

PUBLIC HEALTH

- Extended telehealth through June 30, 2023 in order to keep the services utilized during the pandemic and required insurance coverage so people don't have to pay out of pocket.
- Protected nursing care workers and patients by requiring nursing homes and dementia-care special units to employ a full-time infection and prevention control specialist; maintain at least a two-month supply of PPE for staff; raise staffing levels to require at least three hours of direct care to residents; and allow residents to designate an "essential support person" to visit even during general visitation restrictions.
- Cut prescription drug costs by requiring manufacturing discounts to go directly to the consumer and not the insurance company.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

- Modernized the Bottle Bill by expanding the list of beverages in January 2023 to include hard cider, juice, tea, coffee, sports energy drinks, and nips while increasing the deposit from 5 cents to 10 cents starting January 2024.
- Advocated for new restrictions on electric suppliers including more oversight of and a prohibition on termination fees and/or early cancellation fees for residential customers.
- Protected firefighters and consumers from PFAS, known as class B firefighting foam, by widely prohibiting its use, and also banning for sale or promotional of food with PFAS.

SUPPORTING OUR SENIORS

- Expanded the eligibility for the Elderly Tax Freeze Program at the local level by decreasing the minimum age requirement from 70 to 65 years, if the municipality chooses to participate.
- Protected working seniors by removing a prospective employee's age, birth date, or graduation date on an initial employment application to prevent age discrimination.
- Expanded the Nursing Home Patient Bill of Rights to include the right of residents to treat their living quarters as their own home; required nursing homes to provide residents with free Internet access.

"It is critically important that we do everything we can to help our seniors stay in the Connecticut we love. I fought to ensure personal income tax was phased out on 401Ks and pensions and made sure that IRAs will be included in 2023."

State Representative Eleni Kavros DeGraw



STATE REPRESENTATIVE ELENI KAVROS DEGRAW PROUDLY SERVING AVON & CANTON

CAPITOL UPDATE 2021

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Dear Neighbor,

COVID-19 has created many challenges for us over these last eighteen months and it certainly changed how we did our jobs as legislators. Whether it was continuing to assist people with challenges with unemployment, locating vaccination sites and vaccines, or answering questions about upcoming legislation, it is an honor and a privilege to serve you and thousands of constituents in our district.

This session my colleagues and I passed a significant number of impactful bills and resolutions. We worked to pass a bipartisan budget and we will be paying down a record amount of pension debt (nearly a billion dollars), while investing in infrastructure, education, seniors, and small businesses. In this newsletter, you will find more detailed information about the issues and bills I championed and supported.

I know that last year's increase in car thefts in our communities continues to be a concern and a priority for you and for me. I have and will continue to encourage our leadership to work in a bipartisan manner to continue the changes we recently enacted to address gaps in the system that have exacerbated this issue.

As always, if you or your family need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at Eleni.KavrosDeGraw@cga.ct.gov or by phone at 860-240-8585.

Wishing you and yours a happy and healthy remainder of 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eleni Kavros DeGraw".

Eleni Kavros DeGraw



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

ELENI KAVROS DEGRAW

CAPITOL UPDATE 2021



FOCUSING ON CHILDREN & FAMILIES

- Eliminated birth-to-three fees making the program free to Connecticut families
- Expanded mental health services to include youth suicide prevention training and created more outpatient services; required social emotional learning as part of teachers' professional development, as well as requiring schools and hospitals to offer information about behavioral and mental health services for children.
- Required comprehensive background checks for employees 18 years or older who have unsupervised access to kids at OEC-licensed youth camps, operators of youth athletic activities, volunteers, coaches, instructors, and athletic trainers.

GROWING CONNECTICUT'S ECONOMY

- Supported our restaurants by creating three possible weeks for restaurants to keep 1% of taxes collected at their establishments; continued to allow alcohol to-go and delivery sales; and cut red-tape to make outdoor dining a permanent option.
- Expanded the Small Business Express program to enable local businesses to grow and thrive.
- Reformed our unemployment laws through a bipartisan, labor union and business-backed plan that lowers taxes on 73% of businesses in Connecticut, putting our trust fund on solid footing for the first time in 50 years.
- Enacted equitable broadband legislation to ensure access across Connecticut.
- Created a Disability Workforce Pipeline Program to help individuals with disabilities find meaningful work.



A BIPARTISAN, ZERO TAX INCREASE BUDGET

This session, I advocated for the negotiation and passage of our \$46 billion state budget. It's critical that we pass as bipartisan a budget as possible in order to maintain our fiscal responsibilities to our taxpayers as well as ensuring that government can still solve the challenges these same people face. This biennium budget package is one we can all be proud of with no tax increases.

- ✔ **Paid down over a billion dollars toward the pension debt with federal dollars**
- ✔ **Record \$3.5 billion allocated to Connecticut's Rainy Day Fund**
- ✔ **Fully funded municipalities**
- ✔ **Restored the social safety net**
- ✔ **Increased tax benefits for seniors**

"As Vice Chair of the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee, I proposed and passed the phase out of the IRA personal income tax to help our Seniors stay in Connecticut while defeating the so-called 'mansion tax.'"

State Representative Eleni Kavros DeGraw

EDUCATION & HIGHER ED

- Created a new Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities to provide guidance for reading assessments in kindergarten through grade three to include new methods for reading proficiency.
- Established the CT Remote Learning Commission to analyze remote learning and to develop a plan to create a K-12 statewide remote learning school.
- Protected town education funding by enacting a new law where each town will receive at least as much ECS money in FYs 22 and 23 as they did in FY 21.
- Created a "Fee-free" Day that requires the Board of Regents and UConn Board of Trustees to establish a day where high school students can apply without paying the costly application fee.
- Established a Council on Sexual Misconduct Climate to conduct assessments protecting students from disciplinary action if the misconduct was connected to a drug or alcohol policy violation.



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