



THE 2009 SESSION

Connecticut’s families gained substantial protections through the passage of numerous important bills during the past legislative session. The state’s fiscal crisis dominated much of our work and the General Assembly fought hard for the people of Connecticut by implementing a fairer income tax to create much needed revenue for our state from the wealthiest residents. We passed legislation to protect children, seniors, military families, homeowners and students. Keeping in step with President Obama’s initiatives at the national level, we passed landmark legislation intended to provide accessible, affordable, quality health care. New laws taking effect this year also reduce the size of state government, improve the efficiency of government functions and protect consumers from future financial abuses by unscrupulous lending officials and money managers.



REFORMING OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Over 750,000 Connecticut residents went without health insurance at one point during 2007 or 2008. Health care costs everyone more each year and taxpayers pay more to supplement the people who do not have it. Although the governor’s veto of the Healthcare Partnership Bill stood, the legislature overrode her veto of the Sustinet Bill positioning Connecticut for federal healthcare reform that will provide affordable quality care for all.

SUSTINET PLAN

- PA 09-148 | HB 6600
- » Provides a framework for expanding high quality coverage to more residents
 - » Establishes an eleven-member board of healthcare providers and experts
 - » Creates new public health insurance options that will be affordable
 - » Allows Connecticut to take full advantage of Obama’s federal reforms



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Protecting Our Environment

I am very pleased to confirm that the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority (CRRA) has decided to suspend its efforts to develop a publicly owned ash landfill along the border of Windham in Franklin. I worked diligently along with Representative Kevin Ryan, and Senator Edith Prague to convince CRRA that building an ash landfill along the Shetucket River was not in the best interest of our town or state. It is a major priority of mine to encourage CRRA and the state to focus on other environmentally sound options for long-term disposal of ash residue. I will be working on legislation this coming session to that effect.

DAIRY FARM ASSISTANCE

PA 09-229 | SB 891 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- » Dedicates funds to assist and preserve Connecticut dairy farms to protect farms that have trouble meeting milk production costs
- » Preserves the character of farmland in the state
- » Allows Connecticut dairy farms to remain competitive with out of state farms

GO SOLAR

The state is dedicating \$4 million in federal stimulus funds to help homeowners and businesses pay for the installation of solar-powered hot water heating systems, an investment that will lower utility bills and promote the use of alternative fuels. The incentive program will be administered by the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund (CCEF), a ratepayer fund that promotes, develops and invests in clean energy resources for the benefit of Connecticut's electric ratepayers. The systems can supply up to 80 percent of a customer's annual hot water needs. For more information about the Solar Thermal Incentive Program, visit:

www.ctcleanenergy.com/solarthermal
call (860)563.0015 or e-mail
solarthermal@ctcleanenergy.com.



IMPROVING REGIONAL COOPERATION

PA 09-231 | HB 6585 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.11

- » Allows regions to enter into mutual agreements to promote regional economic development
- » Allows regions to share property tax revenue from the new developments
- » Allows municipalities with approved regional agreements to share part of the sales and use tax

Looking out for seniors

This year we passed several initiatives to improve the quality of life of seniors in our communities, including:

MAKING MEDICINES ACCESSIBLE

PA 09-136 | HB 6540 – EFFECTIVE: 01.01.10

Eye drops can be difficult to use. A thirty day supply can easily be depleted before the refill date so insurance companies are now required to provide refills if prescription eye drops run out before the next refill date.

SERVICES FOR ALZHEIMER'S PATIENTS

PA 09-75 | SB 989 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- » Increases the annual income limit for eligibility from \$30,000 to \$41,000
- » Increases the asset limit from \$80,000 to \$109,000
- » Requires the Department of Social Services to annually increase these limits
- » Allows recipients to hire their own personal care assistants



Keeping our Children Safe & Healthy

Windham's children need our protection from various harms. This legislative session I worked hard with my colleagues to pass legislation to do just that.

PREVENTING CARDIAC ARREST IN SCHOOLS

PA 09-94 | SB 981 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- » Makes Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) more accessible to schools and provides training to school staff for their use

BANNING TOXIC CHEMICALS

PA 09-103 | HB 6572 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- » Bans bisphenol-A (BPA), an industrial chemical with toxic properties.
- » Makes baby bottles, food containers, and beverage containers safer for infants and children

GREEN CLEANING PRODUCTS IN SCHOOLS

PA 09-81 | HB 6496 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- » Requires schools to implement a green cleaning program
- » Promotes use of safe green cleaning products
- » Requires replacement of hazardous cleaning chemicals currently used in most schools

PROTECTING COLLEGE STUDENTS CREDIT

PA 09-167 | HB 6483 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- » Requires the Board of Governors of Higher Education to adopt policies that regulate credit card marketing practices on public college campuses
- » Protects young consumers from being unfairly targeted

Winter Heating Assistance

The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program and the Contingency Heating Assistance Program are administered by the Department of Social Services and coordinated by the Access Agency in cooperation with municipal and other non-profit human service agencies.

On behalf of eligible households, the winter heating assistance pays for such heating sources as oil, natural gas, electricity, propane, kerosene, coal and wood. Homeowners and renters may apply.

Households eligible for the winter heating program may also be eligible to receive weatherization assistance. This can help conserve energy and lower heating bills.

Please call 211 Infoline or DSS Energy & Refugee Services Unit at 800.842.1132 if you have energy assistance questions.

Veterans

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

PA 09-10 | HB 6406 – EFFECTIVE: UPON PASSAGE

- » Ensures that members of the armed forces and their dependents can receive necessary transitional behavioral health services

RELIEF FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

PA 09-163 | HB 6394 – EFFECTIVE: Upon passage

- » Expands the Military Family Relief Fund
- » Allows immediate relatives of members not on active duty to receive benefits
- » Provides grants to pay for essential personal or household items in hardship situations



Foreclosure Protection

PA 09-209 | SB 948 – effective: 07.01.09

- » Implements federal reforms
- » Improves licensing of lending professionals
- » Expands eligibility for state foreclosure prevention programs
- » Makes the state's foreclosure mediation program mandatory

EMERGENCY MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE

PA 09-219 | HB 6481 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09/10.01.09

- » Expands eligibility for the Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program
- » Assists more families so that their loss of income due to illness or job-loss won't result in a family losing their home



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