



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
SUSAN JOHNSON
 PROUDLY SERVING WINDHAM

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It is an honor to serve you in the legislature. This year's legislative session wrapped up on Wednesday, June 5th and I am pleased to share some exciting new laws that will help to make Connecticut a better place to work, live and raise a family.

I hope you find the enclosed information helpful. Please do not hesitate to reach out to my office if I can be of service to you or your family. I can be reached at Susan.Johnson@cga.ct.gov or by phone at 860-240-0160. If you don't already get them, please sign up for my email blasts to receive information on a regular basis - regarding my bills and issues that face our town and our state. I will continue to fight for the best interests of Windham.

Sincerely,



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

SUSAN JOHNSON

PROUDLY SERVING WINDHAM

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STATE REP. SUSAN JOHNSON

Left: Rep. Johnson at the 34th Annual WILI Willimantic Boom Box parade.

Right: Rep. Johnson with Rep. Orange and Sen. Flexer speaking to the Town Council

PAID FAMILY LEAVE

I am proud to have voted “yes” to a state wide Paid Family and Medical Leave Program. In the event of a medical emergency, Paid Family and Medical Leave allows workers to care for themselves or a loved one without having to face the threat of financial ruin. By providing up to 12 weeks of Family and Medical Leave Insurance per year, equaling up to 95% of an employee’s weekly paycheck, we will provide financial protection to those who find themselves in an unanticipated medical emergency. This will help pregnant women on medically-ordered bedrest, families with an infirm or aging parent, and new parents who want to bond with an infant. The program is funded by employee contributions. If you or your family has an emergency, there will now be financial peace-of-mind. (SB 1; Public Act 19-25)

RAISING WAGES

No one who works full time should live in poverty. That is why I co-sponsored a bill that ensures Connecticut families will have more economic security as the state’s minimum hourly wage gradually rises to \$15.00 by June 1, 2023. This legislation will help over 300,000 Connecticut workers who make less than \$15.00 an hour. The wage will increase on October 1, 2019 to \$11.00 an hour, followed by incremental increases over the next 4½ years until \$15.00 is reached. (HB 5004; Public Act 19-4)

The Economic Policy Institute (EPI), a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank based in Washington D.C., found that minimum wage increases stalled after the 1960s; and, if the minimum wage rose with economic productivity, the EPI estimates it would be \$21.57 in 2022.

PRE-EXISTING INSURANCE COVERAGE

This session, we expanded health insurance coverage for pre-existing conditions. Passed unanimously, this protects Connecticut residents against any changes to federal law.

This legislation will:

- Assure that patients receive treatment and insurance coverage for pre-existing conditions
- Codify federal Affordable Care Act protections
- Save lives and money
- Prohibit some types of short-term health insurance plans from containing a pre-existing condition provision (HB 5521; Public Act 19-134)

EXPANSION OF THE ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

I was pleased to see the legislature pass a bill that expands the current pilot program into additional public high schools, and also allows for the participation of private institutions of higher education, in addition to public institutions of higher education. (HB 5833; Public Act 19-103)

WORKERS’ COMPENSATION TASKFORCE

This session a bill that I have been working on for several years was signed into law. We established a taskforce to evaluate unreasonably contested or delayed workers’ compensation claims and find ways to prevent bad faith defenses. I am grateful for the governor’s support on this bill and I am honored the speaker of the house appointed me as chair of this taskforce. Workers who are injured on the job should not have to wait for their medical benefits to begin, or be denied care. (HB 6916; Public Act No. 19-10)

COVERING POLICE AND FIREFIGHTERS FOR PTSD

We have passed legislation which will provide workers’ compensation benefits for police officers, parole officers and firefighters suffering from PTSD due to traumatic events in the line of duty. Our first responders see violence and death on a too frequent basis and we must help them cope with the effects of these tragic experiences.

This legislation will:

- Establish eligibility criteria to receive PTSD benefits
- Provide the benefits up to 52 weeks and within four years after an event
- Develop a peer support policy
- Offer training in resilience and self-care
- Study the feasibility of expanding these benefits to include EMS and Department of Correction employees
- Prohibit a law enforcement unit from disciplining police officers solely because they receive mental health services, or have surrendered their work weapons or ammunition (SB 164; Public Act No. 19-17)

PROTECTING OUR PLANET

Seeking to use innovative ideas to help us address our environmental and energy challenges, we created a Green Jobs Career Ladder website for jobs in the green technology industry, including a listing of careers and the jobs available in the state.

Additionally, we passed legislation to encourage the construction of high performance green state buildings that have reduced emissions and conservative water resource management. We hope to create new and viable career opportunities, benefit the environment, and help protect our planet for generations to come.

This legislation will:

- Extend renewable energy programs, including traditional net metering and the Green Bank’s renewable solar investment program
- Expand the virtual net metering cap which will reduce energy costs for municipalities
- Require DOT to put together an inventory of which lands are suitable for Class I energy resources; for example, solar energy on lands adjacent to state highways (HB 5002; Public Act No. 19-35)

MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAM

The budget agreement that was made ensured that the Medicare Savings Program (MSP) will be fully funded. MSP helps low income elderly individuals and the disabled pay for the cost of their Medicare supplement. The income eligibility limits are detailed in the chart below:

MSP Tier	Individual Income Limit (%FPL)	Individual Annual Income Limit	Married Couple Annual Income Limit
QMB	Less than 211%	\$26,358	\$35,676
SLMB	211% to 231%	\$28,857	\$39,057
QI	231% to 246%	\$30,730	\$41,594

BUDGET AND EDUCATION

The biennium budget brings increased funding to the Town of Windham. Windham will receive an additional \$1 million for FY 20 and \$2 million for FY 21. Overall, Windham will get \$33,489, 817 in total state aid for fiscal year 20 and \$34,499,022 for fiscal year 21. These increases come from Education Cost Sharing grants, Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Fund grant, a Municipal Stabilization grant and others. The chart below shows the difference in aid from FY 19 to FY 21.

Grant	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Total Grants from the State	\$32,479,160	\$33,489,817	\$34,499,022
Education Cost Sharing	\$26,989,803	\$27,999,008	\$29,008,213

NATHAN HALE HOTEL AND HOTEL HOOKER BUILDING

In early May 2019, Attorney General William Tong announced a negotiated settlement agreement between the state and two property developers to preserve the historic Nathan Hale Hotel Building. This settlement was a huge success for downtown Willimantic. Now, we will be able to bring economic development to our downtown which will generate revenue and jobs, while preserving the historic nature of downtown Willimantic.



Left: Rep. Johnson with Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Attorney General William Tong, Sen. Flexer, Councilman Tom DeVivo among others, announcing the agreement regarding the Hale and Hooker buildings on Main Street, Willimantic

Right: Rep. Johnson speaks at a Progressive Caucus press conference on healthcare.