



Good News for Seniors

Reducing Costs for Homecare Services

Seniors using the CT Homecare Program for Elders will soon see a reduction in their monthly costs for critical in-home services, such as meal deliveries and personal care assistance. The budget reduces the percentage seniors pay for these services from 15% to 6% -- saving the average client nearly \$100 each month.

Supporting Services for Alzheimer's Patients

Last year's budget protected the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program, which provides small grants to family members caring for people with Alzheimer's to fund personal care, home health and adult day care services. Governor Rell closed the program in 2009, but working with advocates, the legislature was able to re-open the program in May, allowing Connecticut families to receive these important services.

Protecting our Children

Athlete Concussions

Head injuries in school sports are often hard to diagnose and have turned tragic.

To avoid serious long-term injuries we enacted new protections:

- » Student athletes who sustain head injuries will need medical clearance before re-joining athletic activity
- » Athletic coaches will now be trained to recognize and respond to concussions
- » Anyone with a coach's permit issued by the State Board of Education will need to complete a course by the start of their sports season next school year
- » The state school board can revoke a permit if any requirements are not followed

Improving the Senior Driver Discount Program

New legislation encourages seniors to keep their driving skills sharp by making it easier to qualify for safe driver discounts. People age 60 and older will now be able to complete a shorter, 4-hour driving program to be eligible for a two-year discount of 5% or more on their automobile insurance.

Protecting Seniors from the Medicaid Spend-Down

New legislation will help seniors protect their assets when their spouse needs to enter a nursing home. Under current law, the spouse remaining at home must spend down half of his or her assets in order to allow the ill spouse to qualify for Medicaid coverage. This year, we increased the asset cap, so that the couple can keep assets up to \$110,000 and still qualify the ill spouse for Medicaid.

Banning Toxic Cadmium in Children's Jewelry

Cadmium is classified as a known human carcinogen by the National Toxicology Program due to health concerns. Prolonged exposure to cadmium has been shown to damage the central nervous system.

We passed legislation that:

- » Prohibits children's jewelry containing cadmium or its compounds or alloys of more than .0075% by weight from being sold, offered for sale, or distributed in Connecticut

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State Representative | Assistant Majority Leader

Linda M. Gentile

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE of the CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY



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If you need additional assistance or have questions, please contact me:

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Important phone numbers

To reach many state services, call InfoLine **211**

ConnPACE 800.423.5026

Medicare Hotline 800.633.4227

Long-Term Care 800.547.3443

Commission on Aging 860.240.5200

Medicare Advocacy 800.262.4414

Consumer Protection 800.842.2649

CT Veterans Affairs 860.616.3600

CT Elder Services 866.218.6631

Health Care Advocate 866.466.4446

Ansonia and Derby Save by Working Together

Property Taxpayers May Get Relief

Ansonia and Derby can now team-up with other towns to save money while delivering necessary services.

House Speaker Christopher G. Donovan created the blue ribbon commission on Municipal Opportunities and Regional Efficiencies (MORE). The Commission was charged with initiating a new approach to state and local government in Connecticut that would make our state more economically competitive in the short and long term.

Over the coming year, additional opportunities for cost savings will be discussed with local government officials and business leaders – all working together to encourage more cooperation between towns.

This year we worked for:

- » Cost savings by allowing towns to join the state in bulk purchasing of prescription drugs
- » Saving money on school transportation by giving money to towns that work together to provide transportation services
- » Health insurance savings by allowing two or more municipalities or boards of education to purchase employee health benefits
- » Getting local taxpayers off the hook for storing the belongings of evicted tenants while protecting tenant's rights



Saluting Our Veterans

Driver's License Renewals Extended

The driver's license of a service member on active duty outside Connecticut will remain valid beyond the expiration date. After returning to Connecticut or an honorable discharge, the service member now will have an additional 30-day period for renewal.

This new law applies if:

- » The license has not been suspended, cancelled or revoked
- » The service member was out-of-state on active duty service
- » The service member has the license and discharge or separation papers

Vietnam War Veterans Welcome Home Day

The Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day will be held March 30 of each year to commemorate the return home of the last members of the Armed Forces who served in Vietnam. Each year we can now officially recognize and thank all Vietnam Veterans for their important sacrifice and service to our country, which remains a vital part of our history.

Credit for Military Training

Armed Forces members are now eligible for credits or exemptions from state agencies or boards that issue licenses or certificates requiring professional training or schooling. Agencies will be prohibited from requiring those members who received applicable training, schooling or experience while serving in the Armed Forces to repeat any similar training or schooling required for licensure or certification.

The bill defines the "Armed Forces" as the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Air Force and reserve components, including the Connecticut National Guard and State Militia.

VA Drugs in Nursing Homes

Connecticut nursing homes now allow veterans the choice to use their VA prescription drug benefits. VA prescription drug benefits are often less expensive saving veterans and taxpayers money.



Creating Jobs

One of the best ways to pull Connecticut out of the recession is through job creation. Working with the Governor, we passed a significant new jobs bill that will help put Connecticut on the road to economic recovery.

The new job growth law creates jobs in Connecticut with:

- » Up to \$500,000 in loans and lines of credit for small businesses and nonprofits
- » Student loan reimbursement and training grants for education and careers in green technology, life sciences and health information technology
- » Personal income tax credits for investments made in new and emerging technologies
- » Sales tax exemptions for machinery, supplies, and fuel used in renewable energy industries
- » Tax credits for small businesses of up to \$200 per month per new employee
- » A Community-Technical College advisory board to assess the training needs of unemployed residents
- » Up to \$150,000 in pre-seed financing and technical services to businesses developing innovative concepts
- » Reformed environmental rules that speed up the business permitting process and maintain environmental protections
- » Changes to the state's film tax credit program that will create more film production jobs in Connecticut

State Representative

LINDA GENTILE

To receive more information on any of the following issues, e-mail, call or mail me the completed form. Make sure to give your name, address and email, and indicate which issues you're interested in.

- 2010 Major Acts
- Business
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