

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
SUSAN JOHNSON

2019 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2019 Legislative Session wrapped upon Wednesday, June 5th, and I'm pleased to announce the legislation we worked on will make Connecticut a better place to do business, raise a family, work, and live.

This begins with the budget, which was on-time and is balanced. It works to address inequalities in education funding, ensures workforce development, provides necessary social services, includes increasing the Rainy-Day Fund balance to more than \$2 billion, the largest in CT history, and addresses financial mismanagement from past decades. I am honored to serve the 49th Assembly District, and I am grateful to continue working with the Town of Windham, organizations and my constituents to ensure that our needs are met.

I hope you find this mailer informative and, as always, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance in regards to any matter concerning Windham or the State of Connecticut. I can be reached at Susan.Johnson@cga.ct.gov. Also, 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.

Wishing you and your family a safe and happy summer!

Sincerely,



Susan Johnson
49th Assembly District

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SUSAN JOHNSON
PROUDLY SERVING WINDHAM - 49TH DISTRICT



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STATE BUDGET AND INCREASED EDUCATION AID FOR WINDHAM

The budget we passed is balanced, and invests in our workforce, small businesses, and environment. It stabilizes our long-term pension finances so that we don't see fixed costs balloon later down the road, and supports our community.

The \$43 billion document came in under our state's constitutional spending cap, and permits Connecticut's "Rainy Day" reserve balance to reach over \$2 billion to protect Connecticut taxpayers in the case of an economic recession. The fund is expected to reach approximately \$2.65 billion by the end of Fiscal Year 20.

Windham can expect to receive \$67,988,839 in state aid over the 2020-21 fiscal years from Education Cost Sharing grants, Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Fund grant, Municipal Stabilization grant, and others.

This includes \$57,007,221 in total ECS funding for Windham schools in the biennium, broken down as follows:

- Fiscal year 2020, Windham will receive \$27,999,008, a portion of this: \$3,829,291, will be Alliance District funding.
- Fiscal year 2021, Windham will receive \$29,008,213 in total ECS funding.

It is important to note that the fiscal year 2021 numbers are subject to change based on a variety of factors, including changes in town wealth, student population and more.

MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

Governor Lamont recently signed HB 5004 into law, which increases Connecticut's minimum wage to \$15 over the next few years, according to the below schedule:

- \$11.00 on October 1, 2019
- \$12.00 on September 1, 2020
- \$13.00 on August 1, 2021
- \$14.00 on July 1, 2022; and,
- \$15.00 on June 1, 2023.

Beginning January 1, 2024, the legislation will index our state's minimum wage to the employment cost index as calculated by the U.S. Department of Labor.

This legislation will benefit our state's over 330,000 minimum wage workers, ensuring they are paid a livable wage, strengthening our state's economic security, increasing workers' purchasing power.

According to 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION LEGISLATION:

- There will be a ban on single use plastic bags starting July 2021, HB 7424
- After years of work Connecticut has a complete State Water Plan, HJR 171
- This year we enacted a comprehensive ban on accepting fracking waste disposal in Connecticut, SB 753



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THE NATHAN HALE HOTEL AND HOTEL HOOKER BUILDING

In early May 2019, May 2019, Attorney General William Tong announced a negotiation 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. With this settlement, we will be able to bring economic development to our Downtown which will generate revenue, jobs and preserve the historic nature of Downtown Willimantic.



PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

This session, Connecticut passed the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act. The benefits will become available on Jan. 1, 2022. The program that passed in the legislature will provide up to 12 weeks of wage replacement benefits for state residents needing to take time off for the following reasons:

1. Care for a new child (birth, adoption and foster);
2. Care for a family member with a serious health condition;
3. Care for your own serious health condition;
4. Qualifying exigency arising out of family member being on active duty; and,
5. To serve as an organ or bone marrow donor.

People considered as a family member include children, parents, spouses, domestic partners, grandparents, grandchildren and individuals related to the employee by blood or affinity whose close association the employee shows to be the equivalent of those family relationships.

The program will cost \$5.1 million to start up, and authorizes bonding funds for the IT infrastructure, which will be paid back by the program. There will be a 0.5 percent earnings deduction from every employee's paycheck to continually fund this program.

It is a fact is that most working families in Connecticut have not had access to paid leave, but this legislation will change that and in the end all of our state will benefit. Please contact me with any questions that you may have on the Paid Family Medical Leave Act.