

REGULATING SOLAR FARMS

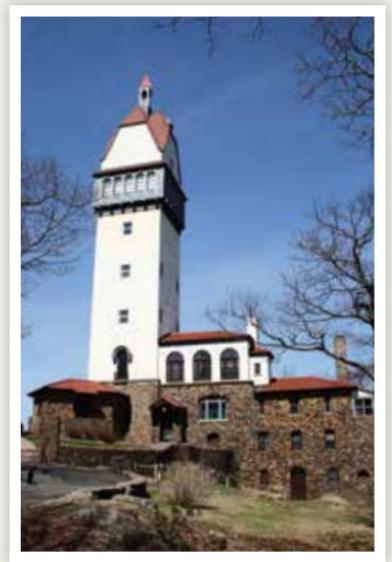
On the last night of session, we passed Public Act 17-218 concerning the installation of solar facilities on open space and farmland. This law amends the Siting Council process to require the DEEP to consider the environmental impact of siting energy generation facilities on farmland, forests, brownfields and landfills.

The bill protects our open spaces by requiring special consideration of how the siting of these facilities will impact our environment and the character of our farmland and forests. It also requires the state to document significant impacts to agriculture when rendering decisions. The bill balances the need to protect farms and forests, farm and forestland owners, their neighbors and the state's interest in promoting clean renewable energy.

As you may know, there is a current proposed solar farm project for Simsbury--filed by Deepwater Wind--to build a 289-acre solar farm along County and Hoskins roads on the property of a former tobacco farm. Because the company filed for a declaratory ruling with the Connecticut Siting Council to construct a facility on June 29, just two days before the effective date of the legislation, July 1, 2017, it is unclear if the new criteria would apply to the proposal. Under the existing law, however, the Siting Council must still give consideration to other state environmental quality laws and municipal regulations including DEEP air and water quality standards and local zoning regulations.

I am hopeful that given the spirit of the newly passed law and recent recommendations from the Council on Environmental Quality with respect to building solar farms on open space and farmland, that the Siting Council will address all the potential environmental and health concerns of citizens.

Moving forward, I will do everything that I can to ensure that there is an open and transparent process and that the town and all citizens are given a chance to be heard so that a fair decision can be made in a way that honors the character and rural nature of our community.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JOHN HAMPTON

PROUDLY SERVING THE 16TH DISTRICT, SIMSBURY

CAPITOL UPDATE 2017



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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The state legislature passed a state budget with a 126 to 23 vote in the House and a 33 to 3 vote in the Senate.

While I understood the immediate need to have a state budget to fund vital programs for our towns and social service agencies and to avoid some of the drastic cuts contained in the governor's contingency plan, I decided to vote against the spending plan.

I believe that this budget did not contain enough of the structural spending changes that were necessary to prevent the ongoing yearly budget deficits that have forced us to make cuts to education funding for towns and those who can least afford it, such as the seniors and those with disabilities, for which I have been a strong advocate.

We also need more predictability and stability in our state budget in order to retain and attract businesses, create jobs and maintain our state's talent base of young people graduating from our colleges.

I was encouraged by the bipartisan support for the budget, and I am hopeful that this will serve as a platform for the future cooperation that will be needed to continue to get Connecticut's fiscal house back in order. We have more work to do.

I look forward to being a part of those efforts and will continue to make it my top priority.

Sincerely,



I take the responsibility that the people of Simsbury have placed in me very seriously. I am proud to report that I received a 100 percent voting record this session. This means that for 417 out of 417 floor votes in the House of Representatives, I was there doing my job representing the people of Simsbury.

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THE 16TH DISTRICT, SIMSBURY



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JOHN HAMPTON

ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER
CO-CHAIR, INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED CAUCUS
RANKING MEMBER, INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE
AGING COMMITTEE
COMMERCE COMMITTEE
PROUDLY SERVING THE 16TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT, SIMSBURY

HONORING OUR VETERANS This year, we passed a bill that allows municipalities to provide a property tax exemption to a parent or surviving spouse of a service member killed in action while performing active military duty. A municipality may exempt up to \$20,000 or 10 percent of the property's assessed value.



Rep. Hampton meets with Secretary of the State Denise Merrill to honor Claudette Hagan of Simsbury who recently became a U.S. citizen.

ADVOCATING FOR SENIORS

SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME TAX EXEMPTION: We passed a provision that will exempt social security and pensions from the state income tax starting in 2019. This will help provide much needed tax relief to those who need it most and allow them to keep more of their own money.

MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAM: The state Department of Social Services recently announced it will delay changes to the Medicare Savings Program (MSP) and the scheduled income eligibility reductions that were set to begin January 1. DSS has put the plan on hold for at least two months in response to concerns raised by those who qualify for the program. I have been concerned about these changes since the Governor proposed them last winter and I am hopeful this will allow the legislature the time we need to reach a resolution to reduce the impact on those who rely on this program. If you or a loved one is potentially affected by the lower income eligibility levels, please call the CHOICES program at 800-994-8422 for health insurance assistance.

FOSTERING A BETTER BUSINESS CLIMATE

Legislation passed to help foster business expansion and job growth including:

- Expansion of a tax credit for investors to support small businesses and provide access to business mentors;
- Creation of a business information hotline to provide prospective small business owners with one-stop advice, education and network resources;
- Creation of a new Workforce Training Authority to provide business and workers with access to customized training programs that link to hiring and coordinated services.



Rep. Hampton is joined by Rina Patel of Dyno Nobel Inc. as well as Eric Gjede and Paul Pescatello of CBIA on a business tour of Dyno Nobel, Inc. in Simsbury.

EXPANDING PROTECTIONS FOR WOMEN

I co-sponsored legislation to protect women in the workplace including Public Act 17-118 which strengthens protections for pregnant and nursing women from discrimination at work.

IMPLEMENTING A STATE SPENDING & BONDING CAP

I was encouraged by legislation to strengthen the state bonding cap based on a bill I introduced. A cap of \$1.9 billion on state bonding will also reduce bond spending and is expected to save nearly \$30 million in debt service payments next fiscal year. In addition, legislation to strengthen the state spending cap will require funding for pensions, distressed municipalities and money used to receive federal matching grants to all fall under the cap over time. However, I believe more structural reforms are needed to address ongoing state budget deficits.

SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

As Co-Chair of the Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Caucus, I am proud to advocate for issues individuals with disabilities face. Legislation passed includes the creation of a non-profit called Disability Rights Connecticut, Inc. to serve as a protection and advocacy system for people with disabilities. This bill protects the intellectually disabled by allowing the Department of Developmental Services to investigate reports of abuse or neglect of individuals on the autism spectrum by the Department of Social Services. The organization is also required to send an annual report to the governor regarding its services, operations and recommendations.



Rep. Hampton meets with clients of HARC as a part of their legislative advocacy on behalf of those with disabilities on Have a HARC Day.

PROTECTING OUR STATE'S WATER RESOURCES

I was proud to host the first statewide public meeting on the draft State Water Plan in Simsbury last September. Based on legislation I introduced, the state will now have its first plan for management and protection of our precious natural resources. The final draft will be sent to the legislature on January 1, 2018 and the current draft is available at www.ct.gov/water.



Rep. Hampton is joined by John Betkoski of PURA, Lori Mathieu of DPH and Betsey Wingfield of DEEP at a State Water Plan informational meeting held in Simsbury.

FIGHTING OPIOID ADDICTION

We passed legislation to help combat drug abuse and addiction by reducing the maximum opioid prescription for minors from 7 to 5 days, require insurance coverage for necessary detox treatment and ease restrictions on destroying unused medications. I was proud to host a community forum in Simsbury on the issue with the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

STANDING UP FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS AND TEACHERS

FOOD ALLERGIES: A law passed based on legislation I had introduced on behalf of a Simsbury family concerned about the lack of allergy management plans on school buses. It requires the state to develop a model safety protocol to assist school bus personnel when a student experiences a food allergy emergency and allows school bus personnel to administer medication to students.

EDUCATION MANDATE RELIEF: Legislation passed eliminates duplicate training for staff, expands the type of alternative education for expelled students and shortens the employer lookback period for new hires. It also requires the state Department of Education to survey districts to recommend a common, digital way of storing and sharing education records.

STUDENTS WITH DYSLLEXIA: This law better prepares our teachers for addressing dyslexia by requiring special education teachers to receive training in reading, language diagnosis and remediation.



Rep. Hampton along with volunteers for Simsbury Clean Up Day held on Earth Day April 22. "Simsbury Proud!"