

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JACK HENNESSY

PROUDLY SERVING THE 127TH HOUSE DISTRICT | BRIDGEPORT

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

House Democrats led the way in passing significant legislation during the 2016 session of the General Assembly to help protect and improve the quality of life for Connecticut families.

This was a session dominated by the budget. Although there were no easy solutions, we made significant cuts and balanced a budget without borrowing and without tax or fee increases.

Improving public health, increasing access to jobs, securing additional benefits for veterans, and encouraging financial security for everyone were featured elements of some of the major bills approved by the legislature this year.

One of the issues I advocated for this session was **Improving Connecticut's Business Climate**. These laws will allow first-time business owners to receive reimbursement for the initial costs associated with starting up a business, address the teacher shortage issue in the Connecticut Technical High School System, and develop programs to introduce students to careers in manufacturing.

Keeping Connecticut a great place to live, work, and raise a family is our ongoing responsibility. Though the 2016 legislative session presented one of the toughest budget challenges in decades, we succeeded in helping move our state forward.

Sincerely,



Jack Hennessy



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REAPPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ELDERLY PROPERTY RELIEF

This bill changes the deadline, from March 15 to April 15, that elderly and disabled homeowners must reapply for property tax relief for three income-restricted programs: the state-funded Tax Relief Program for Elderly and Totally Disabled Homeowners (i.e., Circuit Breaker Program), and both the local option and state-funded Elderly Property Tax Freeze Program. Program participants must reapply for tax relief every two years by submitting copies of their tax returns.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

With over 600,000 Connecticut workers lacking an employer-based retirement plan, we created a voluntary program to help encourage and assist people to save for retirement. There is no cost to taxpayers for the program, and the bill was a top priority of AARP.

OPIOID CRISIS

In recent years Connecticut, like other New England states, has seen a heartbreaking increase in fatal opioid overdoses. Earlier this year we passed groundbreaking legislation to combat this crisis. This lifesaving law will allow any licensed healthcare professional to administer drugs that reverse opioid overdoses, require municipalities to equip their first responders with the opioid reversal drug Narcan, and cap first-time opioid prescriptions at a seven-day supply.



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VETERANS

Standing Up For Veterans

As chair of the Veterans' Committee, I am proud to report that we helped veterans by lowering taxes, creating new jobs and helping small business owners secure new business.

The legislation will:

- Allow cities and towns to double the local veteran tax exemption option to \$20,000.
- Give a price preference of up to 15% for veteran-owned businesses bidding on state contracts.

As a former Army Ranger, I understand the challenges in finding employment for members of the special operations community. That is why we have passed legislation instructing the Labor Commissioner to form a specific database to match veterans with employers seeking their elite skills.

ENERGY

Promoting Clean, Reliable Energy

We are making a great deal of progress in promoting clean, reliable energy. Several laws provide incentives in the form of credits for excess electricity generated through clean sources such as solar and wind. These monetary incentives will help to expand the use of clean, renewable energy while keeping our environment clean.

ENSURING ACCESS TO LEGAL SERVICES

Everyone must be treated fairly under the law and ensuring reliable access to legal services is a keystone to that fundamental right. That's why the legislature ensured funding for legal services for the poor. Access to reliable counsel for criminal defendants has not been a problem, but the same has not been true in civil court. A newly established task force will examine this issue and report its finding to the General Assembly later this year.



Rep. Hennessy gives a speech at the Annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day



Save-A-Suit, a nonprofit organization that provides our former military and college graduates with business attire, visits the Capitol



Rep. Hennessy and Members of the Bridgeport Delegation meet to discuss legislative issues that directly affect the Bridgeport Community