

**G.M.O.'s
(Genetically Modified Organisms)**

This truly became a hot-button issue this session. The more we learned how our food was being changed, the more we realized it had to be substantially addressed. Basically, it came down to labeling, so that the consumer would be aware that the food had been genetically altered. We are the first state to ever require labeling but this will not happen until four other states have passed similar legislation— one of which must border Connecticut. All four will be northeastern states and must have a total population of 20 million. There are fines if the food is not properly labeled. And if the label misleads the public, then there will be criminal penalties. Let's hope four states hop on our bandwagon quickly! For all our sakes!

Guns

Thank you for all your e-mails and phone calls regarding the assault weapon ban of 2013. Interestingly enough, I was the Chairman of the Public Safety Committee in 1993 when we passed the first assault weapon ban in the country. Also, interesting in those twenty years no gun-owners lost their Second Amendment rights. Be honest! You didn't then and you will not lose them in 2013!

Human Trafficking

This is an issue the legislature has been trying to address successfully for a long time. I believe this year we have finally done it! There are 7 sections to the new law. For me, the highlights are that money and property used and associated with this crime and prostitution will be seized and forfeited by those running the business. It moves the crime from patronizing a prostitute from a class A misdemeanor to a class C felony (punishable up to ten years in prison, a fine of \$10,000, or both). The actor must know that the victim was under 18 years of age or a victim of human trafficking. Significantly, the victim can approach the court to get the crime of prostitution vacated as a victim of human trafficking, for one, and the victim does not have to endure additional punishment! About time!

Education Evolution

We all remember the struggles with the Education Reform Act of 2012. Changes took place this year as well – all for the good. Finally, legislators realized that local Boards of Education and the local professional development committees could mutually work together to develop their own evaluation program. For once, a program is not going to be determined by somebody far removed from your district!



**At the Capitol:
1-800-842-1902
In the District:
(203) 269-1169**

2013 Senior Laws
2013 Children Laws
2013 Business Laws
2013 Major Public Acts

**Keep In Touch
With
Mary Fritz**

State Representative
Mary G. Fritz



News for the 90th

Cheshire • Wallingford

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CLIP AND SAVE!

Important Telephone Numbers	
Medicare Hotline	1-800-633-4227
CT Partnership for Long-Term Care	(1-800-MEDICARE)
Commission on Aging	1-800-547-3443
Medicare Advocacy	1-860-240-5200
Connecticut Legal Assistance For Elders	1-800-262-4414
New Car "Lemons"	1-203-946-4811
Consumer Protection	1-860-713-6120
Tax Department	1-800-842-2649
Unclaimed Property Hotline	1-860-297-5962
	1-800-833-7318

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
MARY G. FRITZ
News for the 90th - 2013
CHESHIRE • WALLINGFORD



Dear Neighbor,



As you know, this was a session which addressed many issues. Some were controversial—like assault weapons and G.M.O.'s and others were absolutely necessary, like teacher evaluations and pool safety.

For the first time in many years, I voted for the budget! My thinking and reasoning was very precise—money was restored in the budget to both Cheshire and Wallingford. I strongly believe these are your tax dollars coming home to give you tax relief at the local level!

I hope this newsletter shows you what a busy session we had. Clearly, you and your families were my primary concern.

As always, it is a great pleasure and privilege to serve you.

Sincerely,

Mary G. Fritz
Assistant Deputy Speaker

P.S. Remember, I am only a phone call away - (203) 269-1169

Taking Care of Business

Revised Petroleum Tax Bill

BYK USA Inc. is a very successful Wallingford Company. Because of complications regarding taxes on petroleum related products, BYK USA Inc. was being taxed unfairly since 2005. Finally, this session bringing all the players together, I was successful in working out the problem. This will result in a saving of \$250,000 a year, and when the new plant is up and running, it possibly could mean up to a \$400,000 savings annually. Working for businesses is working for YOU!

Closing the Wallingford Dump

The funds that were pooled by Wallingford, Hamden, North Haven, Cheshire and Meriden for the eventual closing of the landfill in Wallingford were used by the Connecticut Resource Recovery Authority (CRRRA). With the passage of the General Government Implementer, the closing cost will be fully covered by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. This is significant because it protects the taxpayers of the five towns from being forced to pay additional money. Protection under the law!

Phosphorous Fund

Within the Bond Act of 2013 is a provision that three towns will receive a 50% project grant from the Clean Water Fund for phosphorous removal projects. The three towns are Wallingford, Cheshire, and Southington. These are the towns I brought together to get help from D.E.E.P. in 2012 to address the costs related to this project. I also passed another bill this year that forces D.E.E.P. to report on the interaction that takes place between these towns and this agency. Again, your money coming home!

AROUND AND ABOUT



Public School Pool Safety

Establishes state wide safety standards for public school pools. Significant among the standards is that there must be two trained swimming/safety instructors on duty for any pool activity. Safety first.



Taxes to Disappear

After June 1st 2015, taxes on all clothing and foot wear costing under \$50 will be gone.

Insurance Coverage Continued

With the publication of the 5th edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, insurance coverage for many of the autism spectrum disorders was going to end. We passed a law guaranteeing that all such persons who had been so diagnosed before the publication of this manual were to maintain their existing insurance coverage.

Highway Worker Safety

This stiffens the penalties for drivers who break the laws in these zones. Additionally, the fine is doubled for drivers who use hand-held cell phones in these zones. These violators may also be required to take driver re-training courses. Others required to take these courses would be those drivers who drive at excessive speed in these zones.



Hiring Veterans

Grants will be available for certain employers to train eligible unemployed veterans. The veterans have to have been honorably discharged, served at least 90 days or have a service related disability. We must honor those who have served us so well!

Tanning Beds

New law prohibits operators from allowing people under the age of 17 from using a tanning bed. Those who break this law will be subject to a fine of up to \$100. Protection up front!



Absentee Ballots

This change on absentee ballots will occur as a constitutional amendment on the ballot in 2014. The language recommends that any and all restrictions regarding absentee ballots be removed. Basically, if you want to vote by absentee ballot you do NOT have to declare that you are handicapped, old or out of town on Election Day. You just have to ask for the ballot!

Governor's Scholarship Program

This is a consolidated state financed aid program for state residents who are undergraduate students at in-state public and private institutions of higher education. There are four categories: 1) need and merit 2) need based 3) performance incentive pool and 4) Charter Oak grant. This is truly taking care of our own young people!



MONEY COMING HOME



Cheshire

Grants	FY 14
PILOT: State Owned Property	\$1,961,262
PILOT: Colleges & Hospitals	\$123,971
Town Aid Roads	\$404,608
Local Capital Improvement Program	\$185,343
Pequot/Mohegan Aid	\$1,978,606
Adult Education	\$24,277
School Transportation	\$185,924
Educational Cost Sharing	\$9,448,555
Municipal Revenue Sharing Account	\$692,865

Total State Aid \$15,008,942

Wallingford

Grants	FY 14
PILOT: State Owned Property	\$50,485
PILOT: Colleges & Hospitals	\$340,176
Town Aid Roads	\$543,569
Local Capital Improvement Program	\$291,753
Pequot/Mohegan Aid	\$174,855
Adult Education	\$259,864
School Transportation	\$273,601
Educational Cost Sharing	\$21,740,956
Municipal Revenue Sharing Account	\$1,832,519
Vocational Agriculture	\$726,727

Total State Aid \$26,234,505

FOR CHESHIRE

Prison Provision

Finally, I was successful in getting the bill passed which allowed Cheshire to amend its contract with the Department of Corrections. This contract was signed October 31, 1991 during the period of prison expansion in Connecticut. The contract did not allow for any amending of the existing language. Other prison communities did have this provision. Some have amended their contracts up to six times. Now, finally, Cheshire has this same ability! We are now on equal footing with all the other prison towns. Patience and persistence pays off!!



FOR WALLINGFORD

Water Safety

In a very small section of Wallingford, my constituents notified me that their wells were contaminated with T.C.E. (Trichloroethylene), which is a known carcinogen. I arranged a meeting with the staff from the potable water division of D.E.E.P., the water and sewer division, the Mayor, the Director of Public Utilities, and the local health department. Before the meeting, I reached out to the Speaker of the House, the Office of Policy and Management, and the Governor's Office to explain the situation that is seriously effecting the children and people of this neighborhood. With a great deal of support from all these people, \$225,000 was set aside as a grant-in-aid to the Town of Wallingford to bring town water to this neighborhood. Solving this problem brought great satisfaction to everyone involved.

