Reforming our Health Care System

Over 750,000 Connecticut residents went without health insurance at some point during 2007 or 2008. Healthcare costs everyone more each year and taxpayers pay more to supplement the people who do not have it. This year, the General Assembly took major steps towards reforming our broken healthcare system with the passage of two historic healthcare bills:

Creating the Connecticut Healthcare Partnership

- Would have opened the state health plan to small businesses, non-profits, and cities/towns
- Would have provided at least $70 million savings to the state, when we need it most
- Would have reduced taxes with improved bargaining power and lower administrative costs
- Would have helped small businesses access quality, affordable health care for employees
- Would have been an important step toward streamlining health care state-wide

Establishing the Sustinet Plan

- Provides a framework for expanding high-quality coverage to Connecticut residents
- Establishes an eleven-member board of health care providers and experts
- Creates new public health insurance options that will be affordable
- Allows Connecticut to take full advantage of Obama’s federal reforms

Taken together, these bills would have made Connecticut maximally ready for federal reforms that provide affordable, quality care for all.

While I am extremely disappointed that Governor Rell vetoed these important measures – rejecting an opportunity to provide relief for families and businesses fighting high health care costs – I’m glad to report that the General Assembly was able to override the governor’s veto of the Sustinet plan. As a result, Connecticut will continue to be a leader in the fight to reform our health care system.
Applies to families and dependents

Provides grants to pay for essential personal services

allows immediate relatives of members

PA 09-163 | HB 6394 – effective: Upon passage

RELIEF FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

PA 09-10 | HB 6406 – effective: Upon passage

This session we passed several new laws to aid members & their families

The service and sacrifices of our Armed Forces members must always be valued and honored.

The diagnosis to determine if an individual has an autism spectrum disorder

The results:

Higher quality of life for individuals on the autism spectrum

Decrease in lifetime costs of treatment

Comprehensive coverage – in line with that of eleven other progressive states

Providing for our Armed Forces Members & their Families

The service and sacrifices of our Armed Forces members must always be valued and honored. This session we passed several new laws to aid them and their families.

Behavioral Health Services

PA 09-10 | HB 6406 – effective: Upon passage

- Ensures that members of the armed forces can receive transitional behavioral health services
- Applies to families and dependent members of armed forces members as well

Senior Discount Programs

PA 09-119 | SB 451 – effective: 07.01.09

- Requires businesses to disclose details of programs and eligibility requirements

Patients’ Rights at Nursing Homes

PA 09-168 | HB 6572 – effective: 10.01.09

- Ensures that the Nursing Home Bill of Rights to prohibit the solicitation of donations or gifts as a condition of admission
- Extends protections to third parties, such as families and friends

Banning Toxic Bisphenol-A

PA 09-105 | HB 6772 – effective: 10.01.09

- Bans bisphenol-A (BPA), a highly toxic and bio-active industrial chemical
- Makes baby bottles, food containers and beverage containers safer for children
- Establishes Connecticut as a national leader in consumer protection, and as a model for federal regulation

Green Cleaning Products

PA 09-91 | HB 6495 – effective: 10.01.09

- Phases out hazardous cleaning chemicals currently used in most schools
- Promotes use of safe green cleaning products
- Develops a state list of approved non-toxic cleaning products – most of which cost less than harsh, synthetic cleaners

Locating Missing Seniors

PA 09-110 | SB 814 – effective: 04.01.10

- Creates an emergency notification system similar to the Amber Alert
- Allows law enforcement agencies to issue public alerts for missing seniors

Senior Income & Health

PA 09-53 | HB 5674 – effective: 10.01.09

- Expands personal care assistance services to more of our seniors

Affordable Elderly Homecare

PA 09-184 – effective: 04.01.10

- Expands access to affordable homecare support services
- Helps seniors remain independent in their own homes rather than nursing homes
- Expands personal care assistance services to more of our seniors

Ensuring Support & Services for Older Connecticuters

PA 09-103 | HB 6572 – effective: 10.01.09

- Requires the Board of Governors of Higher Education to adopt policies that regulate credit card marketing practices on public college campuses
- Protects young consumers from being unfairly targeted

Healthy Insurance for Autism Treatments

PA 09-111 | SB 320 – effective: 01.01.10

- Requires insurance coverage of critical treatments and benefits that will greatly help the lives of people with autism.

Treatments covered include:

- The diagnosis to determine if an individual has an autism spectrum disorder
- Behavioral therapies for children 14 years old or younger including applied behavior analysis and cognitive behavioral therapy
- Prescription drugs

Protecting Your Home, Savings, & Credit

We took action to aid consumers hurt by recent events and protect you from the recent sub-prime mortgage crisis and corrupt money managers (like Bernie Madoff).

Protecting Schools & Libraries

One of my top priorities of 2009 was protecting critical state support for public schools, libraries and family resource centers. I’m glad to report that the budget enacted on August 30th included:

- Level funding for West Hartford’s education cost sharing grant
- Continued funding for the library programs that the governor sought to cut
- Level funding for West Hartford – and all state – family resource centers

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Believe it or not, this is (the hand of) President Obama shaking Representative Fleischmann’s hand in October of this year.