



SCHOOL SAFETY

Parents need peace of mind knowing that their children are safe in their schools. Many districts have armed school resource officers and others have security guards. This new law requires that an armed guard working in a school must meet certain requirements. If they are not a police officer, they must be a retired police officer or state trooper who was in good standing at the time of their retirement. They must also complete firearms training from the Police Officer Standards and Training Council. This law ensures that if an armed guard in a school is not a current officer they are receiving the same training on school security and firearms as active police officers.

WINTER UTILITY ASSISTANCE

The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) has started early intake for winter heating assistance, with applications available through Community Action Agencies. Assistance covers oil, gas, electric, propane, wood, coal and kerosene heat. For more information call 2 -1 -1.

HOMEMAKER COMPANION AGENCIES

This law helps to protect some of our most vulnerable residents, requiring that homemaker companion agencies notify clients in writing that a comprehensive background check was performed before sending an employee to a client's residence for the first time. The legislation also adds additional consumer protections to agency contracts, including specifying payment obligations and when contracts between the agency and the client are enforceable and can be cancelled.

ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

The position of Athletic Director is defined in state statute for the first time and creates minimum standards for this position. These standards ensure that our student athletes and our school athletic budgets are better protected.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE Theresa Conroy

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CAPITOL UPDATE 2013

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ISSUE BRIEFS

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

We have demonstrated our commitment to giving seniors a choice in their long term care and support services by passing legislation that requires the Commission on Aging to establish and facilitate partnerships with municipal leaders, planning and zoning boards and social services organizations to encourage collaborative efforts for long-term care planning. I am also facilitating a forum on this issue in our community, soon. I will send out a press release when the date is set.

ALZHEIMER'S TASK FORCE

According to the Alzheimer's Association, there are over 70,000 Connecticut residents with Alzheimer's or related dementia and this number is expected to grow, posing important challenges for both families and our long-term care infrastructure. In response, the Public Health Committee proposed legislation convening an Alzheimer's Task Force to create a comprehensive, strategic plan for strengthening services and support for patients and their loved ones. The task force will bring together state agencies, health care professionals, service providers, and caregivers to make recommendations on how best to prepare for the needs of this population.

CO-PAYMENTS FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY

Co-payments for physical therapy have risen in recent years, creating a deterrent for patients seeking these essential services. Physical therapy may require multiple visits per week over the course of several weeks or months in order for the patient to regain strength and mobility, and avoid chronic injuries and future health costs. This new law limits co-pays for visits to in-network physical therapists to \$30 per visit.

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Connecticut's Economy

JOB GROWTH

Both the House and the Senate unanimously supported the passage of a bill to encourage Connecticut manufacturers to recruit, hire, and train apprentices, preparing Connecticut's workforce for manufacturing jobs in the future. This legislation increases the hourly tax credit – per apprentice – and, as part of a coordinated approach with the state's public schools, colleges, and private sector companies, will ensure a well-trained, experienced workforce here in Connecticut.

STATE BUDGET

Despite the difficulties surrounding our biennial budget, I am proud to have not only maintained, but increased funding for the 105th District. I was committed to preserving the safety net our communities depend on while keeping property taxes down and I was able to accomplish both of these goals.

This 2013-2014 budget passed by the General Assembly includes:

- Major investment in science and technology at the University of Connecticut;
- Funding for the landmark public education reforms passed in 2012;
- Continued funding for Economic Development Programs;
- Funding for our cities and towns.

SEYMOUR BUDGET FIX

I helped to ensure that Seymour residents no longer need to worry about paying \$580,000 for debt remaining on the Seymour Middle School building project. Legislation passed this session allowed the town the time it needed to renew its construction loans on the middle school project and receive state funds to pay the debt off.

SMALL BUSINESS EXPRESS PROGRAM

We increased our investment in the Small Business Express program, which provides loans and matching grants to businesses with 100 or fewer employees. Funds were moved from the Manufacturing Assistance Act program into the Small Business Express account so that more funds will be available for this very successful program that has helped many small businesses in the state to create jobs.

REMOVING THE ENERGY AUCTION

After hearing from so many of you regarding the proposed energy auction, which would have sold off standard offer customers, I became a leader in the fight to remove it from the budget. Connecticut energy costs are already too high, and this one-time revenue gain would have pushed those costs even higher.

LOCALLY RAISED POULTRY

Many of you would like to buy food that is locally grown. This legislation makes it easier for consumers to buy poultry raised in Connecticut. Previously, Connecticut farmers or poultry producers were limited to selling only to household consumers, restaurants, hotels and boarding houses. This legislation expands our regulations to allow Connecticut farmers the ability to sell fresh poultry to grocery stores.

VETERANS

VIETNAM VETERANS DIPLOMAS

This law allows boards of education to issue an honorary diploma to any veteran who did not complete high school due to service in the armed forces during the Vietnam era.

MILITARY LEAVE

To ensure that our state armed forces receive the same employment protections afforded to employees who are U.S. Armed Forces Reservists or National Guard members we passed legislation to provide more uniform workplace protections for our servicemen and servicewomen.

VETERAN RESOURCES

We have streamlined access to programs and assistance for our veterans by requiring cities and towns that do not have one to appoint a town employee to serve as a veterans' service contact who will act as an ombudsman to guide veterans to appropriate resources.

RELIEF FUND

This will provide grants to help families pay for essential household goods or services by expanding the group of eligible grant recipients who are unable to pay for certain expenses due to their military service.



Rep. Theresa Conroy at Fire Ops Day

BOOT DRIVES

I am happy to report that I supported allowing our municipal fire departments a special event permit to collect donations for charity on roads like Route 34. The permits for these charitable fundraisers (also known as boot drives) are valid for one day, and a fire department can only get two per year. The boot drives can be held only at intersections controlled by a traffic control signal or stop sign where the posted speed limit is 30 miles per hour or less.

FIRE STATION WORK ZONES

A new law allows municipalities to designate fire station work zones and doubles the basic fines for speeding or committing certain other traffic violations in any conspicuously designated zone where a uniformed firefighter is directing traffic.