

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
MICHAEL D'AGOSTINO

PROUDLY SERVING HAMDEN - 91ST DISTRICT

Dear Neighbors,

This year's legislative session has concluded with the passage of additional changes to the State budget. Earlier in the session, the Hamden delegation successfully worked together to secure the release of \$856,025 in municipal aid for Hamden that had been held up due to the budget negotiations. The State budget adjustments, however, failed to make Hamden whole for about \$1 million in additional aid for the 2018 fiscal year. Additionally, the upcoming 2019 fiscal year budget adjustments still failed, in my opinion, to provide Hamden with adequate educational cost sharing funds.

Thus, while there was some good contained in the budget, in the end I voted against it, as I felt the final budget agreement did not provide Hamden with the funding it was promised.

One of my top priorities in the legislature has been and will remain making sure our town gets its fair share of funding. I am not afraid to vote independently to achieve that goal. I also wanted my vote to reflect the fact that, even though we did make significant restorations to several essential programs, there still is an unfair disparity that exists when we are making cuts that hurt some of our most vulnerable citizens, including the elderly, disabled and those who are low-income without asking the very wealthy to contribute more.

This newsletter contains some highlights of what I felt were good items contained in the budget as well as some other legislation we worked on that I hope you find helpful.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to my office if I can be of service to you or your family. It is a true honor to serve our community.

Sincerely,



Michael D'Agostino

BUDGET ADJUSTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Restores funding to the Medicare Savings and Renter's Rebate Programs.
- Restores \$12 million to the Husky A healthcare program which assists more than 13,000 people.
- Prevents bus and rail service cuts, any fare increases and keeps transportation projects on track.
- Maintains reserves in the "Rainy Day" Fund at the highest level in over a decade (over \$1 billion for the biennium).

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CAPITOL UPDATE 2018

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PROUDLY SERVING HAMDEN

FAIR PAY AND BENEFITS FOR HOMECARE WORKERS

I am proud to have taken the lead on legislation to raise wages and provide workers' compensation benefits to thousands of personal-care attendants. These folks work around-the-clock – often under challenging circumstances – to provide critical care for thousands of disabled state residents. They are employed directly by their disabled clients and paid at or below minimum wage through state-administered Medicaid programs. PCAs have not had a wage increase in over a decade. This legislation passed overwhelmingly in the House and unanimously in the Senate because it was the right thing to do.



On the floor of the House, Rep. D'Agostino celebrates with disability workers/advocates and their clients after successfully passing the Personal Care Attendant Bill that will raise wages.

PAY EQUITY FOR WOMEN

In Connecticut, as it is around the country, working women earn less than men. Women would have to work an extra ten years just to make up the disparity in wages over their lifetime. This important new law prohibits employers from asking about your salary in previous jobs which is a major contributor to perpetuating low-paying salaries and the gender pay gap.

INVESTING IN MIDDLE CLASS FAMILIES

We also continued to work with the business community on earned family leave. Every working person in Connecticut should be allowed to take paid time off when they or a loved one gets sick. In addition, I supported a proposal to raise the minimum wage, so no one who works full time lives in poverty. Unfortunately, neither of these proposals had sufficient support to become law this session. These policies are essential and I will keep working on them.



Rep. D'Agostino meets with residents at Davenport Dunbar in Hamden at a Senior Forum he hosted in January.



Members of the Hamden Progressive Action Network (HAMPAN) meet with Rep. D'Agostino at the State Capitol.



Rep. D'Agostino attends a local meeting of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

REDUCING PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Recognizing that prescription drug prices are the number one driver of rising healthcare costs, we passed legislation to hold pharmaceutical companies accountable by increasing transparency and requiring them to explain large price increases for drugs that have a substantial cost to the state. Additionally, insurance companies must now submit information about which drugs are most frequently prescribed and which are provided at the greatest cost. By collecting more data and holding drug companies accountable, we can get closer to lowering drug costs for Connecticut residents.

PROTECTING WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

The Affordable Care Act contains ten essential health benefits including maternity and newborn care, prescription drugs, preventive and mental health services, and chronic disease management that all Americans are entitled to have covered in their health insurance plans. As Congress and the President attempt to dismantle the ACA, we passed legislation to safeguard these benefits to ensure that no matter what happens in Washington, in Connecticut insurance policies must still cover these basic services. Additionally, we went a step further and required coverage for a twelve-month supply of contraceptives.

MAKING SCHOOLS SAFER

Schools must be a safe place to learn, so we increased funding for school security measures by \$15 million. Districts can use these funds for entrance upgrades, bullet-proof glass and security cameras. I also supported legislation to review the use of more social-emotional learning in school curriculum. Studies show it helps students reach their full academic and social potential while improving the school climate and reducing the potential for classroom violence. Unfortunately, this bill did not pass the Senate.