

# STATE REPRESENTATIVE ROLAND LEMAR

Dear Neighbor,

The pandemic has produced numerous challenges and exacerbated existing institutional inequities. Throughout the 2021 session, my colleagues and I worked to address these new challenges and the existing injustices by passing over 350 bills and resolutions.

I know the past year has been difficult for each individual and family in our community, and I believe the legislation passed in Hartford will empower everyone in our district. This session I advocated for equitable public health policies, increased access to mental health resources, and additional support for our seniors, schools, and small businesses. I also worked with my colleagues to pass a bipartisan budget that will strengthen our economy and invest in our infrastructure, sustainability efforts, and education. I have fought to ensure New Haven and East Haven will see an increase in funding in both Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 through this budget. I am confident that these state investments will see our community recover and thrive as we move out of this pandemic.

Please continue reading for more information on legislative highlights and resources developed this session that will benefit your family, our district, and our state.

Best,



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STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**ROLAND LEMAR**  
PROUDLY SERVING NEW HAVEN & EAST HAVEN



# CAPITOL UPDATE 2021



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# ROLAND LEMAR

PROUDLY SERVING NEW HAVEN & EAST HAVEN

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## STRENGTHENING CT'S ECONOMY

- Leading the country with Equitable Broadband (HB 6442)
  - » Assessment of state-wide access to the web
  - » Grants to towns and cities for broadband projects
  - » State-level industry regulation
  - » Required internet providers to cover part of the state's cost
- Created a new workforce pipeline program for individuals with disabilities (PA 21-10)
- Cut unemployment insurance taxes on local businesses by excluding pandemic-related layoffs and paying directly into the fund (PA 21-5 & SB 1202)
- Taking Care of Connecticut's Restaurants
  - » Created a tax-free day for restaurants (SB 1202)
  - » Continued alcohol to-go and delivery sales by local bars and restaurants (PA 21-37)
  - » Cut red tape and made outdoor dining a permanent option for bars and restaurants (SB 1202)

## PUTTING CT'S FAMILIES FIRST

- Provided further relief and assistance for homeowners with crumbling foundations by extending the life of the captive insurance company, requiring annual reports from quarries, and developing concrete standards. (PA 21-120)
- Extended telehealth benefits for Connecticut residents for the next two years. Individuals in the state will continue to have access to in-depth healthcare from the comfort of their homes as we transition out of the pandemic. (PA 21-133 & PA 21-9)
- Helping our children recover from this pandemic through expanding youth suicide prevention training, creating more outpatient services and requiring social emotional learning to be part of teachers' professional development. (PA 21-46)
- Strengthened protections for domestic violence victims and survivors. (PA 21-78)

## A BUDGET FOCUSED ON



WORKING FAMILIES



TOWNS & CITIES



NONPROFITS



## A GREENER CONNECTICUT

- Raised bottle deposits to 10 cents, applied deposits to more products and provided more money to towns and redemption centers to ensure these products don't end up as litter or in a landfill. (PA 21-58)
- Regulated the harmful chemical "PFAS". (SB 837)

## EXPANDED VOTING ACCESS

Voting is the foundation of democracy. This year, the General Assembly voted to allow two ballot referenda to decide in 2022 if we should have early, in-person voting and in 2024 to decide if every registered voter in CT should be able to vote by absentee ballot. (RA 21-1 and RA 21-2)

## PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

- Allows local traffic authorities to establish speed limits and pedestrian safety zones
- Requires motorists to grant the right-of-way to pedestrians who affirmatively indicate their intention to cross the road in a crosswalk
- Increases the additional fee provided to municipalities for certain traffic violations
- Establishes the greenways commemorative account
- Increases the fine for operating a motor vehicle while using a hand-held mobile telephone or electronic device
- Allows the use of automated traffic enforcement safety devices within maintenance work zones
- Establishes a fine for opening the door of a motor vehicle in a way that impedes the travel of a pedestrian or a person riding a bicycle

## RESPONDING TO COVID

- Expanded workers' compensation benefits for PTSD to cover emergency responders, corrections workers, dispatchers and essential health care providers who were on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic (PA 21-107)
- Continued coverage and access to telehealth (HB 6470)
- Increased funding to local health departments (SB 1202)

## LEGALIZED ADULT USE CANNABIS

We crafted a comprehensive program to legalize cannabis.

- Legalized the use and possession of cannabis for adults 21+.
- Retail sales will begin around summer 2022.
- Individuals 21+ can grow up to 3 mature plants in 2023.
- Established an equity fund, criminal justice reforms, and economic opportunities to address the devastation of the War on Drugs and erased cannabis possession convictions going back 20 years.
- Created an equity commission that will work continuously to make improvements to the system.
- Invested in public health, prevention, mental health and addiction services.
- Established a multi-level system to train police officers to recognize impaired drivers.

## FIGHTING FOR EQUALITY

- Declared racism a public health crisis and created a Commission on Racial Equity tasked with eliminating health disparities (PA 21-35)
- Championed new zoning reforms to address rising housing costs, affordability, equity and opportunity in our communities (PA 21-29)
- Guaranteed legal representation if you're facing eviction (PA 21-34)
- Voters will get to decide in 2022 whether CT will allow in-person voting, and in 2024 whether CT will offer no-excuse absentee ballots to all registered voters. (PA 21-1 & PA 21-2)
- Ended prison gerrymandering – the practice of counting prisoners as if they were registered voters in the towns in which they are incarcerated when determining what districts our elected officials represent (PA 21-49)
- Restored voting rights for individuals in community facilities or on parole (SB 1202)

