



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
BOBBY GIBSON

Dear Neighbor,

The 2019 legislative session was a success, and we have accomplished many of the goals set out in our Democratic agenda.

The budget passed on time with no income tax or broad-based sales tax increases. We protected tax breaks on Social Security and pension income and avoided cuts to municipal aid. This fiscally responsible budget invests in education and the middle class. It aims to protect our most vulnerable and encourages economic growth for Bloomfield, Windsor and all of Connecticut.

As a member of the Appropriations and Education committees, I was able to help maintain the same amount of funding for Bloomfield and Windsor, as in the previous budget. I was very pleased to see a bill pass requiring African-American and Latino studies be added to the public high school curriculum in 2021. Less than 10 percent of the state's public school teachers are people of color. To that end, we passed legislation focused on recruiting minority teachers. We also passed a bill in the House requiring climate change to be taught in public schools. Unfortunately, that bill did not come up for a vote in the Senate.

I appreciate hearing from you about the issues that matter. I look forward to continuing these conversations. Please do not hesitate to reach out by email, phone or social media.

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CAPITOL UPDATE 2019

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SUPPORTING OUR SENIORS

TACKLING DEMENTIA AND ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

In order to ensure the proper care for seniors, we modified continuing education requirements for physicians to include diagnosing and treating cognitive conditions, including Alzheimer's disease, dementia, delirium, related cognitive impairments and geriatric depression. (SB 827; PA 19-115)

BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR CAREGIVERS

We want to keep bad people away from our loved ones. We made it easier to do background checks to help identify potentially dangerous individuals seeking jobs that have contact with our elderly population. The Commission on Women, Children and Seniors has been charged with assembling a working group to develop strategies raising public awareness about the available information on caregivers. (SB 832; PA 19-116)

VETERANS

IN-STATE TUITION FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

Connecticut will grant in-state tuition, to spouses and children of service members stationed in the state who may get orders to move elsewhere. Allowing in-state tuition to stay with the student helps Connecticut support our military and their families.

This legislation will:

- Allow tuition reduction to follow the student
- Make education more accessible to military families (HB 7248; PA 19-172)

GETTING VETERANS THE HELP THEY NEED

Veterans should not get lost in bureaucracy when they reach out to town hall to explore benefits offered for veterans.

This legislation will:

- Create a contact person to help veterans access resources
- Help local communities connect with their veterans (HB 7064; PA 19-148)

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PAID FAMILY LEAVE

GIVING WORKING FAMILIES THE SUPPORT THEY DESERVE

In the event of a medical emergency, Paid Family and Medical Leave allows workers to care for themselves or a loved one without having to face the threat of financial ruin. By providing up to 12 weeks of Family and Medical Leave Insurance per year, equaling up to 95% of an employee's weekly paycheck, we will provide financial protection to those who find themselves in an unanticipated medical emergency. This will help pregnant women on medically-ordered bedrest, families with an infirm or aging parent, and new parents who want to bond with an infant. The program is funded by employee contributions. If you or your family has an emergency, there will now be financial peace-of-mind. (SB 1; PA 19-25)



EDUCATION

AFRICAN-AMERICAN, BLACK, PUERTO RICAN AND LATINO STUDIES

We are expanding social studies to include an important part of our shared culture: African-American, Black, and Puerto Rican and Latino history. Through the teaching of this curricula, we all become more aware of both the suffering and accomplishments of our fellow Americans. It helps all students to have a fuller picture of the challenges and resilience of our African-American and Latino populations. This also gives students of color the opportunity to learn more about their history and the significant contributions their cultures have made to Connecticut and the rest of the country. (HB 7082; PA 19-12)

MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

It is important for the minority students in our state to have more teachers who not only look like them, but understand the challenges they face in our society, so we passed legislation which creates an annual hiring goal of 250 new minority teachers and administrators across the state. (SB 1022; PA 19-74)

UPDATING TEACHER TRAINING STANDARDS

We added culturally pedagogy and practices to teacher professional development and in service training. This will help prepare our teachers to better connect with students of diverse backgrounds. (SB 1020; PA 19-100)

PROTECTING OUR PLANET

GREEN JOBS AND NET METERING

Seeking to use innovative ideas to help us address our environmental and energy challenges, we created a Green Jobs Career Ladder website for jobs in the green technology industry, including a listing of careers and the jobs available in the state.

We encouraged the construction of high performance green state buildings that have reduced emissions and conservative water resource management. We hope to create new and viable career opportunities, benefit the environment, and help protect our planet for generations to come.

This legislation will:

- Extend renewable energy programs, including traditional net metering and the Green Bank's renewable solar investment program
- Expand virtual net metering cap which will reduce energy costs for municipalities
- Require DOT to put together a land inventory on which lands are suitable for Class I energy resources; for example, solar energy on lands adjacent to state highways (HB 5002; PA 19-35)

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