



State Representative

# HENRY GENGA

Public Safety

Keeping the public safe and secure in our neighborhoods and on our streets is one of the key functions of government. This session, we made several advancements towards protecting our public pathways.

IMPROVING BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

- PA 09-154 | SB 735 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09
- » Requires funding to be set-aside by the Department of Transportation
  - » Enhances bicycle and pedestrian use in our neighborhoods
  - » Increases funding to municipalities for bikeways and sidewalks with curb cuts or ramps
  - » Establishes a board to create new policies and procedures that improve the bicycling and walking environment in Connecticut

“MOVE OVER” LAW

- PA 09-121 | HB 5894 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09
- » Establishes a new CT law regarding stationary emergency vehicles on travel lanes, breakdown lanes, or highway shoulders



- » Requires a motorist approaching stationary emergency vehicles to immediately slow down
- » Requires a motorist to move over one lane from the lane of an emergency vehicle, when safe and reasonable

Reforming Health Care System

Over 750,000 Connecticut residents went without health insurance at one point during 2007 or 2008. Health care costs everyone more each year and taxpayers pay more to supplement the people who do not have it. This year, Democrats took major steps towards reforming our broken health care system.

SUSTINET PLAN

- PA 09-148 | HB 6600
- » Provides a framework for expanding high quality coverage to more residents
  - » Establishes a nine-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

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State Representative | Assistant Majority Leader

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# CAPITOL NEWS 2009

Members of the General Assembly passed a compromise state budget that successfully closed an \$8.5 billion budget deficit for the next two fiscal years. I am pleased that we were able to make a compromise where important programs for some of the most vulnerable populations in our state were protected.

East Hartford will maintain its full fixed entitlement for education funding. In previous years, there was an adjustment that was negative for East Hartford. Now there will be no adjustment, which means an additional \$484,000 this year. This is something I have been working on with my colleagues for the past year. The budget successfully protects education by funding family resource centers, priority school districts, magnet and charter schools, local education aid, Head Start and Care 4 Kids.

Even while the state’s fiscal crisis dominated much of our work, the General Assembly fought hard for the people of Connecticut from landmark health care reform legislation to bills protecting children, seniors, military families, homeowners and students.

*Henry Genga*  
Henry Genga  
Assistant Majority Leader









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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 our armed forces 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 dependents of armed forces members as well

RELIEF FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

- PA 09-163 | HB 6394 – EFFECTIVE: Upon passage
- » Expands the Military Family Relief Fund
  - » Allows immediate relatives of members not on active duty to receive benefits
  - » Provides grants to pay for essential personal or household items when in hardship

SUPPORT FOR THE FAMILIES OF WOUNDED SOLDIERS

- PA 09-70 | SB 710 – EFFECTIVE: Upon Passage
- » Expands the State Family and Medical Leave Act
  - » Permits employees to take up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave from work to care for injured family members who are military personnel

Assisting our Seniors

Improving the lives of seniors so they may be healthy, safe, and economically secure is a central role of our state government. To improve their overall quality of life, we passed several new legislative initiatives.

AFFORDABLE ELDERLY HOMECARE

- PA 09-64 | SB 814 – 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

LOCATING MISSING SENIORS

- PA 09-109 | SB 451 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09
- » Creates an emergency notification system similar to the Amber Alert, called the Silver Alert
  - » Allows law enforcement agencies to issue public alerts for missing seniors

SENIOR DISCOUNT PROGRAMS

- PA 09-53 | HB 5674 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09
- » Provides seniors greater access to senior citizen discount programs
  - » Requires businesses to disclose details of programs and eligibility requirements

PATIENTS’ RIGHTS AT A NURSING HOME

- PA 09-168 | SB 455 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09
- » Expands 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

Keeping our Children Safe & Healthy

East Hartford’s children need our protection from harms. This legislative session I worked hard with my colleagues to pass legislation to help keep our children safe.

BANNING TOXIC CHEMICALS

- PA 09-103 | HB 6572 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09
- » Bans bisphenol-A BPA, an industrial chemical with toxic properties
  - » Baby bottles and food and beverage containers will be safer for kids

PREVENTING CARDIAC ARREST IN SCHOOLS

- PA 09-94 | SB 981 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09
- » Requires each school to have an automatic external defibrillator AED
  - » Provides training to school staff for AED use and also for CPR

GREEN CLEANING PRODUCTS

- PA 09-81 | HB 6496 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09
- » Promotes use of safe green cleaning products
  - » Hazardous cleaning chemicals currently used in most schools will be replaced
  - » Requires schools to implement a green cleaning program



HEALTH INSURANCE FOR AUTISM TREATMENTS

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

*These treatments are:*

- » The diagnosis to determine if an individual has an autism spectrum disorder
- » Behavioral therapies to children 14 years old or younger including, but not limited to, applied behavior analysis and cognitive behavioral therapy
- » Prescription drugs
- » Psychiatric and psychological services
- » Physical and occupational therapy
- » Speech and language pathology services

*These results are:*

- » Higher quality of life for the individual
- » Decrease in lifetime costs of treatment
- » Connecticut has become the 12<sup>TH</sup> state to require this comprehensive coverage

PROMPT TREATMENT OF ALLERGIES IN SCHOOLS

- PA 09-155 | SB 755 – EFFECTIVE: 08.15.09
- » Permits some students with asthma or allergies to carry inhalers and epi-pens in school
  - » Allows students to self-administer with proper authorization
  - » Adds licensed athletic trainers to the list of school personnel permitted to administer medication

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
- » Corrupt money managers like Bernie Madoff

SAFEGUARDS AGAINST MORTGAGE FORECLOSURES

- PA 09-209 | SB 948 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09/10.01.09
- » Implements federal reforms
  - » Creates many new safeguards against future mortgage foreclosures to better protect homeowners
  - » Regulates the mortgage lending process
  - » Expands eligibility for state foreclosure prevention programs

Government Efficiency

Making government functions more efficient is especially important during these difficult economic times. This year we took important steps to reduce the size of government and streamline some important functions.

PROBATE COURT REFORM

- PA 09-182 | HB 6385 – EFFECTIVE: Upon Passage
- » Makes the probate court system sustainable for local caseload demands
  - » Established a commission which consolidated courts and created new districts
  - » Reduced the total number of probate courts from 117 to 54 statewide
  - » Changes the current basis of compensating probate court judges, from fees the court collects to population and workload
  - » East Hartford continues to remain its own probate court district

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Rep. Genga outside the Capitol giving a tour to a group from East Hartford High School.