Highway Safety Increased

The 'move-over' law is an important tool for safety on our roads. This new law expands the "move-over" law to include two lane highways as well as road maintenance vehicles and tow trucks. Now, the law requires drivers to move-over one lane if an emergency vehicle or maintenance vehicle with flashing lights is parked on the shoulder of any state highway.

According to FBI statistics, traffic crashes claim the lives of more police personnel than any other cause of death in the line of duty, including shootings. This new law will protect our law enforcement officials and roadway maintenance crews working on all of our highways.

Reducing Domestic Violence

This new legislation strengthens the state's current laws to better protect victims and hold abusers accountable. We gave police officers the tools they need to better identify and respond to domestic violence. We also improved access to and enforcement of protective and restraining orders to improve victim safety.

Veterans

Desecrating Veterans' Memorials

Honoring the present and past sacrifices of our veterans is very important to all of us. It is shocking to see an increase in thefts and vandalism of memorials. Legislation passed which increased penalties for desecrating memorials beyond the monetary value of what was vandalized.

Veterans Charity Network

Fraudulent charity groups often misrepresent veterans, trying to take advantage of our good will toward those who serve our country. We helped protect consumers from these fraudulent groups by creating a legitimate charities list on the Department of Veteran's Affairs website.



contact Rep. Boukus online:
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