

COMMITMENT TO BRINGING HOME NEW LONDON'S FAIR SHARE



Even in these difficult fiscal times, the current state budget includes significant increases in statutory grants to New London. These grants total **\$34,335,904** - an increase of **\$925,301** over the past year. These funds will help New London meet its obligations in education, road maintenance, and a variety of services for seniors, children, and those with special needs - services that are vital to the health, safety, and well-being of all our citizens. The following is a breakdown of money that has come home to New London:

STATE FUNDING BROUGHT HOME TO NEW LONDON

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Pilot: State-Owned Property | \$419,142 |
| Pilot: Colleges & Hospitals | \$6,084,823 |
| Mashantucket Pequot & Mohegan Fund | \$2,992,407 |
| Town Aid Road..... | \$191,256 |
| Local Capital Improvement Program..... | \$281,979 |
| Public School Transportation..... | \$388,666 |
| Non-Public School Transportation | \$47,673 |
| Adult Education..... | \$989,393 |
| Education Cost Sharing..... | \$22,940,565 |

Total Money for New London: \$34,335,904

(Statutory Formula Grants Fiscal Year '08-'09)



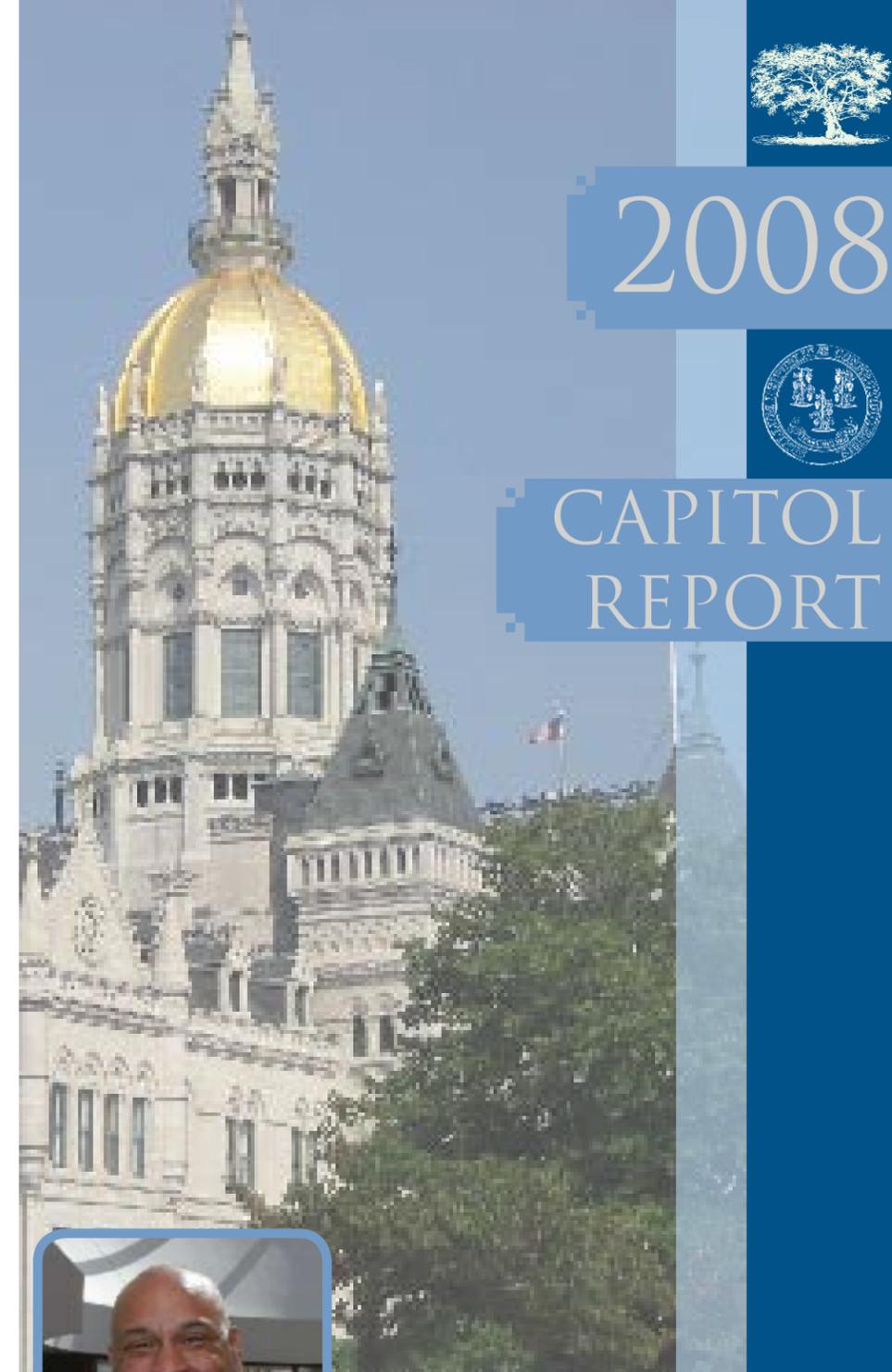
Mark Your Calendar Now - This year's sales tax-free week for back to school shopping will run from **Sunday, August 17th through Saturday, August 23rd**. It applies to clothing and footwear under \$300.

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2008



CAPITOL
REPORT



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
ERNEST HEWETT

PROUDLY SERVING NEW LONDON



A LETTER TO MY NEIGHBORS



Dear Neighbor,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family in good health and in good spirits.

This was a challenging year at the State Capitol. As a state and as individuals, we face many new and difficult demands. In this newsletter, I would like to share some

of my accomplishments that will benefit the people of the state and all of us here in New London.

We have been hard at work crafting the necessary legislation to improve economic stability, education, health care, the environment and services that the people of Connecticut deserve. I have worked hard to advocate for mortgage assistance programs, municipal health care pooling, education, security for foster care children, equitable rights and opportunities for all people and many more programs and services.

Please continue to share with me your thoughts and ideas. Your letters, e-mail and phone calls provide insight and allows me to understand your concerns. With your input, I will continue to fight for a better quality-of-life for the people of the 39th District.

Sincerely,

Ernie

Ernest Hewett, State Representative

Teenage Driving Safety

In an effort to prevent further accidents and encourage responsible driving, my colleagues and I passed Public Act 08-32, which changes the current teenage driving laws, beginning August 1, 2008, by:

- Extending the passenger restrictions for new drivers from six months to one year.
- Establishing a curfew of 11 PM for teen drivers, and requiring seat belts to be worn by all passengers in a car operated by a teen driver.
- Mandating teen drivers have 40 hours of behind-the-wheel training, instead of 20 hours.
- Requiring the driver's parent to attend a two-hour class with their child.
- Increasing the penalties and suspensions for violations of the graduated license restrictions, excessive speeding, DUI, street-racing and reckless driving offenses.
- Enabling police officers to confiscate a teen's driver's license for 48 hours for violating any of the graduated license restrictions, as well as for excessive speeding, reckless driving, and street racing.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ERNEST HEWETT



CAPITOL NEWS FOR SENIORS

Money Follows the Person Program

This bill will make sure the people who want to remain at home with their families can be cared for at a level that meets their needs. The Money Follows the Person program reduces reliance on institutional care and develops community-based long-term care opportunities. It will support elderly and disabled Medicaid recipients. As the program grows, 5,000 individuals can be served under the program.

The Homecare Option Program for the Elderly

The Homecare Option Program for the Elderly (HOPE) offers participants, who establish an individual savings account within this state-administered trust fund, the ability to save for qualified homecare expenses. Capital gains and dividends earned on contributions to these accounts are exempt from the designated account beneficiary's state income tax. In addition, you can now designate anyone to be your beneficiary.

Support for Grandparents and Relative Caregivers

The act of raising a child is not always an easy one. It is more difficult when a child's parents are not in the picture. In an attempt to ease the burden on family members who are given custodial rights over a child, the state will now allow grandparents or other relative caregivers appointed through Superior Court, and who are not receiving subsidized guardianship or foster care payments from the Department of Children and Families (DCF), to apply for grants under the probate-court administered Kinship Fund and Grandparents and Relatives Respite Fund. Prior to this legislation, only guardians who were appointed through the probate court were allowed to receive financial support.

Homeowners' Assistance and Foreclosure Protection

Connecticut families caught in this riptide of the subprime mortgage crisis find themselves being pulled into deeper and deeper water. This legislation addresses the crises facing families and includes critical reforms for the industry.

- The Homeowner's Equity Recovery Opportunity Loan (HERO) program authorizes the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) to purchase mortgages directly from lenders and restructure the loans to place eligible borrowers on an affordable payment schedule.
- \$64 million was invested in the state's emergency mortgage assistance program (EMAP) for borrowers facing foreclosure.
- \$40 million was approved to continue the CT FAMILIES assistance program.
- A foreclosure mediation program within the state Judicial Branch has been created.
- A mortgage crisis job training program at Workplace Inc., will be established in collaboration with other regional workforce development boards and one-stop centers.

Department of Banking's Foreclosure Assistance Hotline: 877-472-8313
Connecticut Housing Finance Authority: 860-571-3500.

The Teaching of Children with Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities

The number of children affected by autism continues to rise. Teachers and the professionals who work with them need to be properly and comprehensively trained to deal with growing classroom issues. To better address developmentally disabled students' needs, we have passed legislation which seeks to improve the educational training we provide for teachers and paraprofessionals who deal with these students by gathering recommendations that incorporate effective teaching methods and professional development. PA 08-5

An Act Establishing a Minority Health Advisory Commission

The legislature took great strides in expanding quality, affordable health care for state residents. One of the key measures will be to establish the Commission on Health Equity. This commission will work with other state agencies, boards and commissions to eliminate the disparities in health status among the state's multicultural, multilingual and multiethnic communities. The legislature expects the commission will highlight the problems many underserved communities face when obtaining health care. PA 08-171



Stopping Increased Gas Tax / Expanding Gas Price Discounts

It has become apparent to every consumer in the state that high fuel costs affect the price of everything. To ease the pain at the pump, I am happy to report that the legislature **moved to stop the planned tax increase on gas and oil.** An increase would have cost everyone more at the pumps.

We also passed legislation allowing station operators to offer **cash discounts** or similar incentives for different purchasing methods. As the stations move to utilize this ability we will see discounted gas prices.

Minimum Wage Increase

During the session the legislature passed a bill to raise the state hourly minimum wage from \$7.65 to \$8.00 beginning January 1, 2009 and to \$8.25 on January 1, 2010. The Governor decided to veto this legislation and on June 23rd we came back to Hartford to overturn her veto and give the working people the help they deserve.

New London Given Magnet School District Funding

This session we made it possible to bring more money to our school construction projects by allowing one or two schools in New London to be designated as interdistrict magnet schools. The state would cover 95% of the construction costs at those schools. An improvement from the regular lower reimbursement rate (approximately 78%).

