

NEWS FOR OUR TOWNS



Rep. Brycki and local seniors at the site of what will be the newly renovated McCluggage Manor.

GRISWOLD'S McCLUGGAGE & ASHLAND MANOR

Earlier this year we received the good news that McCluggage Manor would be the recipient of a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of \$800,000 to fund renovations. In July, Ashland Manor Senior Housing was also approved for an \$800,000 CDBG to aid in the completion of Phase IV renovations to the 30-unit complex. Improvements include converting 12 studios to one bedroom units.

LISBON TO RECEIVE HOUSING GRANT

The Town of Lisbon was approved for a Community Development Block Grant of \$400,000 to begin its first housing rehabilitation program. Beginning October 1st, the town will accept applications based on income, for eligible properties. Please contact the Town Clerk to see if your property qualifies for renovation assistance and, if so, an application.

LISBON SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION FUNDING

This session, I submitted language in the School Construction Bonding Bill allowing a space waiver to make the Lisbon School eligible for \$235,000 in school construction funding for renovations.

VOLUNTOWN RECEIVES GRANT FOR PUBLIC WORKS GARAGE

In March, Voluntown received a \$500,000 STEAP Grant for the construction of a new public works facility. The current facility was not large enough to hold the public works trucks, which forced workers to have to work on them outside even during winter storms. The current building does not have indoor heating or bathroom facilities. The new garage will be constructed behind Voluntown Elementary School on Gate Street.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

PAUL BRYCKI

PROUDLY SERVING THE 45TH DISTRICT | GRISWOLD, LISBON, PLAINFIELD, STERLING, VOLUNTOWN



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CAPITOL UPDATE 2015

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As my first legislative session has come to a close, I want to thank all of you who took the time to contact me during the legislative session and for the trust you have placed in me to represent you. As your State Representative, I do my best to stay in touch with constituents. Earlier in the year, I sent out a legislative survey and have held several local office hours. Hearing from you helps me with the decisions I have to make. Being available and of service to my constituents is a top priority. With this newsletter, I would like to take the opportunity to share with you some of the things I've been working on at the Capitol and some important pieces of legislation we passed this year.

This first session was definitely an eye-opening experience. When the Governor submitted his budget in early February, I was already being told that we inherited a \$2 billion deficit. In the end, we were able to cut over a billion dollars from the budget. I was personally involved with a group that came up with ways to save millions of dollars through reductions in state employee workers' compensation costs and overtime. However, we were also able to find ways to protect funding for programs that help seniors, families in need, in addition to protecting essential services.

We also created the framework for a historic investment in our transportation infrastructure, which will spur more growth in our economy and create thousands of jobs. This is very important for us in eastern Connecticut which has seen a massive under investment in our infrastructure.

I hope you find the enclosed information informative. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions or concerns you may have regarding state matters.

Sincerely,



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JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As a member of the Commerce Committee I was glad to work on legislation that spurred economic development and the creation of jobs.

REDEVELOPMENT OF BROWNFIELDS

To encourage economic development, we made some changes to the Department of Economic and Community Development's (DECD) remediation programs, which provide grants to towns. We now allow DECD to make grants for preparing plans to redevelop multiple brownfields and to award additional grants for ongoing projects. I look forward to continuing to work with DECD on bringing a couple of redevelopment projects to our area.



Rep. Brycki speaks to a group from the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce at the State Capitol.

UCFS HEALTH CENTER IN GRISWOLD



Earlier this year we broke ground for the new United Community & Family Services (UCFS) Health Center on East Main Street in Jewett City. The center will bring medical, dental and behavioral health services to the downtown area. Recently, we received exciting news that UCFS has been granted federally qualified health center status. This will help pave the way for \$1.1 million in funding over the next 2 years. It will also lead to 24 full-time jobs and a 34 percent increase in clients. I look forward to building on this success with more downtown economic development in the near future.

Rep. Paul Brycki joined by Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman and Rep. Peter Tercyak on Polish Day at the Capitol.



Rep. Brycki hosting local office hours at the Griswold Town Hall.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

PROTECTING ELECTRIC CONSUMERS

Connecticut became the first state to protect residents from electricity providers who offer a low introductory rate that increases rapidly. The protections require competitive electric suppliers to give their customers a 60-day notice before the end of their contract. Suppliers cannot charge customers a termination or early cancellation fee and must allow customers to switch providers within 72 hours.



Honoring Griswold native Elizabeth Mentillo's 101st Birthday

NEW GRISWOLD SENIOR CENTER

During her visit to the State Capitol, Elizabeth Mentillo met with Rep. Brycki, First Selectman Kevin Skulczyck and Governor Malloy at a State Bond Commission Meeting for the approval of \$343,500 towards the construction of a new senior center in Griswold.

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ENVIRONMENT

SUPPORTING FARMERS AND RESTORING FARMLAND Invasive species and poor conservation plans can lead to a deterioration of Connecticut's natural resources. This year, we encouraged the conservation and preservation of farmland by requiring the state to reimburse farmers for the cost of developing, implementing, and complying with a farm resource management plan or farmland restoration plan. We also increased the maximum reimbursement under the program for management or restoration of certain state or municipal lands.

SUNDAY HUNTING AND FISH HATCHERIES As a member of the legislature's Sportmen's Caucus, I supported legislation authorizing bow and arrow hunting on certain private property on Sundays. As of October 1st, bow hunters will now have more time to hunt on Sundays on private property in overpopulated deer management zones. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) expects to issue more permits for bow hunting as a result of expanding these hours. Increasing interest in fishing and recreation is placing pressure on the state's fish hatcheries, threatening their sustainability. These hatcheries, are used to cultivate and breed large numbers of trout and salmon used for stocking lakes and rivers to enhance recreational fishing opportunities. In the original proposed budget, funding for these hatcheries was in danger of being cut. However, we fought to preserve this critical funding to ensure these hatcheries can continue to operate.

EDUCATION

REDUCING MANDATED STUDENT TESTING Since the rollout of No Child Left Behind almost 15 years ago, standardized testing has come under a lot of scrutiny. One area of concern is that there are simply too many tests. For example, juniors in high school are currently required to take the SBAC exam at a time when many of them are taking the SAT or ACT college admission tests. As we work statewide and across the country to improve the use of standardized tests, the legislature took another big step forward this year by allowing schools to waive SBAC testing for students taking these college admissions tests.

GIVING TOWNS MORE SCHOOL BUDGET FLEXIBILITY Since the state first implemented a Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR), school enrollment numbers have steadily declined. The rigid requirement making towns spend the same amount (or more) on education than they did the year before was creating a disincentive for towns to deliver education efficiently and corroboratively. This year, we offered flexibility to towns that are experiencing declining enrollment. Towns can now set an education budget down to 3% below their MBR.

SENIORS AND VETERANS

CONTINUING CARE BILL OF RIGHTS This year, we created a bill of rights for seniors living in continuing care retirement communities. This bill of rights gives residents a voice in decisions that affect them within these communities. It also gives residents more independence in making decisions about their medical care and assisted living services, and requires reasonable accommodations for disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

MILITARY RETIREMENT INCOME A new law fully exempts federally taxable military retirement pay from the state income tax. Prior to this change, retirement pay was exempt at just 50%. The exemption applies to tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2015 and applies to federal retirement pay for retired members of the U. S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and the Army and Air National Guards.