



Representatives Hennessy and Flexer discuss a bill in the Legislative Office Building.

Senior News

ConnPACE Eligibility If you are a Connecticut resident age 65 or older, or with a disability age 18 or older, and you are NOT eligible for Medicare, you may qualify for ConnPACE.

Home Care for Elders Despite an earlier proposal to raise the program cost-sharing from 6 to 15 percent for people in the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders, the Legislature successfully set a lower rate of 7 percent.

Money Follows the Person is expanded under the state budget, allowing more nursing home residents to transition back home. This program provides Medicaid funds for home care, which benefits families and saves money.

Nursing Home Grievance Committees will be established at each facility to ensure residents' concerns are resolved in a timely manner. Two nursing home employees and one elected resident will comprise the committee.

Grandparents' Rights will be the subject of a study aimed at enhancing their ability to seek visitation rights. A task force will report its recommendations to the legislature by February 1, 2012.

Helping with Grocery Bills The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (the Food Stamp program) has grown, making it easier for seniors to qualify and better afford their groceries. A household of two can earn up to \$2,248 monthly and still qualify for assistance. More information is available at: 800.742.6906

Our Energy Future

We helped lower energy costs and your electric rates while moving the state toward clean and efficient energy. By creating the new Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), we now have a single state agency focused on energy issues. The bill seeks to help create industries, jobs and businesses necessary to support a clean energy economy for the future.

www.housedems.ct.gov/Hennessy

State Representative | Assistant Majority Leader

Jack Hennessy

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State Representative

JACK HENNESSY

Proudly Serving Bridgeport | 127th District



Dear Neighbor,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve and represent you in Hartford. We are in the midst of incredibly challenging times that require our state government to work to achieve a bright future. We have a governor who is forging bold initiatives. The legislature is working with the governor to create an attractive environment for business and new industries to come to Connecticut. Bridgeport's infrastructure provides the best opportunities for new manufacturing in Connecticut. I will continue to advocate to bring jobs to Bridgeport, to clean-up the brownfields, and to expand our grand list.

We created a balanced budget without accounting tricks or borrowing. The budget protects public services that we expect from the state of Connecticut. To protect the middle class, we restored a portion (\$300) of the property tax credit proposed for elimination by the Governor, made the income tax more progressive, and eliminated a proposed gas tax increase. I continue to support making the state income tax more progressive to allow the wealthy to pay their fair share.

As chair of the Veteran's Committee, I was delighted to bring forth many great new initiatives to help our veterans. This report is a brief summary of some of the legislation we passed during the 2011 Legislative Session. If you have any questions about these subjects or have other concerns, please do not hesitate to call my office at 1-800-842-8267.

It is a pleasure and honor to serve you. Your input helped shape my votes during the session of the General Assembly. Together we can work to create a better future for our friends and families.

Sincerely,

Jack Hennessy
State Representative

CAPITOL
REPORT 2011

State Representative
Jack Hennessy

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CAPITOL REPORT 2011

Brownfield Remediation

Lowering Property Taxes & Helping the Environment

Especially important to the future of Bridgeport, brownfield remediation will pave the way to expanding our grand list and lowering property taxes. I am pleased to have co-sponsored a bill that could be one of the most important job generators in Connecticut. We funded clean up and re-use of "brownfields" – contaminated and long abandoned properties that can be remediated and turned into productive and safe sites for economic development, open space or other public uses. Our cities, small towns and rural areas are all winners because these remediation projects can be a catalyst for job creation and real estate development.

Paid Sick Leave

This year, we passed the first in the nation employee paid sick leave bill to let employees earn time off without fear of losing pay or their job. This landmark bill will help prevent the spread of disease at restaurants, day care centers and within the workplace benefitting both employees and the public.

Better Health Care Access & Affordability

Health care benefits are one of the largest expenses faced by individuals and employers. We combined two major health care reforms that protect and increase access to quality, affordable health care.

The Connecticut Health Care Partnership offers the state health insurance coverage to municipalities and to non-profit organizations. Taking advantage of the increased bargaining power and reduced administrative costs associated with the state plan will allow municipalities and non-profits to provide quality care with less cost. When municipalities save money on health care, those savings can be passed down to property taxpayers.

In addition, better health care delivery will be attained for individuals and groups through a comprehensive plan that lays out a framework for a state-wide health care delivery system that also leverages the state health plan pool to contain costs and promote preventive care.



Rep. Hennessy in the House Chamber with Majority Leader Brendan Sharkey, and Reps. Sayers and Olson.

Saluting Our Veterans

Providing a better life to those who protect us

As chair of the Veterans Committee, I was proud to champion legislation to help provide access to the benefits the state provides to veterans and to create a level playing field for them to succeed. Veterans returning from foreign engagements need to know that we appreciate what they do for us and that means passing legislation that helps them and their families.

Veterans' bills I championed this session:

- » Offer veteran license plates to a member of the U. S. armed forces or his or her surviving spouse
- » Allow veteran status to be on a driver's license or identity card
- » Provide disabled wartime veterans with free parking, admission, and boat access parking to state recreation areas
- » Expand the waiver of property tax interest for certain armed forces members in Iraq and Afghanistan
- » Waive the \$20 fee for one certified copy of a veteran's death certificate when requested by family
- » Create a one-stop website for services available for veterans - www.ct.gov/ctva

Eliminating Toxic BPA

We have already banned the chemical BPA from infant formula and baby food containers. This session, we have expanded this law to eliminate BPA from cash register receipt paper. BPA exposure can be linked to various illnesses and ailments including prostate cancer, breast cancer, obesity, attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity disorder and disruption in reproduction and fertility (including damage to fetus).

Condominium Rules Changed

I introduced and fought for legislation to make a number of changes to the Common Interest Ownership Act, Connecticut's law governing condominium communities, to protect condominium owners. The new law:

- » Prohibits an executive board member of a condominium association from accepting any item of value if it will influence the member's vote
- » Prohibits a community association manager from campaigning for a candidate for the executive board
- » Requires an association to hold a hearing before bringing an action against a unit owner
- » Permits a unit owner to request a hearing before the executive board to enforce an obligation against an association or another unit owner

Job Creation in Connecticut

The Legislature made sure the state was open for business by enacting laws that:

- » Encourage businesses to create jobs by providing tax incentives through the "First Five" program
- » Expand our reinvestments in manufacturing
- » Allow employees to earn paid time off when they or a family member is sick
- » Provide student loan reimbursements for green-tech degree holders after 2 years employment in the field
- » Create the Connecticut Airport Authority to run our airports as economic engines for the economy
- » Save our Vo-tech schools that teach the skills that put people to work.

At UConn, we're building a world class bioscience research center that will support hundreds of temporary construction jobs and permanent bioscience jobs.

Reporting Child and Animal Abuse

A new law that requires the cross reporting of child abuse and animal cruelty. Research indicates a strong connection between animal abuse, child abuse and domestic violence. Animal control officers and Department of Children and Family employees must now report to the state Department of Agriculture commissioner when an animal is suspected of being harmed, neglected or treated with cruelty.

Protecting Domestic Violence Victims

Even one incident of domestic violence in our state is too many, but when more than 20,000 incidents resulting in arrest occur in a single year, something had to be done. Building on last year's landmark legislation, this year we passed bills improving the state's response to domestic violence:

- » maintaining funding for 24/7 staffing at emergency shelters
- » improving information sharing among state agencies
- » allowing victims who experience a pattern of threatening or stalking to request a restraining order; people of any age, including teens, can request a restraining order
- » requiring offenders to surrender firearms to police or sell them to a federally-licensed firearms dealer if the offender is barred from possessing them
- » providing restitution to the families of victims
- » fixing a contradiction in the statutes that exempts people in dating relationships from arrest when a domestic violence crime is alleged to have been committed, so that police have clear authority to make such arrests

