



My Fellow Neighbors:

As the 2007 session progresses, many bills and issues will be debated and discussed in an effort to craft legislation that will better serve our people and our state.

As always, my number one priority is to represent you, the people of the 56th district. This newsletter will serve to provide a brief glimpse at some of the bills and issues being considered with emphasis on the district that I serve.

I hope you find the information helpful and would encourage you to continue to share with me your ideas and concerns.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve you.

Sincerely,

Claire Janowski  
State Representative  
Chair, Executive & Legislative Nomination Committee

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# State Representative Claire Janowski

## 2007 Session Update



**Proudly Serving  
Rockville & Vernon's**

**56th District**

## **\$1.5 MILLION FOR ROOSEVELT MILLS**

A request for state assistance to help rehabilitate the burned down Roosevelt Mills site has advanced. A \$1.5 million bonding request has been included in the bonding package which is due to go before the General Assembly for a vote before the session ends on June 6th. I am pleased to have advocated for these dollars, on behalf of our town, to enable the necessary demolition and preparation work needed to ready the site for productive use.



## **HISTORICAL MUSEUM GRANT**

A request from the Vernon Historical Society for \$283,000 in state funding to enable needed improvements to the Vernon Historical Society Museum and Vernon Grange Building has been included in the Finance Committee Bonding Bill. The bill is scheduled for a vote before the end of session.

I am pleased to have taken the leadership role in requesting these dollars which will be used to increase access through the installation of an elevator, handicapped access ramps and other improvements.

## **ROCKVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY BONDING**

\$500,000 to enable improvements to the Historic Rockville Public Library has been included in the Bonding Bill. I am pleased to have requested this funding for installation of an elevator, handicapped restrooms, and improved storage.

## **ENERGY**

Connecticut's electric rates are higher than surrounding states. This hurts residential consumers and businesses by making Connecticut uncompetitive in attracting new businesses. Options for immediate relief appear to be primarily related to better conservation and less demand. Long term solutions will revolve around the problems created by deregulation, some of which are expected to be addressed this session.

## **CONSUMER SAFEGUARDS**

### **DORMANT BANK ACCOUNTS**

I have co-sponsored legislation that will prohibit banks from imposing fees or charges to dormant bank accounts. These fees are not consumer friendly and generally affect smaller savings accounts established by seniors. The bill, which was passed by both chambers, was signed into law by the Governor April 17th.

### **PREPAID PREMIUM REFUNDS**

A bill I introduced to refund premiums paid in advance to health insurance providers for Medicare Supplement Policies was successfully passed by the House on April 11th. This will allow those who pay premiums in advance to receive a refund of their pre-paid unused amount should they cancel their policy or switch carriers. The issue was brought to my attention by Audrey Davis, a constituent in my district, and I am pleased that the Insurance Committee voted the bill out of committee so that it could proceed to both chambers for a vote.

## **ELDERLY PROPERTY TAX FREEZE**

I again introduced legislation to reactivate the elderly tax freeze program which was passed unanimously by the Committee on Aging. If passed by the General Assembly, the bill would increase the income limits used for eligibility so that a greater number of seniors would qualify. Qualified individuals would have to be seventy years of age or greater, and the tax would freeze at a rate determined on the year that the eligibility requirements are met.

A very important component of the legislation is that municipalities would be reimbursed for the loss of revenue, something that is missing from recently passed legislation that places the burden of lost revenue on the towns. This program will make a difference to many elderly who would otherwise not be able to remain living in their homes due to increasing property taxes.

## **VETERAN RECOGNITION MEDALS**

In response to many of your calls, I have introduced legislation that would provide for the posthumous award of State of Connecticut ribbons and medals. These awards are currently given to living veterans. The bill would expand the program to include the recognition of deceased veterans who served our country in time of war.

## **HEALTH CARE REFORM**

Connecticut has an estimated 400,000 uninsured individuals. To ensure they have access to affordable coverage, the legislature will be looking into various options including universal health coverage and the Charter Oak Plan. Health care reform must address two major problems: how to reduce costs and how to enable the uninsured access and affordability.

**KEEP IN TOUCH WITH STATE REPRESENTATIVE CLAIRE JANOWSKI**

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