



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Robin Comey

PROUDLY SERVING BRANFORD

Dear Neighbor,

On March 8th, Connecticut had its first confirmed case of coronavirus. On March 9th, the Governor declared a state of Public Health and Civil Preparedness Emergencies. And our lives have been radically changed ever since.

However, my commitment to you and your family has not changed. We will get through this period, and I know our state will be stronger on the other side.

This newsletter is intended to provide you with helpful information and resources, as well as an overview of some of the work my office has been doing during this time.

If you have any questions, concerns, or if I can be helpful to you in working with any state agency or understanding how any of our state laws or regulations can affect your work, our schools, or your opportunities, please call or email me anytime.

Best,

Robin Comey

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While this certainly was an unusual legislative session, I want to highlight some work that I enjoyed over the past year.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

I joined the Branford delegation for a Vaping Forum at Branford High School, and continued representing the 102nd district on the Coastal Caucus, the BioScience Caucus and Fire/EMS Caucus. I joined a large and excited group of business owners at the New Haven Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast and was a special guest speaker at an Advocacy Training Public Health Conference for SCSU and Yale students.

EDUCATION

I am committed to continuing improvements in cradle to career initiatives through my work on the Education Committee. I spoke at the CT Association of Infant Mental Health Fall Conference, attended the CT Association of School Board's (CABE) conference and also visited Gateway Community College to learn about their Early Childhood Program and their Culinary Degree Program. I'm proud to serve as legislative designee on the Special Education Advisory Council and we've been working hard to improve coordinated services both before and after COVID-19.

VETERANS AND PTSD

In February, I welcomed a group of veterans and their service dogs to screen the documentary movie "To Be of Service" at the Capitol in Hartford. This film highlighted awareness of PTSD and how service animals play a key role in their recovery. I also attended a national policy conference about Suicide Prevention Policy and worked with colleagues here in Connecticut to make a difference for our residents impacted by suicide.

ADVOCATING FOR YOU DURING THIS TIME

This has been a remarkably challenging time for us all. I have worked with so many of you to successfully resolve your unemployment applications and connect Branford businesses with financial assistance through loans and grants. I know that it is during these difficult times when we need government help and services the most.

That's why I have worked with my colleagues to advocate on your behalf to the Governor and his administration. I am proud to say that because of our advocacy, we have expanded tele-medicine, connected businesses with PPE, expanded affordable childcare options for front-line workers, and delayed due dates for state income taxes and municipal property taxes. If there are more ways that we can make state government work better for you, please let me know.

THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION THAT WASN'T

When we began this year's legislative session on February 5th, I expected to be working on many of the issues that we have talked about including reducing the cost of health insurance, making it easier for you to exercise your right to vote, and protecting our environment. As a member of the Public Health and Education Committees, I was deeply involved in expanding opportunities for children and working towards creating new career paths in the healthcare field. This work continues now, and will continue through any special session of the legislature this summer or fall, and into next year.

One of the few votes we took this year in the House of Representatives was for the bond act. I am proud to say that this legislation contained authorizations for state aid for our town.

STATE FUNDS TO BRANFORD	FY 20	FY 21
LoCIP (LOCAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT)	155,575	155,575
TOWN AID ROAD	399,723	399,723
GRANTS FOR MUNICIPAL PROJECTS	138,521	138,521
EDUCATION COST SHARING	2,483,807	2,679,195
PILOT: COLLEGES & HOSPITALS	105,041	105,041
TOTAL STATE FUNDS TO TOWN	3,282,667	3,478,055

In addition, the bill contained funds for workforce development, launching the Paid Family Medical Leave insurance, and funding transportation improvements.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

While we continue to be guided by public health experts on the steps we need to take to safely "reopen", we also have an opportunity to build a stronger and more robust state.

Already we are working to ensure hospitals and health care providers such as nursing homes never find themselves in a position again where they lack personal protective equipment and access to vital healthcare equipment.

This summer, we are planning to have a special legislative session. We are committed to making sure every resident has access to absentee voting in November, nobody should have to risk their health in order to exercise their right to vote. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me and make your voice heard as we manage the COVID crisis, expand voting access, and implement police accountability and transparency reforms.



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