



State Representative
Claire Janowski



Pictured (Left to Right) Thomasina Clemons, Representative Janowski, Bernice Dixon, and James Krupienski.

Special Resolution Presented

Rep. Janowski, member of the Vernon Bicentennial Committee and Thomasina Clemons, Chair of the Bi-centennial Re-enactment Committee, presented a replica of the 1808 Resolution establishing the Town of Vernon to Town Clerk, Bernice Dixon and Assistant Town Clerk James Krupienski to acknowledge and thank them for their assistance in the research of the town archival records. The resolution is displayed at the Town Clerk's Office in a floating frame showing the signed written version on one side and a printed version on the reserve side for ease in reading. Rep. Janowski was asked to replicate the document for use in a play written and performed by the Rockville High School Drama Students for the Bicentennial Re-enactment event held at the First Congregational Church on October 13, 2008 in celebration of Vernon's 200th Anniversary.

Olender's, Inc. Wins Award

Olender's, Inc. was honored with the 2008 Connecticut Family Business of the Year Award by UConn Business School at a special recognition dinner held November 12, 2008. This award is well-earned as well as an extraordinary tribute to a long standing Vernon family business. Congratulations & best wishes to Olender's.



Claire Janowski
State Representative

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HOUSE OF
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Representative Janowski with the AARP at a press conference.

Dear Neighbor,

This legislative session promises to be a most challenging year for all of us. The worldwide economic crisis is having a dramatic impact on our country, our state, our communities and our everyday lives.

No doubt, difficult decisions will need to be made to consider the looming budget deficit and passage of a sustainable, balanced budget for the upcoming fiscal year. During the process, we will need to work together and I am confident we can achieve that goal through imaginative and responsible planning that will safeguard critical services, local education funding and promote jobs creation needed for economic growth.

This newsletter focuses on some of the legislation I have introduced during this session, much of which is based on ideas from people who have contacted me about things and issues they found important. I welcome your continued input and hope you find the information helpful.

Thank you for the opportunity and honor to serve you once again.

Sincerely,

Claire Janowski
Chair, Executive & Legislative Nominations



Help for Municipalities & local schools

Despite the budget problems at the state level, my message to leadership will continue to be that municipal aid to cities and towns be protected and increased, if at all possible. In addition I have proposed several measures to remove or delay the implementation of a number of school mandates to reduce expenses during these hard economic times. The bills are being heard in the Education Committee for consideration and possible adoption.

Bills Introduced by Representative Janowski

- **HB 5049** State Funding of Pre-K Education

This bill removes the mandate that local school boards pay tuition for a pre-K education for students attending out-of-district Magnet schools and instead requires that pre-K tuition be fully funded by the state.

- **HB 5047** Increases Funding for local Education Cost Sharing Grant

This bill increases funding to cities and towns under the local Education Cost Sharing Grant to provide compensation to cover the costs for compliance with the Open Choice Program and Magnet School tuition Mandate.

- **HB 5753** Delays the Implementation of the In-School Suspension Program

Bill would delay the use of in-school suspension for two years to allow school districts sufficient time to evaluate and plan for the facilities and costs associated with the in-school suspension requirement.

Elderly Tax Freeze Program

The Committee on Aging held a public hearing January 27 on HB 5045: An Act concerning the Elderly Tax Freeze Program. Although I recognize the difficulty in funding this bill given the economic times, I was pleased to introduce this legislation once again and appreciate that the Committee on Aging raised it as a committee bill and is giving it the attention it deserves. This bill would make a difference to many elderly on fixed incomes who qualify as it would freeze their property taxes at a rate determined on the year of eligibility. It further requires that the state reimburse local cities and towns for the loss in local tax revenue.

Consumer Protection Legislation

I have introduced two bills to help consumers saddled with insurance premium increases after they file claims. HB 5020 would prohibit insurance companies from increasing policy premiums following claims submitted as a result of home invasions. HB 5022 would require insurers to provide written disclosure during the renewal process indicating the amount of the increase and the date the increase will be removed. The Insurance and Real Estate Committee combined both bills into HB 6445. There was a public hearing on the bill on February 19, 2009 where I testified in support of this important consumer safeguard. I am encouraged by the interest of the committee in moving this bill forward.



Options for Filling the Budget Gap

It is important that we consider a combination of options to close the looming budget gap, including:

- **Cutting spending:** Reducing spending by suspending or eliminating inefficient or non-essential programs while preserving critical services will be necessary.
- **Seeking federal funds:** The federal economic stimulus package will help our state by providing federal funds that will have a direct impact on our budget and a significant impact on our economy. We anticipate receiving more money from Washington D.C. for health care, education, transportation, and infrastructure projects.
- **The Rainy Day Fund:** This fund currently has \$1.4 billion because we have followed a fiscally responsible path and saved during the good times. It will be an important part of addressing the gap.
- **Working with state employees to reduce costs:** State employees have always stepped up to the plate and helped in difficult years. The Governor is currently meeting with employees to negotiate their contribution in the upcoming years. During past budget shortfalls, agreements between the state and state employees have significantly helped mitigate budget problems.
- **Tax Fairness:** At a time when many families and businesses are already struggling to make ends meet, increasing most types of taxes would have negative consequences. Commitment to a fair tax structure that doesn't overburden families, seniors and small business is vital. There are, however, some corporate loopholes that we will be looking at as possible sources of additional revenue to help address the deficit.

Rep. Janowski presents Legislative Citation to Rockville Bank President & CEO, Bill McGurk, in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Rockville Bank at a special event held June 19, 2008 at the Promenade Shops at Evergreen Walk.