

STATE REPRESENTATIVE BRANDON CHAFEE

Dear Neighbor,

The pandemic has produced numerous challenges and exacerbated existing institutional inequities. Throughout the 2021 session, my colleagues and I worked to address these new challenges and the existing injustices by passing over 350 bills and resolutions.

I know the past year has been difficult for each individual and family in our community, and I believe the legislation passed in Hartford will empower everyone in our district. This session I advocated for equitable public health policies, increased access to mental health resources, and additional support for our seniors, schools, and small businesses. I also worked with my colleagues to pass a bipartisan budget that will strengthen our economy and invest in our infrastructure, sustainability efforts, and education. I have fought to ensure Middletown will see an increase in funding in both Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 through this budget. I am confident that these state investments will help our community recover and thrive as we move out of this pandemic.

Please continue reading for more information on legislative highlights and resources developed this session that will benefit your family, our district, and our state.

Best,



Brandon Chafee



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STATE REPRESENTATIVE
BRANDON CHAFEE
PROUDLY SERVING MIDDLETOWN



CAPITOL UPDATE 2021



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FIGHTING FOR EQUALITY

- Declared racism a public health crisis and created a Commission on Racial Equity tasked with eliminating health disparities (PA 21-35)
- Created an Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities in SDE responsible for verifying that educator preparedness programs comply with requirements for literacy interventions for students with dyslexia (PA 21-168)
- Guaranteed legal representation if you're facing eviction (PA 21-34)
- Ended the practice of charging prisoners to use the phone (PA 21-54)
- CT joined seven states in making it illegal to discriminate based on hair texture and protective hairstyle (PA 21-2 "CROWN ACT")
- Required employers to provide a salary range for job openings to make it easier to predict what the job is worth and to ensure a more equitable playing field for salary negotiations (PA 21-30)
- Modernized our breastfeeding laws by requiring employers to provide a private area with access to a refrigerator and electrical outlet and provide mothers with some privacy while they express milk (PA 21-27).
- Repealed an old law on the books that kept adoptees born before 1983 from getting a copy of their original birth certificate (PA 21-21)
- Strengthened the rights of families who are not biologically related and for parents who have children through the assistance of donors (PA 21-15)



PUTTING YOUR SAFETY FIRST

- Ensured school athletic programs have plans to deal with emergencies (PA 21-92)
- Created new training for athletic coaches to better understand the effects of heat illness (PA 21-87)
- Raised awareness of child sex abuse (PA 21-64) and required comprehensive background checks for coaches, trainers, instructors, and certain employees of youth camps (PA 21-82)
- Improved sexual misconduct reporting, data collection, and our response to sexual assaults on CT college campuses (PA 21-81)
- Strengthened our domestic violence laws, including defining coercive control as domestic violence, and ensured immediate cash assistance for victims and their families (PA 21-78 "Jennifer's Law")
- Improved pedestrian and bicycle safety by changing laws affecting speed limits and crosswalks (PA 21-28)
- Established a Vision Zero Council with the goal of eliminating transportation-related deaths and serious injuries (PA 21-28)

RESPONDING TO COVID-19

- Expanded workers' comp benefits for PTSD to cover emergency responders, corrections workers, dispatchers and health care providers who were on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic (PA 21-107)
- Passed legislation to address the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of our children, including:
 - » Expanding youth suicide prevention training
 - » Creating more outpatient services for kids
 - » Requiring social emotional learning as part of professional development for teachers
 - » Continuing virtual parent teacher conferences
 - » Addressing absenteeism in virtual learning
 - » Ending lunch shaming when kids fall behind in paying for their school lunches (PA 21-46)

A GREENER CT

- Helped approve more anaerobic digesters on farms to address storm water runoff and food waste (PA 21-16) [Anaerobic digesters produce methane energy from organic material]
- Raised bottle deposits to 10 cents (starting January 1, 2024), applied deposits to more products (starting January 1, 2023), and provided more money to towns and redemption centers to ensure these products don't wind up as litter or in a landfill (PA 21-58)
- Bonded \$81 million for property remediation programs and grants (PA 21-111)
- The Commission on Racial Equity is required to take environmental factors such as air and water quality into consideration while creating a plan to eliminate health disparities (PA 21-35)

BUDGET 2021-22

STATE DOLLARS SECURED FOR MIDDLETOWN:

| | FISCAL YEAR 21 | FISCAL YEAR 22 |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| EDUCATION COST SHARING | \$22,680,819 | \$23,481,905 |
| NON-EDUCATION AID | \$12,499,058 | \$13,592,188 |
| ADDITIONAL BONDING | \$3,904,372 | \$4,862,025 |
| TOTAL MONEY FROM THE STATE | \$39,084,249 | \$41,936,118 |

