



Dear Neighbors,

The 2026 legislative session focused on protecting Connecticut from the drastic changes at the federal level, as well as other looming issues like election safety, standing up for working families, affordability, funding our schools, and balancing our state budget.

We made historic investments in police, fire, EMS, veterans, teachers, and healthcare workers. Voters demanded better access to absentee ballots, and we ensured their voices were heard. We know that our regressive tax structure means property taxes are still too high, and we set aside more state funding generally, and more education dollars, to municipalities with the direction to lower their mill rates if possible.

It was truly a short, three-month legislative session that did its best to move mountains, and you'll see more details about key legislation and policy initiatives in this newsletter. Thank you for your continued support and for engaging in your community.

All my best,

Eleni Kavros DeGraw

HONORING OUR VETERANS

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED

- Secured more funding for towns to clean up and maintain veterans' cemeteries.
- Created a dental care program for thousands of eligible veterans in our state to cover up to \$3,000 in costs annually.
- Waived fees on veterans' driver's licenses and ID cards, and extended deadlines for car registrations when they relocate to Connecticut.
- Cracked down on scammers who go after veterans pretending to be licensed claim agents or attorneys.
- Established income tax exemptions for honor guard details at veterans' funerals and for National Guard officers on active duty during times of war or natural disasters.
- Created Military Department Emergency Response Account to cover the cost of response to natural disasters or civil emergencies.
- Recognized out-of-state credentials for driving fire trucks, which will help our veterans who already have the relevant experience to be firefighters.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
ELENI KAVROS DEGRAW

PROUDLY SERVING AVON AND CANTON

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CAPITOL UPDATE 2026

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CAPITOL UPDATE 2026

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HISTORIC INVESTMENTS FOR WORKERS & MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILIES

- Provided state health insurance to the families of volunteer firefighters and state marshals who lose their lives in the line of duty.
- Ramped up efforts to hire and train more police officers and firefighters, including volunteer firefighters.
- Financially protected healthcare employees if they get assaulted on the job.
- Made companies disclose when they use AI for decision-making and tell their employees when layoffs are related to AI or other technologies.
- Made it easier for towns to create a retention-based retirement plan for their employees.
- Protected lost wages and benefits through workers' compensation up to 100% (previously 75%).

PROTECTING CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES

- Created a 32-member oversight committee for children under DCF care.
- Improved procedures at DCF if a child is taken out of state and required consideration of children's opinions during home visits.
- Established a new program to support the creation of new scholarship "promise" programs within higher education.
- New adult vaccine program, which will give vaccines at no cost to the uninsured and those who want them.
- AI protections, including safeguards for AI companions acting in human ways, crisis-resource referrals when users express risk of self-harm, and strengthening youth online safety protections related to social media.

HOUSE DEMOCRATS SHEPHERD PASSAGE OF BIPARTISAN BUDGET

- \$190 million in additional direct support for schools.
- \$100 million to mitigate local tax increases.
- \$12 million to establish universal free school breakfast programs across the state.
- Deposited \$300 million into the Early Childhood Endowment.
- Maximized federal funding for healthcare.
- Provided \$3.25 million for early voting and voter information campaigns.
- \$100 million in new funding to cities and towns.
- \$162 million new Education Equalization Grant to address underfunding in our current school funding formula.
- Continued our commitment to responsible budgeting by putting \$1 billion toward paying down long-term pension debt.
- Maintained our Budget Reserve Fund (often called the "rainy day fund") at a historic level.



SUPPORTING OUR SENIORS

- Ensured residential care home residents can set up cameras in their rooms to stay connected with family and monitor their care.
- Required assisted living facilities to give 60 days' notice before any fee increase. If the increase is more than 10%, the facility must hold an informational hearing where residents and families can weigh in.
- Required homemaker companions to get 8 hours of annual training. The training includes how to best help seniors who have dementia, how to report abuse and neglect, and home safety.
- Required nursing homes with 5% or more investor ownership to disclose detailed ownership and financial information every year.
- Required home health aide agencies to provide gloves, masks, and other personal protective equipment to their workers at no cost.
- Strengthened state audits of Medicaid rates at nursing homes.
- Promoted smaller styles of nursing homes for more person-centered care, stronger community ties, and a higher quality of life for residents.



DELIVERING FOR AVON & CANTON

HELPING OUR TOWNS AND HOMEOWNERS

- Avon Senior Center to receive \$100,000.
- Avon DPW to receive \$514,000 to update its break room.
- Avon to receive \$140,000 for sidewalk repairs.
- Canton's Mills Pond Park to receive \$300,000.
- Canton to receive \$425,000 to fix the Town Hall elevator.
- Canton to receive \$200,000 for Bridge Street paving and river access.