



Dear Neighbor:

Thank you for taking the time to read my end of session newsletter. Inside you will find information on some of the legislation passed in the 2008 legislative session.

Although we were in session for just a few months this year, we did pass some substantive pieces of legislation.

It is a privilege for me to represent you in Hartford at the State Capitol. I do my job best if I know your needs and concerns. So please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or if you need assistance.

Sincerely,

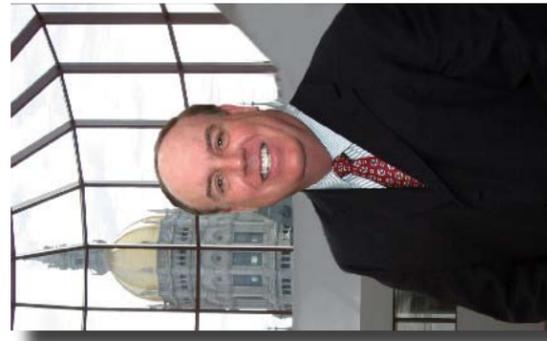
Stephen D. Dargan



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State Representative

Steve Dargan

PROVEN LEADERSHIP FOR WEST HAVEN



CAPITOL UPDATE 2008

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

In January, the legislature met in special session to rework our state's criminal justice system. In April, we revisited that legislation and expanded the law to include stronger penalties for repeat violent offenders. The law now calls for doubling mandatory minimum sentences for second offenses and triples those sentences after a third conviction. The bill also allocates \$10 million to implement the criminal justice reform measures we passed in January.

MILITARY FAMILIES

- Makes military spouses permanently eligible for unemployment compensation when they voluntarily leave their jobs to accompany a spouse required to relocate for active duty service. PA 08-40
- Provides a tuition waiver at state colleges and universities for members of the Connecticut National Guard seeking graduate degrees. PA 08-57
- Requires state public universities and colleges to waive tuition for any state resident who is a dependent child or surviving spouse of a state resident killed in action while performing active military duty in the U.S. Armed Forces on or after September 11, 2001. PA 08-71
- Enables the state to join a national interstate compact that provides uniform standards for handling the school records of military children who transfer into our state public schools. Provides appropriate placement in courses, extracurricular activities and on time graduation. PA 08-57



Rep. Dargan with visiting fifth grade students and teachers from Mackrille School.



Rep. Dargan at work in the State Capitol.

RESPONSIBLE LENDING AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

With the number of foreclosures on the rise in Connecticut, the General Assembly has acted to protect the rights of homeowners, keeping families in their homes without discouraging responsible lending.

HB 5577 includes a comprehensive set of reforms that will provide mediation and financial assistance to individuals and families whose homes are at risk of foreclosure. The bill creates stricter regulations and greater penalties on lenders and brokers when writing loans for people with limited income and high debt.

For more information contact The Department of Banking's Foreclosure Assistance Hotline at 877-472-8313 or the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority at 860-571-3500.



TEEN DRIVING LAWS



Citing a guiding principle of safety – safety for teens and for everyone with whom they share the road – our teen driving reforms establish new requirements for 16 and 17 year olds and, in some cases, their parents or legal guardians. Changes include:

- Restricting passengers for new drivers from six months to one year;
- Establishing a curfew of 11 PM for teen drivers; and
- Requiring seat belts for all passengers in cars with a teen driver.

In addition, teen drivers will be required to have 40 hours of behind-the-wheel training, instead of 20 hours. Parents will be required to attend a two hour class with their child.

It also enables police officers to confiscate a teen's drivers license for 48 hours for violating any of these restrictions, as well as for excessive speeding, reckless driving and for street racing.

IDENTITY THEFT

To help control identity theft, the legislature passed laws requiring entities which use Social Security numbers to:

- Shred personal information prior to its disposal,
- Create a privacy protection policy to ensure confidentiality,
- Eliminate the social security numbers of individuals from certain vital records except those used for medical, statistical or research purposes.



Rep. Dargan with Speaker James Amann.

Questions or concerns? Call Rep. Steve Dargan (800) 842-8267 or e-mail stephen.dargan@cga.ct.gov