

STATE AID TO STRATFORD

STRATFORD BUDGET SUMMARY	2020 STATE AID	2021 STATE AID
Education Cost Sharing (ECS)	23,024,429	24,161,591
PILOT	213,514	213,514
Adult Education	121,477	121,477
Mashantucket Pequot & Mohegan Fund Grant	30,567	30,567
TOTAL IN BUDGET	23,389,987	24,527,149

STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH P. GRESKO

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2019 legislative session concluded with a budget passed on time, with no income or broad-based sales tax rate increases or cuts in aid for Stratford. It is not only balanced, but protects taxpayers into the future. We are investing in education, while providing fiscal stability and encouraging economic growth for Connecticut.

As Vice Chair of the Environment Committee and a member of the Energy and Technology Committee, I co-sponsored legislation that expanded the state's procurement of off-shore wind power, established a State Water Plan, allowed our state farmers to tap into the very lucrative hemp manufacturing market and phased in a ban on single use plastic bags.

We passed legislation that expands the property tax exemption for veterans, increases the recruitment and retention of minority teachers and strengthens safeguards for children in homes with firearms through Ethan's Law. We also took common sense steps to increase gun safety by regulating "ghost guns" purchased over the internet or manufactured at home.

As always, please reach out to my office if I can be of service to you or your family.

Sincerely,



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JOSEPH P. GRESKO

PROUDLY SERVING STRATFORD



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STATE REPRESENTATIVE
JOSEPH P. GRESKO
PROUDLY SERVING STRATFORD



THE STATE BUDGET

How does, “no increase in income tax” sound? How about, “no income tax on Social Security or pension income?”

Our biennial budget was delivered on time, under the constitutional spending cap and doesn’t include cuts in aid to Stratford. We are protecting our most vulnerable citizens, investing in the middle class, and encouraging economic growth for all of Connecticut. (PA 19-117)

The 2019-2020 Budget:

- Maintains the tax exemptions for Social Security income and the phase-in of a tax exemption on pension income to make CT more affordable to seniors
- Establishes long-term structural reforms to shore up the teachers’ pension fund
- Anticipates almost \$3 billion in our rainy day fund by the end of the biennium - a historically high amount
- Establishes a tax credit to craft beer breweries (Two Roads, Fairfield Craft Ales, Athletic Brewing)
- Protects the Medicare Savings Program and increases funding for Meals on Wheels
- Establishes the Partnership for Connecticut, providing financial assistance to strengthen public education in Connecticut
- Avoids a costly and disruptive nursing home strike
- Keeps the “Passport to the Parks” funded
- Increases education funding
- Protects the Care4Kids program
- Repeals the Business Entity Tax starting next year
- Increases access to health care

PAID FAMILY LEAVE

The legislature created a Paid Family and Medical Leave system to allow workers to care for themselves or a loved one without having to face the threat of financial ruin. The program will provide replacement wages so that patients and caregivers can take time off and make ends meet. (PA 19-25)

PRE-EXISTING INSURANCE COVERAGE

We expanded health insurance coverage for preexisting conditions. This protects Connecticut residents against any changes to federal law. Prior to the Affordable Care Act, if someone had a preexisting or chronic condition, insurance companies could refuse to insure them. As a result, hospital emergency rooms and Medicaid were forced to absorb these costs, resulting in higher prices for everyone. (PA 19-134)

TOBACCO 21

Research shows if you haven’t started smoking by 21, you likely never will. We made the sale of cigarettes, e-cigarettes and vape products illegal for those under 21. E-cigarette use, also known as “vaping,” is on the rise among middle and high school students. This law seeks to keep nicotine out of the hands of minors. (PA 19-13)

ETHAN’S LAW

Ethan’s Law, named after Ethan Song who tragically lost his life due to an improperly stored gun, requires the safe storage of all firearms in a home with children under 18. (PA 19-5)

BANNING GHOST GUNS

Seeking to protect people from gun violence, we made it illegal to build a gun without a serial number, build a plastic gun that isn’t detectable by a metal detector, or have an unfinished firearm frame without a serial number.

This legislation will:

- Close loopholes in current law that allows unregulated guns to be used by violent people
- Reduce accessibility to guns through the internet, mail order or retail locations. (PA 19-6)

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. (PA 19-172)

GREEN JOBS INITIATIVE

Green jobs and net metering are good for the planet and our economy. We passed new legislation that will:

- Create a Green Jobs Career ladder website with information on jobs available in Connecticut in the green technology industry.
- Extend renewable energy programs, including traditional net metering and the Green Bank’s renewable solar investment program.
- Expand the virtual net metering cap to reduce municipal energy costs.
- Require DOT to develop a land inventory on which lands are suitable for Class I energy resources such as putting solar panels on lands adjacent to state highways. (PA 19-35)

OFFSHORE WIND

We have cleared the path for offshore wind energy generation to help achieve Connecticut’s renewable energy goals. We are looking at a positive economic impact and the creation of good-paying jobs, as well as economic development in Bridgeport and New London. Connecticut will procure up to 2,000 megawatts of offshore wind power helping achieve our energy consumption goal of 40% renewable energy by 2030. It also includes provisions to protect and minimize impacts on the environment and fisheries. (PA 19-71)

PROTECTING OUR WATER

A major accomplishment of the 2019 Legislation Session was passing the State Water Plan, which defines our water supply as a “public trust” to ensure clean drinking water is accessible for all. (HJ 171)

This law:

- Protects our water supply as a “public trust”
- Ensures clean drinking water is available, and that water resource are protected for commercial, agricultural, and recreation activities

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