



I am proud of what was accomplished in the 2024 legislative session. The legislature invested in our priorities while preserving tax cuts for families and seniors.

We protected the largest and second largest tax cuts in state history and ensured more retirement income would be tax-exempt.

We also increased funding for higher education, early childhood, mental health, and nonprofits.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

## 2024 SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- Providing Quality Care for Seniors
- Maintaining Historic Tax Cuts
- Making Childcare More Affordable and Accessible
- Maintaining CT's Fiscal Integrity



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# AUNDRÉ BUMGARDNER

PROUDLY SERVING GROTON, MYSTIC & STONINGTON

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## CAPITOL UPDATE 2024

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# CAPITOL UPDATE 2024



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OUR BIPARTISAN BUDGET INCLUDES

# PROTECTING TAX CUTS

**WE PASSED A BIPARTISAN BIENNIUM BUDGET THAT INCLUDES HISTORIC TAX CUTS AND INVESTMENTS FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

- **LARGEST INCOME TAX CUT** in state history
- **Biggest investment in public education ever**
- **New supports for the IDD community**
- **Expansion of debt free community college**
- **Protected safety net programs**

**THIS SESSION WE PROTECTED THESE TAX CUTS AND INVESTED MILLIONS OF FEDERAL FUNDS IN:**

- **Higher Education - \$160 million with a path to grow to \$200 million**
- **Early Childcare - \$21.8 million**
- **Mental Health - \$24 million**
- **Nonprofits - \$50 million**

**INCREASING SOLAR CAPACITY IN CONNECTICUT**

- Required PURA to study successor programs for NRES (Nonresidential Energy Solutions) and SCEF (Shared Clean Energy Facility)
- Expedited approval process for municipalities for solar canopies
- Required DEEP, DECD, and DOAG to submit information on potential solar siting projects as part of the IRP (Integrated Resource Plan)
- Allowed PURA to exceed the MW caps for NRES & SCEF for program year 2025 as long as PURA did not exceed the dollar amount from procured projects from calendar year 2024.
- Extended SCEF for two years to align with NRES (PA 24-31)

## ENVIRONMENT

### EELGRASS

We created a Connecticut Seagrass Coordinator through DEEP based on recommendations of the Eelgrass Working Group. This office is charged with the following:

- Develop ways to sustainably harvest eelgrass seeds from existing meadows
- Develop best practices for aquaculture operations near eelgrass
- Specify eelgrass-friendly mooring systems
- Identify public awareness campaigns
- Determine a return on investment when evaluating restoration efforts (PA 24-12)

### INVASIVE PLANTS

We added seven species to our invasive plants list, including burning bush, mugwort, and quackgrass. By banning the sale and cultivation of these plants, we protect native flora and fauna as well as our local ecosystem. (PA 24-11)

### RIPARIAN BUFFERS

We allowed the use of stormwater infrastructure funds for the building of riparian buffers along our streams and rivers to protect water quality and natural habitats. Property owners of these easements are required to plant native trees and shrubs adjacent to waterways instead of lawns, golf courses or athletic fields. (PA 24-10)

### BOATING SAFETY

We increased enforcement of boating laws on bodies of water that border our neighboring states. (PA 24-123) We also created a slow-no-wake zone on the Pawcatuck River along the Rhode Island border to protect residents from speeding watercraft. (PA 24-10)

### DAM SAFETY

We expedited the process for dam remediation when public safety or the environment are at risk due to poor conditions. Additionally, we allowed the governor to proclaim a civil preparedness emergency regarding any individual dam. All owners and caretakers are also charged with maintaining dams in a way that does not endanger life or property. (PA 24-94)



## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN MYSTIC

We assembled a group of local officials, tribal leaders, and proprietors of restaurants and small businesses to come up with ideas for critical investments in transportation and resilience infrastructure, as well as increased tourism in the greater Mystic area. Projects to be considered include transit, such as pedestrian and bicycle improvements, leveraging the mystic river for water taxi service, and extending Shoreline East from New London into Groton and Mystic! (SA 24-2)

## HOUSING INITIATIVES (PA 24-143)

- Incentivized towns to develop more multi-family housing
- Required 45-day notice of rent increases
- Streamlined the process for converting vacant nursing homes into housing
- Prioritized surplus state-owned land to be used for affordable housing
- Increased the value of state rental vouchers

## SUPPORTING AND HONORING OUR VETERANS

- Exempted permanently and totally disabled veterans from paying property taxes (PA 24-46)
- Expanded veterans' driver's license and license plate options to reservists (PA 24-146)

## MAKING CT SENIORS A PRIORITY

- Expedited Medicaid coverage for home-based care as an alternative to more costly nursing home care (PA 24-39)
- Required home care workers to wear photo-ID badges (PA 24-39)
- Created a new registry system to connect patients to home care providers and created a dashboard to help navigate nursing home options (PA 24-39)
- Created an incentive-based program to improve nursing home care in CT (PA 24-39)