

# BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Despite the over \$8 billion deficit expected over the next two years, requiring numerous cuts to the state budget, the impact on our town has been minimal. Important programs and funding to our district have been saved. Education funding (ECS) has been kept whole at \$17,230,568, funding for Dial-a-Ride Transportation was saved and funding for Family Resource Centers was reinstated. Some of the Budget Highlights important to our district include:

- **\$30 million to fund State Local Bridge Program.**
- **Funding for Municipal Dial-a-Ride Grants as well as for the Dial-a-Ride Regional Allocation that goes directly to Hockanum Valley Community Council.**
- **Funding for Family Resource Centers.**
- **Library Funding.**
- **Kept local education funding (ECS) whole.**
- **Local Town Aid Road funded.**

It has been a challenging year and I expect that the challenge will be even greater during the next session. It is particularly gratifying, however, that the Family Resource Center in Vernon was able to reopen on September 5<sup>th</sup> due to the reinstated funding.



Veterans Day Parade with Vernon Fire Department members.

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# Claire Janowski

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State Representative

# Claire Janowski



In line-up formation at Veterans Day Parade with Honorary Grand Marshal and U.S. Navy Veteran, Bill McGurk, Rockville Bank President & CEO and Vernon Councilwoman Polly Schaeffer.

*Dear Neighbor,*

*As we approach the New Year, I thought it would be helpful to provide you with some highlights of the Special Session and share with you some important Tax Credits that may be of benefit to you.*

*I hope you find the information useful and thank you for the opportunity to continue being of service to you and our district.*

*Sincerely,*

*Claire*  
Claire Janowski  
State Representative

Proudly Serving Vernon & Rockville | 56<sup>th</sup> District

# HELPFUL PROGRAMS TO LOOK FOR THAT BENEFIT YOUR 2009 FEDERAL FILING - American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA)



Discussing stimulus funding with U.S. Congressman Joe Courtney

## CREDIT FOR RESIDENTIAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS

Reinstates and increases the tax credit for making energy efficient improvements to existing homes. The Act increases the credit to 30% of the cost of all qualifying improvements and raises the maximum credit limit to \$1,500 for improvements placed in service in 2009 & 2010. (See IRS Publication 553, *Highlights of Tax Changes and Form 5695, Residential Energy Credits.*)

## FIRST TIME HOMEBUYER CREDIT

Extended to include qualified home purchases in 2009. Taxpayers can qualify for a refundable credit of 10% of the purchase price of up to \$8,000 (\$4,000 for taxpayers who are married and filing separately. (See IRS Publication 530, *Tax Information for First-Time Homeowners.*)

## EDUCATION CREDITS

For Tax years 2009 & 2010, the Hope Credit adds the cost of required course materials to the list of qualifying expenses and allows the credit to be claimed for four years of post-secondary education instead of two. (See IRS Publication *Tax Benefits for Education and Form 8863, Education Credits.*)

## INCREASE IN EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT THRESHOLD

For 2009 & 2010, the Act increases the income limits and earned income tax credit allowed for working families with three or more qualifying children. (See IRS Publication 596, *Earned Income Credit (EIC).*)

## SUSPENSION OF FEDERAL TAX ON PORTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Act allows the exclusion of up to \$2,400 of unemployment compensation benefits from gross income. (See IRS Publication 553, *Highlights of Tax Changes.*)

## TAX BREAK FOR NEW VEHICLE PURCHASE

For 2009, there is an additional deduction for state & local sales and excise tax on the purchase of qualified motor vehicles. A qualified motor vehicle must be new and includes a passenger auto or light truck, a motorcycle, or a motor home. The deduction is available to taxpayers who claim the standard deduction as well as taxpayers who itemize deductions on schedule A (Form 1040). (See IRS Publication 553, *Highlights of Tax Changes.*)

### For additional questions about tax benefits

Visit [www.irs.gov/recovery](http://www.irs.gov/recovery) or call 1.800.829.1040.

### For additional Information concerning IRS Publications and Forms

Visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or call 1.800.829.3676.

### For free tax help assistance

Call IRS at 1.800.906.9887 or AARP Tax Aide at 1.888.227.7669. *This volunteer tax assistance is available to individuals having low to moderate income.*

## IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT ConnPACE

Despite my opposition and vote against the Department of Social Services (DSS) Budget Implementer, a major change affecting the Medicare D premium payment under ConnPACE is scheduled to go into effect. As a result, DSS now requires that all ConnPACE clients be enrolled in a “benchmark” Medicare D plan as a condition for the state to continue the payment of your Medicare D premiums. Enrollment in such a plan must be done during the Medicare D open enrollment period which runs through December 31, 2009.

*The Medicare D Benchmark Plans that qualify for payment are:*

AARP Medicare Rx Saver	First Health Part-D-Premier
Aetna Medicare Rx Essentials	Health Net Orange Option 1
Advantage Star Plan by RxAmerica	HealthSpring Rx Drug Plan-Reg 2
Bravo RxCigna Medicare Rx Plan One	Medco Medicare Rx Plan-Value
Cigna Medicare Rx Plan One	PrescribaRx Bronze
Community CCRx Basic	Silverscript Value

If you are not already enrolled in one of the benchmark plans above, it is important to switch your coverage to one of the benchmark plans during the open enrollment period to avoid the risk of losing the state premium payment subsidy. Selecting a benchmark plan will assure that your Medicare D Premiums will continue to be paid under the ConnPACE Program.

For assistance in making a selection, contact the Vernon Department of Social Services at 860.896.2375 or the Connecticut CHOICES program at 1.800.994.9422.

Should you experience the loss of the state premium subsidy, are denied coverage of a drug previously covered or have difficulty attaining the maximum supply of refills (generally a 90 day supply), contact my office immediately at 860.240.0452.