

## CHANGES IN MUNICIPAL TAX COLLECTION

New legislation makes several changes to the municipal tax collection statutes. Among other things, it:

- Allows municipalities and district health departments to withhold or revoke a business license or permit if a business owes water, sewer, or sanitation charges that are at least one year delinquent, as they may already do for delinquent taxes;
- Requires municipalities to follow a taxpayer's written instructions specifying the property or properties to which a specific tax payment should be applied;
- Eliminates the requirement that tax collectors apply property tax payments to recording fees related to a taxpayer's delinquency;
- Requires municipalities to retain any interest that accrues on excess tax sale proceeds;
- Specifies that state and municipal tax liens against a delinquent taxpayer have precedence or priority over any claim against the taxpayer by a party who redeems (i.e., buys back) a property following a tax sale;
- Specifies that tax payments made through a municipal electronic payment service are timely, and thus not subject to interest charges, if they are made within the payment's statutory deadline, as is currently the case with postmarked envelopes.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# STEVE DARGAN

PROUDLY SERVING THE 115TH DISTRICT, WEST HAVEN

## CAPITOL UPDATE 2015

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Dear Neighbor,

I am pleased to share with you this update on the recently concluded legislative session.

Each year brings a new set of challenges, and the 2015 session was no different. Despite a serious budget deficit and the need to encourage economic growth, my colleagues and I passed a balanced budget that provides property and car tax relief for middle-class families and small businesses, in addition to consumer protections and programs that empower Connecticut's families.

We also created the framework for a once-in-a-generation investment in our transportation infrastructure, which will spur more growth in our economy and create thousands of jobs. The result of all this will improve quality of life for residents who use our roads and rail system.

In addition to delivering property and car tax relief, we passed legislation that protects seniors and brought transparency to the rapidly changing health care landscape. And in the aftermath of the largest data breach in state history, we set new cybersecurity standards for companies handling residents' personal data. We stood up for military veterans, students and Connecticut workers whose jobs and livelihoods are under threat from out-of-state competition.

I hope you find the enclosed information helpful and will feel free to call or email me for any reason. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your state representative and I welcome the opportunity to hear from you

State Representative Steve Dargan

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*Rep. Dargan discussing legislation with Majority Leader Aresimowicz*

## PROTECTION FROM SURPRISE BILLS & EMERGENCY SERVICE CHANGES

A new law prohibits health insurers and HMOs from charging a coinsurance, copayment, deductible, or other out-of-pocket expense for emergency services rendered by an out-of-network health care provider that is greater than the charges for services rendered by an in-network provider.

Additionally, under the new law, an insured person who receives a surprise bill is required to pay only the coinsurance, copayment, deductible, or other out-of-pocket expense that would apply if the services were rendered by an in-network provider. A “surprise bill” results when an out-of-network provider renders non-emergency services at an in-network facility, and the insured did not knowingly elect to have the out-of-network provider render the services.

## VARIABLE ELECTRIC RATES

This year the state legislature took a historic step in protecting Connecticut residents from electricity providers who offered a very low introductory rate that increased rapidly within a few months. This law protects residential ratepayers from predatory variable rate contracts charged by electric suppliers. This measure makes our state the first in the nation to enact these protections. Competitive electric suppliers must now give their customers a 60-day notice of the end of their contracts. Suppliers cannot charge these customers a termination or early cancellation fee and must allow customers who want to switch to standard service the ability to do that within 72 hours.

The legislation also sets up a process for PURA to further investigate and take measures to completely eliminate variable electric rates when a customer’s contract expires. This legislation will help Connecticut ratepayers see a reduction in their bills and keep them better informed.



*Rep. Dargan with a student from St. Lawrence School*

## PROTECTING LONG ISLAND SOUND

The Long Island Sound remains one of our most precious state resources. To protect the Sound, the “Blue Plan” will inventory the resources, uses and conservation areas of our portion of Long Island Sound.

With this plan in place, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection along with the newly established 16-member Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory and Blue Plan Advisory Committee will be able to more clearly and effectively manage our offshore waters through data-driven processes. It will also help streamline, allocate and coordinate our resources which include state agencies, academic institutions, user groups and other stakeholders. Plans similar to this have been instituted by a number of our neighboring coastal states with great success.

## KEEPING OUR SENIORS SAFE

This legislative year, we passed many more laws to protect our seniors from potential abuse. In situations where abuse or neglect is suspected, the Department of Social Services can now petition a probate court to gain access to that person’s home to make an assessment.

For the purpose of these investigations, the definition of neglect has also been expanded to include elderly people who do not live alone, but whose caretaker fails to arrange for the necessary services to keep an elderly person healthy. We also passed laws that will keep nursing home and residential care home residents safer by requiring the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services to notify a resident’s designee of suspected abuse or neglect within 24 hours.

### CITY OF WEST HAVEN STATE AID FOR FISCAL YEARS 2016 & 2017

	FY16	FY17
Education Cost Sharing	\$45,996,566	\$45,996,566
PILOT: State Owned Property	-----	\$59,579
PILOT: Colleges & Hospitals	\$5,199,073	\$5,476,449
Pequot/Mohegan Revenue Sharing	\$983,815	\$985,721
School Transportation	\$621,694	\$621,694
Local Capital Improvement Program	\$579,476	\$579,476
Town Aid Roads	\$621,676	\$621,676
Adult Education	\$209,151	\$209,151
MRSA- Additional Sales Tax Payment	-----	\$1,614,877
MRSA- Additional PILOT Payment	-----	\$339,563
<b>Total State Funds to West Haven</b>	<b>\$54,211,451</b>	<b>\$56,504,752</b>

