

THE BUDGET: MAKING CT WORK FOR EVERYONE

How does debt-free community college sound? How about no income tax on your Social Security or pension? Our biennial budget includes these things and was delivered on time, balanced, under the constitutional spending cap, and protects taxpayers into the future. I successfully pushed back on Governor Lamont's proposed cuts to education and increased taxes on seniors. The budget provides fiscal stability with no income tax increases, sales tax rate increases, and without cuts to municipal aid. We are protecting our most vulnerable, investing in the middle class, and encouraging economic growth for all of Connecticut.

Here are some highlights:

- Increases Danbury's education funding
- Protects the Medicare Savings Program, and increases funding for Meals on Wheels
- Protects the Care4Kids program
- Re-opens highway rest stops like Danbury's
- Repeals the Business Entity Tax
- Keeps the "Passport to the Parks" fund
- Increases access to breast cancer screenings (PA 19-117)

DANBURY STATE AID - FY 2020	
EDUCATION COST SHARING	\$35,015,511
ADULT EDUCATION	\$243,184
PILOT: STATE OWNED PROPERTY	\$1,597,717
PILOT: COLLEGE & HOSPITAL	\$1,401,114
PEQUOT/MOHEGAN FUND	\$678,398
MUNICIPAL STABILIZATION GRANT	\$1,218,855
TOTAL ESTIMATED AID TO DANBURY	\$40,154,779
Without this state aid, your local property tax rate would increase 3.8 mills or 13.8%	



Bob celebrating the re-opening of the Danbury rest stop



STATE REPRESENTATIVE BOB GODFREY

PROUDLY SERVING THE 110TH DISTRICT | DANBURY

CAPITOL UPDATE 2019

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Dear neighbor,

This year's regular session of the Connecticut General Assembly was better than many in recent years. As a champion of working families, like yours and mine, I've gotten a lot of satisfaction out of the successes accomplished on your behalf. This Capitol Report highlights a number of the big gains made for you. You'll get a separate report on education. I'd like to make a couple of points about our state that I saw in a recent article by Sean Goldrick (a retired investment professional in Greenwich) that makes me more optimistic.

Jobs? In the last 8 years, our private sector gained over 86,000 new jobs. It's the government sector that decreased; state government alone shed 12,000 jobs in the same time.

Spending? According to North Star Policy Institute, Connecticut's ratio of total government expenditures to state GDP ranks second lowest of the 50 states. Only New Hampshire spends less on government relative to GDP than Connecticut. Business taxes? According to Ernst & Young's 2019 study of state corporate tax rates for the Council on State Taxation (COST), Connecticut's total effective business tax rate ranks the fourth lowest of the 50 states. And Connecticut's total corporate tax revenues comprise the smallest percentage of state tax revenues of any state, by far.

Rich leaving the state? Since 2008, the number of billionaires has risen from 11 to 17, and the number of millionaires is up 20%.

There's much more to be done. I'm unsatisfied with the approaches to our pension liabilities. I worry there may be a recession. This is why I've boosted our rainy day fund. Cities like Danbury are still being short-changed by suburban interests. I will continue to fight against these trends in the 2020 legislative session and I encourage you to reach out to me with your questions and concerns.

Bob

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PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Would a medical emergency in your family mean deciding between caring for them or the money from your job? What a horrible choice. But our new Paid Family and Medical Leave allows workers like you to care for themselves or a loved one without having to face financial ruin. It provides up to 12 weeks of Family and Medical Leave Insurance per year, equaling up to 95% of your weekly paycheck, and financial protection to you. Coverage includes pregnant women on medically-ordered bedrest, families with an infirm or aging parent, and parents who care for a new baby. The program is funded by employee contributions. If you or your family has an emergency, there will now be financial peace-of-mind. (PA 19-25)

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

No one who works full time should live in poverty. That's why I proudly voted to raise the minimum wage to \$15.00 an hour. This legislation will help over 300,000 Connecticut workers who make less than \$15.00 an hour. The wage will increase on October 1 to \$11.00 an hour, followed by incremental increases over the next 4½ years until \$15.00 is reached in 2023. It will also:

- Combat pay disparities between races and genders
- Stimulate our economy
- Index future minimum wage increases (PA 19-4)



Bob with Speaker Aresimowicz outlining the Democratic agenda.



Bob introducing the 2019 YMCA Youth Governor, Dawson Trotman.

PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

We expanded health insurance coverage to protect Connecticut residents against any changes to federal law that would deny coverage for pre-existing conditions. Prior to the Affordable Care Act, 50 million people with pre-existing or chronic conditions were refused health insurance - forcing hospital emergency rooms and Medicaid to absorb the costs. The result was higher prices for everyone. This legislation will save lives and money and assure patients that they will receive treatment despite pre-existing conditions and prohibit some short-term health insurance plans from containing a pre-existing condition provision. (PA 19-134)



Bob with Rep. Gucker celebrating the life of Marion Anderson during the Capitol's annual "Danbury Day."

SUPPORTING OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

We expect professional caregivers to provide a safe place for seniors, by expanding access to criminal background checks to help identify potentially dangerous people seeking jobs with the elderly. We're developing new strategies to raise awareness about available information on caregivers. We changed continuing education requirements to include diagnosing and treating conditions like Alzheimer's disease, dementia, delirium, and depression. We're requiring nursing homes to post daily the number of nurses and nurse's aides providing direct care and for the state to take disciplinary action when nursing homes fail to safely staff 1.9 nurses per resident per day. And we are protecting from retaliation residents and employees of nursing homes who file a complaint or testify in an administrative proceeding against a home. And this year's budget avoids a costly and disruptive nursing home strike. (PA 19-115, PA 19-116, PA 19-117, PA 19-89)



Bob speaking to reporter Mark Davis outside the House chamber.

GUN SAFETY IN OUR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

I have championed common sense gun responsibility laws for over 30 years. I'm confident the changes we passed this year will further protect us.

- "Ethan's Law," named for Ethan Song, who tragically lost his life from an improperly stored gun, requires safe storage of all firearms, loaded and unloaded, in a home with children under 18.
- Gun thefts from cars are, sad to say, increasing. Having an unsecured gun in plain sight increases risk of theft, gun injuries, and death. A new law requires gun owners who keep a firearm in their car to store them in the locked trunk, a locked glove box, or a locked safe.
- Ghost guns are homemade weapons with no serial numbers and which circumvent background checks. Seeking to protect people from gun violence, we banned any gun without a serial number, building a plastic gun that isn't detectable by a metal detector, or having an unfinished firearm frame without a serial number. We closed legal loopholes allowing unregulated guns and access to guns through the internet, mail order, or retail locations. (PA 19-5, 19-6, & 19-7)



Bob at the swearing-in of Veterans' Commissioner Tom Saadi with Governor Lamont, Ms. Theresa Taylor, and Rep. Arconti.