

THE BUDGET

TAX RELIEF FOR WORKING FAMILIES

We worked to adopt a budget that invests in the critical services that are important to working families and that sets us on a path that encourages economic growth. At the same time, this budget made significant cuts to the current services budget. We acted to increase revenue to achieve a balanced solution by broadening the sales tax and asking giant corporations to chip in a little more.

PILOT REFORM BENEFITS MANSFIELD

Mansfield will receive an additional \$3,386,575 in state funding for Fiscal Year 2017 mainly from the state's Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program, reformed under this budget. These reforms prioritize towns which host more tax-exempt property, like Mansfield which hosts the University of Connecticut. This large increase in state funding for our town will help hold down our property taxes, repair our roads and fund our schools.

PA 15-244

UNEMPLOYMENT HITS 7-YEAR LOW

Connecticut's unemployment numbers are down and our jobs numbers are going up! This past July, Connecticut's unemployment rate dropped to 5.4%, its lowest rate since May 2008. This drop is occurring at the same time our labor force is growing - over the past 3 years, we have seen 90,00 more people employed in Connecticut. These are positive trends for our state's economy.

While these are good signs for the overall health of our economy, not everyone who wants to work has found a job. Here are some great local and statewide resources that can assist you in you job search:

CT Workforce Alliance
www.workforcealliance.biz

CT Department of Labor
www.ctdol.state.ct.us

Office for Veterans Workforce Development
www.ctdol.state.ct.us/veterans/

Connecticut Jobs
connecticut.us.jobs

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Gregg Haddad

PROUDLY SERVING THE 54TH HOUSE DISTRICT | MANSFIELD

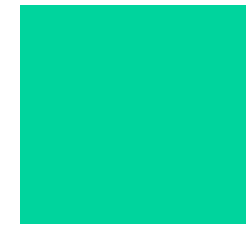


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UPDATES TO OUR EDUCATION LAWS

Some significant improvements this year include allowing national exam results (like ACT and SAT scores) to count toward high school graduation requirements, and greater public transparency for charter schools. Finally, local school boards are given greater flexibility when meeting state-imposed minimum budget standards and can regionalize in order to cut costs.

PA 15-215, PA 15 - 99



Rep. Haddad with Mansfield resident and E.O. Smith student, Aden Abbatemarco, testifying on a bill to ban smoking in cars with children

PROTECTING THE ELDERLY

To protect seniors from potential abuse, we expanded the definition of neglect to include a situation in which a caretaker fails to arrange for the necessary services to keep an elderly person healthy. The Department of Social Services is now required to notify a nursing home or residential care home resident's designee of suspected abuse or neglect within 24 hours.

PA 15-233

PAY EQUITY AND FAIRNESS

To reduce wage inequality and increase transparency, we provided protections for employees who wish to discuss their wages with fellow employees. Employers are now prohibited from barring an employee from discussing his/her wage with another employee and are also prohibited from requiring that an employee sign a document banning them from doing so.

PA 15-196



Rep. Haddad at the Capitol with exchange students from several African countries who were hosted at UConn

ENVIRONMENT & AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION

We banned the import or sale of products containing microbeads. Some cosmetics products such as facial scrubs utilize microbeads - small plastic components - that are not biodegradable and pollute the environment. The legislature also supported farmers by providing financial assistance to help them with farmland restoration and farm management plans.

Special Session PA 15-5

HELP FOR OUR VETERANS

The legislature continued to recognize the important sacrifices that veterans have made for our country. Now, military veterans' retirement pay will be 100% exempt from the state income tax. Additionally, we established the Women Veterans' Program to help better connect female veterans to services, and the Veterans to Agriculture Program to give tax credits to vets working in agricultural production.

PA 15-8, PA 15-117, PA 15-244



Rep. Haddad with Mansfield Middle School students who participated in the essay contest he sponsors for eighth graders

BIG NEWS IN COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

STUDENT LOAN BILL OF RIGHTS

Connecticut became the first state in the nation to create a Student Loan Bill of Rights, which establishes an Office of the Student Loan Ombudsman to regulate student loan servicers, compile data on borrower complaints and help student borrowers and their parents navigate the loan process.

PA 15-162

SIGNIFICANT STUDENT LOAN RATE CUT

Under pressure from the legislature, the CT Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority has announced that it will offer its lowest fixed interest rate yet at 4.95%, down from its current rate of 6.75%.

PA 15-200

OPEN-SOURCE TEXTBOOKS

The legislature voted in unanimous support of a bill which I co-authored to help lower the high cost of college textbooks. The new law encourages greater use of open-source textbooks which are made available for free on the Internet to students, faculty, and the public.

SA 15-18



Rep. Haddad speaking with student inventors at the Connecticut Invention Convention's Day at the Capitol

FAIR TREATMENT FOR JUVENILES

To ensure that the criminal justice system does not treat children unfairly, criminal courts will now consider evidence showing the difference between juvenile and adult brain development when sentencing for certain felonies committed by those under the age of 18. Juveniles serving sentences of more than 10 years will also have a parole hearing after serving a portion of their sentence. We also increased the age when juveniles are automatically transferred to adult court from age 14 to age 15.

PA 15-84