

## BUDGET REFORMS

### PROHIBITING MID-YEAR CUTS TO EDUCATION AID

In the past few years, the Governor has made mid-year cuts to municipal aid, including to the Education Cost Sharing Grant for Simsbury, which is the state's primary grant for local school funding. In order to offer our town greater predictability and more certainty when budgets are adopted, the legislature approved a measure that would prohibit the Governor from making mid-year cuts to these vital education dollars. Although the Governor vetoed this bill the legislature is considering an override.

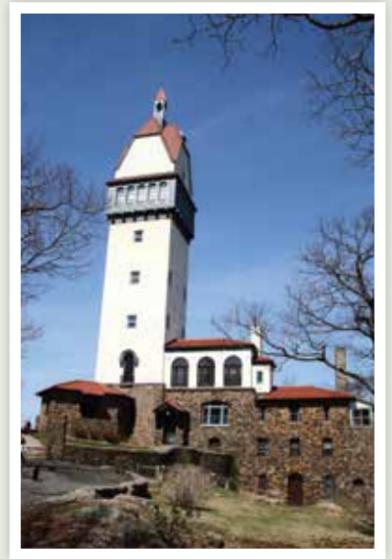
### GIVING TOWNS MORE FLEXIBILITY FOR BUDGET ADOPTION DATES

This bill allows cities and towns, with a two-thirds vote of their legislative body to modify their municipal charters to change the date by which they must adopt a budget. Currently many towns are required to adopt a budget before the end of the legislative session, when the state typically adopts its budget. This will allow municipalities to better plan their next fiscal year because they will be able to adopt a budget later in the year, when they have more certainty about their state grants.

## PROTECTING CONSUMERS

In response to multiple recent data breaches at companies like Equifax, I worked with my colleagues to pass legislation to protect the consumer. Companies can no longer charge a fee for placing or removing a security freeze on a credit report and consumers will now get two free years of credit monitoring after a data breach.

Reverse mortgage lending has become a predatory practice. Lenders often prey on the vulnerabilities of those facing tough financial burdens. Connecticut now requires counseling for those considering a reverse mortgage so a homeowner will have all of the information, including the risks, prior to entering this type of arrangement.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# JOHN HAMPTON

SIMSBURY'S STATE REPRESENTATIVE - 16TH DISTRICT

## CAPITOL UPDATE 2018



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Dear Friends,

This year's legislative session has concluded with the passage of new legislation that will shape our state for years to come. As always, my major focus remains fiscal responsibility and this session we were able to pass a bipartisan budget that funds transportation infrastructure, restores cuts to education and restores funding for the Medicare Savings Program – all without raising taxes.

We worked on policies that support small businesses, workforce development and making our state a place where we can proudly raise our families. I am committed to fighting for you to build a bright future for Simsbury and the State of Connecticut.

I hope that you find this newsletter helpful and informative. Please don't hesitate to reach out to my office if I can be of service to you and your family. It is an honor and privilege to represent you in the Connecticut General Assembly. Thank you.

Sincerely,

- No income, sales or other state tax increases.
- Increases State Aid for Education Aid for Simsbury over 2018 levels.
- Restores funding to the Medicare Savings Program so that no one will lose benefits.
- Restores partial funding to the Energy Efficiency Fund and Developmental Services.
- Honors our commitment to retired teachers by fully funding the state portion of the retired teachers health account
- Maintains reserves in the "Rainy Day" Fund at the highest level in over a decade (over \$1 billion for the biennium).

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**STANDING UP FOR VETERANS AND THE MILITARY**

When members of the armed forces receive orders to be stationed in Connecticut, the shift in location can be difficult for their families. If a military member has a spouse who is licensed to teach in another state, it is not always easy for them to start over in the education system. To address this issue, we created the "military spouse teacher permit" that offers a smooth transition for active military spouses to work as teachers in our state.



*Rep. Hampton on a tour of the Connecticut National Guard*

**CARING FOR SENIORS**

To ensure continuation of Connecticut's top performance in senior care, the state has improved the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman so it will better conform with the federal authority of the Older Americans Act. This will help Connecticut receive the maximum amount of funding from the federal government. A task force will also be formed to resolve transportation concerns voiced by veterans, senior citizens and those with disabilities.

**REDUCING PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS**

Recognizing that prescription drug prices are the number one driver of rising healthcare costs, we passed legislation to hold pharmaceutical companies accountable by increasing transparency and requiring them to explain large price increases for drugs that have a substantial cost to the state. Additionally, insurance companies must now submit information about which drugs are most frequently prescribed and which are provided at the greatest cost. By collecting more data and holding drug companies accountable, we can get closer to lowering drug costs for Connecticut residents.

**SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS**

In an effort to provide tax relief, we provided small business with exemptions on equipment worth up to \$250 that has been owned by the business for more than 10 years. We have also taken steps to encourage students to consider careers in manufacturing. We are working to develop mobile manufacturing training labs that will visit middle and high schools to educate students about advanced manufacturing.



*Rep. Hampton presents Debbie Necker, owner of Necker's Toyland, a legislative citation for their 70 years of business.*

**ADDRESSING PAY EQUITY AND WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE**

Women continue to earn less than men. This inequity is perpetuated by the practice of asking for salary history during the hiring process, ensuring that women who were underpaid at their first job continue to be underpaid. This session, I supported legislation that strengthens our pay equity laws by preventing employers from asking about wage history.

The Affordable Care Act contains ten essential health benefits that all Americans deserve to have covered in their health insurance plans. These include maternity and newborn care, prescription drugs, mental health services, and chronic disease management. As Congress and the President attempted to dismantle this program, we passed legislation safeguarding these benefits to ensure that no matter what happens in Washington, Connecticut policies must still cover these basic health services.

**PROTECTING STUDENTS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES**

Through a bipartisan effort, the legislature enacted a new law implementing sweeping policies that protect students with life-threatening food allergies. The final law was based on legislation I, along with a Simsbury parent, introduced to the House of Representatives. Under the measure, students will be authorized to carry and administer their life-saving medications; bus drivers, under the newly expanded protections of the "Good Samaritan" law, will be trained in how to recognize and treat life-threatening allergic reactions; and the State Department of Education will update guidelines and curriculum standards across the board.



*Rep. Hampton meets with St. Mary's School on their field trip to the State Capitol*

**FIGHTING OPIOID ADDICTION**

We passed legislation to aid the ongoing fight against opioid abuse. The legislature approved a number of initiatives aimed at curbing use and improving our state and local responses. The new law prohibits prescribers from writing prescriptions for immediate family members and promotes increased use of overdose-reversing treatments like Narcan. Over 60,000 of our residents sought treatment for substance abuse in 2016 alone. One of our challenges is providing adequate treatment and recovery services. To help address this, we set up a system where sober homes can register with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services so families will be able to check if a sober home meets Connecticut standards. Under this legislation, sober homes must have Narcan onsite and residents must be trained in its use. It also establishes certain marketing and advertising restrictions that keep the consumer's best interests in mind.



*Rep. Hampton is joined by Austin Serio of Simsbury and his father to testify at a public hearing on Opioids Legislation.*

**DEFENDING THE ENVIRONMENT**

As a means of protecting future generations, current law requires the state, before 2050, to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% from its 2001 levels. In an effort to speed our progress, we doubled down with legislation mandating GHG emissions fall by 45% by 2030. Under this legislation, the Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection must work with electric companies to develop a long-term plan for lowering the cost of electricity while meeting this new goal. In addition, we overhauled a number of our energy programs. A few highlights:

- Increased our state targets for use of renewable energy over 10 years;
- Expanded towns' ability to use renewables;
- Better protected energy efficiency funding; and
- Restored \$10 million to help homeowners make efficiency upgrades.



*Rep. Hampton hosts his annual Clean-Up Day along with local volunteers on Earth Day. "Simsbury Proud!"*