



Dear Neighbor,

I am proud to share some historic highlights from the 2022 legislative session.

Historic like more than \$650 million in tax cuts. Historic like our investment in the mental health of our children. Historic like our commitment to growing jobs and our economy. Historic like a state budget that pays off millions in pension debt and continues our record rainy day fund while investing in Windham's schools, mental health, public safety and programs that work - all while honoring the spending cap.

That's not to say we aren't facing challenges. We are seeing inflation that hits everyone's wallets and housing prices that are pricing many out of even modest homes. That's why I fought hard to provide you with relief: increasing the property tax credit, phasing out taxes on retirement income, creating a child tax rebate, cutting the gas tax and more.

I hope you find this newsletter packed with useful information. It is my pleasure to serve as your state representative.

All my best,

2022 SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- Addressing Children's Mental Health Needs
- Cutting Taxes to Combat Historic Inflation
- Keeping CT Safe with Juvenile Justice Reform
- Bolstering Reproductive Freedoms
- Creating Environmentally Conscious Initiatives
- Maintaining CT's Future Fiscal Integrity



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
SUSAN JOHNSON

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**CAPITOL
UPDATE 2022**

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**CAPITOL
UPDATE 2022**



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ADVOCATING FOR EARLY DETECTION OF BREAST AND OVARIAN CANCER

I championed PA 22-90, which expands health insurance coverage for early detection and diagnosis of breast and ovarian cancer. The law requires insurers to cover BRCA 1 and BRCA 2 genetic testing and routine ovarian cancer screenings for certain individuals at no out-of-pocket expense. I am pleased have been recognized by the Radiological Society of Connecticut for my advocacy for early detection and diagnosis of breast and ovarian cancer during the 2022 legislative session.



ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

Climate change is real. To cut our carbon footprint, increase our reliance on clean energy sources, and protect the health of residents, the General Assembly enacted policies to help achieve a cleaner environment for all residents, which:

- Sets a goal of reaching zero greenhouse gas emissions from electricity supplied to you by 2040 (PA 22-5)
- Expands financing to develop zero-emission vehicle infrastructure, builds more solar power and fuel cells, and reinforces our electric grid against the effects of climate change (PA 22-6 & PA 22-14)
- Supports developing carbon-neutral plans for new transportation projects (PA 22-118)
- Established the Office of Aquatic Invasive Species, expanded sophisticated testing of shellfish, invested in repopulating native salmon and eel populations (PA 22-118)
- Makes it easier for renters and condo owners to install electric chargers (PA 22-25)
- Exempts electric charging stations from property tax assessments (PA 22-25)
- Incentivizes school districts to use electric school buses (PA 22-25)

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Children's behavioral health needs have increased in severity, believed to be worsened by the pandemic and poverty. Although schools have reopened for in-person learning, our students are still grappling with the social and emotional consequences. The General Assembly has passed Public Act 22-47 and Public Act 22-81 to build a comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable behavioral health system that:

- Expands Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services to hire and train personnel to extend the geographic reach and hours of operation
- Makes Connecticut home to more doctors and health care providers by appropriating funds to expand staffing for children needing mental health care
- Supports school-based health care by establishing a grant program for mental health services for children and adolescents
- Addresses the need for expanded inpatient services for children by increasing the number of available beds in hospitals
- Institutes the 9-8-8 Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Hotline

STATE MONEY FOR WINDHAM

In addition to the significant state funding for town aid and education funding, Windham is receiving \$20.4 million in state bonding money. This funding will be critical in enhancing educational opportunities, public safety, recreational and enrichment opportunities for all Windham residents. These projects will add to Windham's vibrancy and safety:

- \$2.9 million to upgrade the Willimantic Dispatch Center, this will go to repairing radio towers and equipment upgrades which will connect our emergency services with the rest of the region and state
- \$500,000.00 for Whitewater Park to continue to improve the area along the river
- Bonding increased from 79% reimbursement to 95%, which is approximately \$17 million more in the reimbursement rate for the Windham High School renovation projects

STATE FUNDING SOURCE	FISCAL YEAR 21	FISCAL YEAR 22	FISCAL YEAR 23
Payment in Lieu of Taxes	\$2,558,128	\$5,300,785	\$5,372,441
Educational Cost Sharing Grant including Alliance District Funds, and Adult Educational Grant	\$29,302,300	\$30,238,317	\$31,051,261
Total increases from 2021 through 2023	\$35,553,015	\$38,775,725	\$39,660,325



MIDDLE & WORKING CLASS RELIEF

Our state budget provides \$650 million in tax relief for Connecticut residents, which will support our economic recovery. The highlights of these state budget recovery initiatives are as follows:

- Increases the property tax credit from \$200 to \$300 and expands eligibility to all homeowners
- Eliminates the pension and annuity income taxes for a majority of retirees
- Establishes a CT Child Tax Credit which provides middle and working class families with \$250 per child, for up to 3 children: Apply at <https://egov.ct.gov/drschildrebateform> by July 31, 2022
- Extends the gas tax suspension until December 1, 2022
- Increases the Temporary Assistance for Families grant from 45% to 55% of the poverty line to limit child and family homelessness
- Cuts the car property tax
- Extends free bus services
- Invests in healthcare workers

PRIDE COALITION AWARDED GRANT

- Partnership to Reduce the Influence of Drugs for Everyone (PRIDE) Coalition received a \$100,000 grant in FY 22 & FY 23 from the State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development's Office of the Arts.
- The funds will be used to address Windham PRIDE's Summer programs for students. The funds will also be provided to students who are taking emergency medical technician training at Windham High School. PRIDE Coalition Students and EMT students are eligible for post-secondary education scholarships.

CLICK AWARDED DOAG GRANT

CLiCK Inc. in Windham was awarded a \$29,750 state Department of Agriculture Farm Viability Grant to expand its kitchen capacity. The grant will be used to purchase infrastructure to increase its food processing capabilities, increase kitchen spaces, and offer farmers more opportunities to use CLiCK's processing kitchen.