

FUNDING FOR ALICE PECK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RENOVATIONS

I worked to secure \$2.5 million in bonding for renovations and expansion at the Alice Peck Elementary School. Currently, the Hamden School system uses the school to house a variety of special education services and related programs for Hamden students. By keeping these programs “in house” we avoid having to pay tuition for these students to receive these specialized services elsewhere. We started this program during my time as chairperson of the Hamden Board of Education and it saves the Town hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. Now, we can expand the Alice Peck programs even further and perhaps make extra space available to other towns (who would pay Hamden for that access).



Rep. D'Agostino testifying at a legislative committee.

TOWN OF HAMDEN STATE AID FOR FISCAL YEARS 2016 & 2017

Education Cost Sharing	\$54,262,274
Municipal Revenue Sharing Account	\$2,776,564
PILOT: State Owned Property	\$1,731,337
PILOT: Colleges & Hospitals	\$5,896,550
Pequot/Mohegan Revenue Sharing	\$1,887,059
School Transportation	\$1,488,180
Local Capital Improvement Program	\$863,860
Town Aid Roads	\$1,336,610
Adult Education	\$575,598
Grants for Municipal Projects	\$573,378
Total State Funds to Hamden	\$71,391,410



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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The General Assembly finally concluded its 2015 legislative session at the end of June.

I am pleased to report that Hamden can expect to receive significant state funding, which I expect our town leaders will use to reduce taxes, support our schools, repair our roads and provide services to our elderly. Overall, the Town will receive \$71,391,410 in state aid to support the 2016 & 2017 town budget. This includes more than \$27,000,000 each year in educational cost sharing funds to support our public schools. We need and should receive more educational funding, but this funding is good progress.

The budget also implements a statewide car tax cap of 32 mills in 2016, and 29.36 mills in 2017. For Hamden car owners currently charged 39.93 mills, this budget will provide some tax relief. The state will make up for that lost property tax revenue to the Town with a grant that is separate from the budget funding described above.



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Rep. D'Agostino in the House of Representatives.



Rep. D'Agostino speaking to House Speaker Sharkey about legislative matters.



QUINNIPIAC WILL FINALLY START TO PAY TAXES ON ALL THOSE PRIVATE HOUSES IT OWNS

Under the law that I co-sponsored and introduced on the House floor, residential property owned by a private tax-exempt college and used for student housing will be part of a host town's grand list.

This landmark legislation requires Quinnipiac University to pay property taxes on the dozens of homes that it owns in Hamden. It is only fair to every property owner in Hamden that Quinnipiac pays its fair share of property taxes for police, fire, and other municipal services. This would never have happened without the efforts of our Speaker of the House, Brendan Sharkey—who also represents Hamden.

ADDRESSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

This year, we worked to help Connecticut close the achievement gap and improve educational outcomes for all students. We will increase early childhood literacy programs by requiring the State Department of Education to hire a Director of Reading Initiatives who is charged with implementing a statewide reading plan and coordinating Connecticut's various reading initiatives.

In addition, more teachers will be certified in shortage areas, more minority teachers will be recruited, and educators will be given new strategies to build better relationships with students of different cultures. We also created a pilot program in four towns and cities to identify best practices for English Language Learners (ELL) instruction and will develop standards for students receiving longer periods of specialized instruction.

HELPING RETIRED TEACHERS

Connecticut's retired teachers will have 10 percent of their pensions exempted from the state income tax in 2015 saving them an estimated \$11.8 million. In 2016, the exemption will increase to 25 percent and 50 percent in 2017. Approximately 26,000 retired teachers living in Connecticut will benefit from this new law.

PROTECTING SENIORS

A law that I introduced and principally authored, provides greater protections for residents of Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC's).

This law protects residents of CCRC's across the state, like those at Whitney Center in Hamden. The core function of a Continuing Care Retirement Community is to allow its residents to age in place with dignity and security. Among other things, the new law provides for:

- Further transparency and disclosure to residents regarding the financial stability of the provider operating the facility;
- Timely notification about developments affecting the facility including ownership changes, facility construction and renovation and changes to the provider's financial condition;
- Improved communication between the residents and management; and
- Streamlining the regulatory requirement associated with opening and operating a facility in Connecticut.



Rep. D'Agostino receiving an award from the Connecticut Continuing Care Residents' Association.

