



### AMERICAN LEGION LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR

Commander Timothy Yuhas of American Legion Post 128 presents Representative Jutila with the Legislator of the Year Award

### VETERANS

**MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY TRAINING** As people serve in the various branches of the military, they gain valuable experience and skills that can be applied to secure employment outside of the military. These skills should be recognized. This bill establishes a task force that will be responsible for reviewing military occupational specialty training experience to determine if any such training is equivalent to that required for state licensing purposes.

**RESOURCE SERVICE CONTACT PERSON** Streamlining access to programs and assistance for our veterans was one of our priorities this session. A new law requires cities and towns that do not have one, to appoint a town employee to serve as a veterans' service contact who can guide veterans to the appropriate local, state or federal resources.

**STATE MILITARY RELIEF PERSONNEL** Military service often creates hardships for families. The Military Relief Fund provides grants to help these families pay for certain essential household goods or services. New legislation expands eligibility for these grants.

### SENIORS

**LIVABLE COMMUNITIES** In most cases, keeping seniors in their homes enhances their well-being, saves money and is a win-win. Connecticut's model of "Aging in Place" is now law. The state will establish partnerships with municipal leaders to encourage collaborative efforts for long-term care planning.

### HOMEMAKER COMPANION AGENCIES AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Protecting our most vulnerable citizens is always a main concern of the legislature, especially those who require assistance in their homes. To help defend against unscrupulous personal aides, we passed a measure requiring homemaker companion agencies to notify clients in writing that comprehensive background checks were performed on their employees before sending anyone to a client's residence for the first time.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**Ed Jutila**

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## CAPITOL UPDATE 2013

Dear Neighbor,

Our state faced many challenges in 2013 which we were able to address and move the state in a positive direction. The legislature's response to the tragedy in Sandy Hook took center stage, but we also looked to our future and adopted a comprehensive energy strategy, invested in our flagship university and took steps to make our state more economically competitive.

This legislative session we were able to pass a biennial budget that is balanced, while maintaining aid to cities and towns, and without raising taxes. Despite the difficult circumstances, I am also pleased to report that both East Lyme and Salem received an increase in state aid. These increases will help us to maintain vital town services, provide quality education for our children and hold the line on property taxes.

Finally, this year I had the privilege of serving as the Co-Chair of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. In this capacity I successfully introduced a number of bills on the House floor that will enhance government efficiency and improve our electoral process.

Thank you for your e-mails, letters and phone calls during the 2013 legislative session. Your input is very important to me. Please do not hesitate to contact me throughout the year if I can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

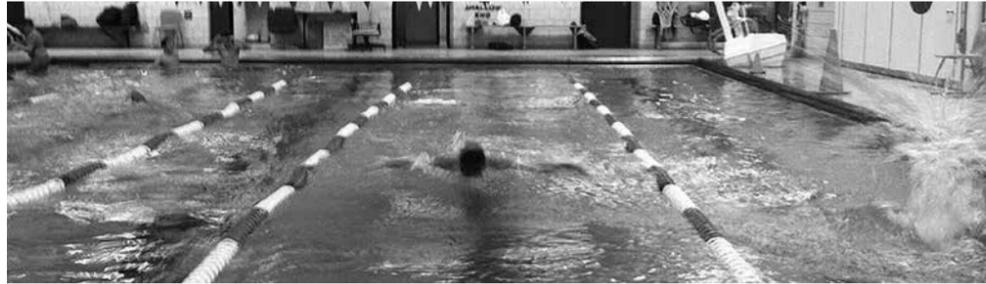
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# ED JUTILA

PROUDLY SERVING EAST LYME AND SALEM | 37TH DISTRICT

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**POOL SAFETY AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS** Making sure our children are safe in school swimming pools was a priority during this last legislative session. A new law phases in statewide safety standards for all public school swimming pools, requiring a qualified educator, swimming coach or lifeguard to be another set of eyes. Schools will be required to develop a pool safety plan by July 1, 2014.



## **SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS IN RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS**

Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors have proven time and time again to save lives; therefore, we took action this year to require that properties that are sold will be certified to be in compliance with new standards, including working detectors.

**DISTRACTED DRIVING REVISIONS** Distracted driving - especially the use of cell phones while driving - is an increasingly common complaint. A new law addresses distracted driving by increasing the penalty for using a hand-held cell phone or other electronic device in violation of the law while driving. A first offense for distracted driving is now \$150, the second offense is \$300 and a third offense and subsequent offenses are now \$500. These violations will now appear on the offender's driving record and will be made available to insurers.

## **SAFETY OF WORKERS IN ROADWAY WORK ZONES**

Construction and repairs on our roads are inevitable, and it is important that we protect workers who are working close to traffic. Stiffer penalties await drivers who violate highway work zone laws. The law doubles the penalty for drivers who use hand-held cell phones in a highway work zone and also requires violators of the highway work zone safety law to attend a driver retraining program. It also establishes a work zone safety account that will be used for highway traffic enforcement. Tests for drivers' licenses now require knowledge of how to drive in a highway work zone.



Rep. Jutila confers with the Ranking Member on the GAE Committee prior to introducing legislation in the House



## GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND VOTING

**VOTING FLEXIBILITY** In order to provide greater flexibility in voting, the legislature passed a resolution that puts a constitutional amendment on the 2014 general election ballot for a vote by the public. The amendment removes the current restrictions on absentee voting and allows the legislature to explore different forms of early voting.



**STREAMLINING STATE GOVERNMENT** Making Connecticut's government more efficient is essential to building a healthy economy and business climate. A bill we passed this year will reduce costs by eliminating or reconfiguring inactive or redundant state boards and commissions and streamline government.

## **VICTIMS' RIGHTS**

Under legislation we passed this year, disturbing graphic crime scene photos will not have to be made public. We listened to the concerns of the Newtown families and believe we owe it to all families of homicide victims to shield them from further pain. In light of the internet age, the balance between privacy and freedom of information needs to be reexamined and updated. This legislation also establishes an interim task force to explore these issues further and make recommendations to the legislature for additional changes.



FIND THESE BILLS ONLINE AT: [WWW.CGA.CT.GOV](http://WWW.CGA.CT.GOV)

## NEWS BRIEFS

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- We recognize the prominent role manufacturing plays in the state's economy and the need to prepare Connecticut's workforce for future manufacturing jobs. A new bill will encourage companies to recruit, hire and train new apprentices for these jobs.
- The Small Business Express program that provides loans and matching grants to businesses with 100 or fewer employees has been a resounding success. This session, we increased funding for this program that has already helped many small businesses in the state to expand and create jobs.

### FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

- Connecticut is the first state in the nation to call for labeling of all food products that contain genetically modified organisms, or GMOs. This will help families make better informed decisions once the law becomes effective when the threshold of neighboring states adopt similar legislation.
- Funding has been expanded for municipalities to purchase development rights for agricultural land preservation.

### CONSUMER PROTECTION

- Price gouging is now illegal in the aftermath of severe weather events such as Superstorm Sandy whenever a severe weather emergency has been declared by the governor.
- The Department of Social Services is required annually to submit a report to the legislature on the state's efforts to prevent fraud, abuse and errors in the Medicaid program.
- Consumers will now receive notices of electric rate changes from their utilities 30 to 60 days before their fixed rate term expires.

### CHILDREN AND EDUCATION

- New law expands "non-traditional" ways students can earn graduation credits, sets up a task force to study mandate relief for high performing high schools, and creates local partnerships for advancement of the teaching profession.
- Athletic Directors for public high schools face new hiring standards.
- Under a new law that takes on childhood obesity, all students grades K-5 will now be required to participate in 20 minutes per day of physical exercise.