

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
MICHELLE L. COOK

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As many of you know our regular legislative session adjourned on Wednesday, June 5th. The session was marked by many positives such as passing bills that will help our elderly neighbors.

This session, I had the honor of being a Deputy Speaker in the House of Representatives. I was proud to serve on the Education, Human Services and Public Health Committees as well as the Joint Committee on Legislative Management. Please take a look at some of this session's highlights and let me know what you think!

Please keep in touch and contact me with issues, concerns or suggestions as to how we can better serve you. Your input will help us make our community an even better place to live and work. Thank you for allowing me the honor of serving you.

Sincerely,



Michelle L. Cook
65th District

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MICHELLE L. COOK
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Representative Cook With Students and Alumni from some of the state's Agriculture Science and Technology Education programs

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PROUDLY SERVING TORRINGTON

STATE BUDGET AND EDUCATION AID FOR TORRINGTON

The State Budget I voted in support of accomplishes many good things – a plan for students to attend community college for three years or take 72 community college credit hours without accruing debt, expanding Husky A Medicaid to 4,000 people who lost coverage, stabilizes the teacher's pension fund, and increases the rainy day fund to over \$2 billion. Most importantly and directly impacting the City of Torrington, the budget also increases Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding. The city will see an additional \$1 million for FY 20 and an additional \$2 million for FY 21. Overall, Torrington will see \$26,826,134 in total state aid for fiscal year 20 and \$27,936,866 for fiscal year 21.

VETERANS PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

We increased the property tax exemption for certain disabled veterans and service members. This additional financial benefit will hopefully make Connecticut a little more affordable for those that have given so much for our country.

EXPANSION OF THE ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

This bill expands the current pilot program into additional public high schools, and also allows for the participation of private institutions of higher education, in addition to public institutions of higher education. (HB 5833, Public Act No. 19-103)

MAMMOGRAM COVERAGE

This legislation will require health insurance coverage for ultrasound screenings for any woman who is 40 years or older, has a recommendation from her doctor, has a personal history of breast disease through the biopsy of a benign tumor, or has a family or personal history of breast cancer. It also prohibits insurance from charging coinsurance, copayments, deductibles and other out-of-pocket expenses for breast ultrasounds and mammograms. (HB 7424; Public Act No. 19-117)

COVERING POLICE AND FIREFIGHTERS FOR PTSD

We passed legislation which will provide workers' compensation benefits for police officers, parole officers and firefighters suffering from PTSD due to events in the line of duty. Our first responders see violence and death too frequently and we must help them cope with the effects of these tragic experiences.

This legislation will:

- Establish eligibility criteria to receive PTSD benefits
- Provide benefits up to 52 weeks and within four years of an event
- Develop a peer support policy
- Offer training in resilience and self-care
- Study the feasibility of expanding these benefits to include EMS and Department of Correction employees
- Prohibit a law enforcement unit from disciplining police officers solely because they receive mental health services, or have surrendered their work weapons or ammunition (SB 164; Public Act No. 19-17)



Rep. Cook At The PTSD Bill Signing Ceremony with Governor Lamont

SUPPORTING SENIORS

It is important to make sure our seniors are fed, so this session I co-sponsored a bill that increases funding for the state's Meals on Wheels program. This new law also requires the Department of Public Health to develop recommendations to track client nutrition and quality of care. (HB 7163; Public Act No. 19-157)



Rep. Cook Joining Connecticut Office of Early Childhood Commissioner Beth Bye Celebrating An Increase In Funding For The Care 4 Kids Program