

Dear Neighbor:

The recently concluded 2013 session of the Connecticut General Assembly was a productive one. Despite the numerous challenges facing our state, lawmakers worked in a bipartisan manner to pass significant legislation benefitting the people of Connecticut.

I joined my colleagues in adopting a balanced budget for the state of Connecticut, without the introduction of any new taxes, without cuts to vital public services, and without cuts to municipal aid allocations.

In response to the tragedy in Newtown, we adopted landmark gun safety and school security measures, and provided for increased access to mental health treatment and support.

We expanded the Small Business Express Program, renewed our commitment to higher education and research, and raised the minimum wage.

In addition, we passed legislation benefitting military veterans as well as Alzheimer's patients and caregivers, provided property tax exemptions for renewable energy sources, and passed the nation's first labeling law for genetically engineered food products (GMO's).

It is my privilege to serve as your representative in the legislature. Please contact me with any concerns you may have.

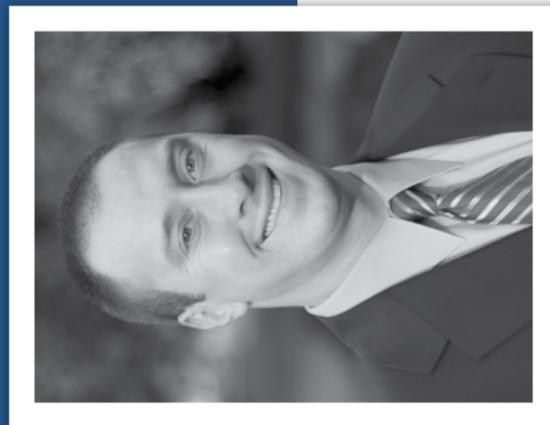
Sincerely,

# STATE REPRESENTATIVE DAVID W. KINER

PROUDLY SERVING EAST WINDSOR & ENFIELD | 59TH DISTRICT

Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591  
Capitol: 860-240-8585  
[www.housedems.ct.gov/Kiner](http://www.housedems.ct.gov/Kiner)

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## CAPITOL UPDATE 2013

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**DAVID W. KINER**

Legislative Office Building, Room 4006

Hartford, CT 06106-1591

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# CAPITOL UPDATE 2013



Rep. Kiner reviewing legislation in the House chamber.

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

Victims of domestic violence and sexual assault now have new protections and advocacy tools, thanks to this law. Changes include: improvements to victim notice requirements when an offender has violated probation; permitting the Judicial Branch to make existing training available to the guardian *ad litem* program; extending the ability to terminate a rental agreement because of violence to victims of sexual assaults; and requiring the Judicial Branch to study the feasibility of permitting a sexual assault victim who is not a perpetrator's family or household member to apply for a civil restraining order. Because many abusive relationships include financial abuse, this law also requires the Judicial Branch to develop a plan to include temporary financial support orders as part of restraining orders, as several other states already do. The law also contains provisions requiring the Judicial Branch to maintain a separate space in certain courthouses for victims and their advocates and revises the protocol for surrendering a firearm by a person who is subject to a restraining or protective order. **(HB 6702/PA 13-214)**

## SMALL BUSINESS EXPRESS PROGRAM

The Small Business Express Program is helping businesses grow and expand, and it's helping Connecticut's economy get back on its feet. It provides customized financial incentive packages tailored to fit individual businesses. The legislature increased support for the Small Business Express Program by authorizing an additional \$60 million in bonds for it, increasing its total bond authorization to \$160 million. **(SB 801/PA 13-2)**

## SYNCHRONIZING PRESCRIPTION REFILLS

This means that all of a patient's prescription refills are coordinated to occur on the same day every month. This law protects patients' drug coverage by requiring that insurance companies cover prescriptions filled in a synchronized manner as long as the patient, their doctor and their pharmacist approve this medication plan. By simplifying the prescription refill process this legislation helps small pharmacies that traditionally offer home delivery of prescriptions, allowing them to cut down overhead costs by only delivering to a specific home once a month. **(HB 5767/PA 13-131)**

## ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND DEMENTIA

According to the Alzheimer's Association, there are over 70,000 Connecticut residents with Alzheimer's or related dementias and this number is expected to grow, posing important challenges for both families and our long-term care infrastructure. In response, the Public Health Committee proposed legislation convening an Alzheimer's Task Force to create a comprehensive, strategic plan for strengthening services and support for patients and their loved ones. The task force will bring together state agencies, health care professionals, service providers, and caregivers to make recommendations on how best to prepare for the needs of this population. **(HB 5979/SA 13-11)**



Rep. Kiner at the Capitol with Senator Richard Blumenthal and a constituent.



Rep. Kiner meets with school children on tour at the Legislative Office Building.

## HELPING VETERANS

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 veteran's service contact who acts as an ombudsman that can guide veterans to the appropriate local, state or federal resources. **(HB 5388/PA 13-34)**

## MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY TRAINING AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR STATE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

Our neighbors serve in the various branches of the military, where they gain valuable experience and skills that can be applied to secure employment, and these skills should be recognized. This act 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 expedited licensure purposes. **(HB 5387/Special Act 13-5)**

## ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE CONCERNING THE SALE OF DOGS AND CATS AT PET SHOPS & THE TETHERING OF DOGS

Many people in the state of Connecticut see their pet as another member of the family. We passed several laws this year that relate to the health and well-being of our pets. One law prohibits the tethering of dogs outdoors under extreme weather conditions, providing protection to the dog and penalizing owners who leave a dog outside for more than 15 minutes during extreme weather. Another law creates a task force to better inform the public about horrible places that the dogs and cats come from when they are purchased and how those living conditions can contribute to the animals' poor health. **(HB 5027/PA 13-19) & (HB 5844/PA 13-189)**