



Rep. Lesser stands with Melissa Greenbacker, from Greenbacker Farm, Durham, and her cow, Daisy, at the Capitol. Rep. Lesser serves on the Dairy Task Force.

Rep. Lesser receives an award from the Durham Fair Association for passing legislation to save the Fair.

Saving the Durham Fair

We successfully passed legislation to save this important tradition, at the request of the Town of Durham and area residents. Earlier this year, the Durham Fair's future was endangered by a state law that imposed new unfunded mandates on towns and fairs. Our bipartisan legislation protects the Durham Fair and relieves those mandates. The bill exempts towns and fairs from being forced to meet excessive licensing requirements and provides first responders in Durham with additional information to ensure that health and safety at the fair are protected.

Protecting Local Dairy

With Connecticut farmers losing as much as a dollar on every gallon of milk, we ensured that federally collected milk fees will now be used to promote our local dairy farms. There are about 150 dairy farms in Connecticut, down from 210 in 2007 and 500 in 1990. Our legislation is aimed at saving the remaining farms. Dairy farming remains a billion dollar industry in Connecticut and provides over 5,000 jobs.

Helping Those in Need

When the St. Vincent de Paul soup kitchen in Middletown was ordered to stop serving food donated by churches just before Thanksgiving, we worked to pass emergency legislation allowing them to continue their work. In these difficult times, it is more important than ever to help families in need.

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State Representative

Matt Lesser

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YOUR REPRESENTATIVE in the CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY



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If you need additional assistance or have questions, please contact me.

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Important phone numbers

State InfoLine 211
ConnPACE 800.423.5026
Medicare Hotline 800.633.4227
Long-Term Care 800.547.3443
Commission on Aging 860.240.5200
Medicare Advocacy 800.262.4414
Consumer Protection 800.842.2649
CT Veterans Affairs 860.616.3600
CT Elder Services 866.218.6631
Health Care Advocate 866.466.4446

Durham, Middlefield and Middletown Save by Working Together

Property Taxpayers May Get Relief

Durham, Middlefield and Middletown can now team-up with other towns to save money while delivering necessary services.

Speaker Donovan created the blue ribbon commission on Municipal Opportunities and Regional Efficiencies (MORE). I was proud to serve on this commission as we initiated a new approach to state and local government in Connecticut that makes our state more economically competitive in the short and long term.

- » Cost savings by allowing towns to join the state in purchasing prescriptions
- » Saving money on school transportation by giving money to towns that work together to provide transportation services
- » Health insurance savings by allowing two or more municipalities or boards of education to purchase health benefits
- » Getting local taxpayers off the hook for storing the belongings of evicted tenants while protecting tenants' rights

Lower Electric Rates, Renewable Energy

Recently, Governor Rell vetoed energy legislation that would have lowered electric rates by 15% and promoted investments in clean energy sources. Connecticut residents pay the highest electric rates in the continental United States. This bill would have also helped create thousands of green jobs. We will continue to work for lower electric rates and renewable energy.



Rep. Lesser and Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz meet with small businesses from Middlefield and Middletown.

2011 BUDGET: BALANCED, BUT NOT COMPLETE

The 2010 legislative session was one of both challenge and compromise as we worked to balance our state budget. In the end, the governor and legislative leaders agreed to a budget that made relatively few cuts, but included a hidden tax on electric rate payers and additional borrowing.

While I am happy that the state protected funding for cities and towns and many important programs, this was not a budget I could support and I voted against it.

For years, electric rate payers have been paying a fee for energy efficiency that goes into a fund. The fund supports programs that help reduce electricity usage in Connecticut which saves families and businesses money. This budget redirects 35% of that money away from energy efficiency and into Connecticut's General Fund—creating, in effect, a new tax on electric bills.

With Connecticut families already paying the highest rates in the continental United States, I could not support legislation that adds even a penny to your electric bill.

Our economy has already begun to show signs of rebounding and I am optimistic about Connecticut's economic recovery, but I remain concerned about Connecticut's long-term fiscal problems. The budget borrows more than \$900 million and relies on one-time fixes, leaving the underlying fiscal problems for a new legislature and a new governor to deal with, so I chose to vote no.

Protecting State Aid to Towns

Town Aid for Durham, Middlefield, Middletown

Fiscal Year 2010-2011

Total Education Grants	\$ 24,130,899
Town Aid Road Fund Grant	\$ 514,666
Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP)	\$ 410,755
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$7,308,550
Pequot/Mohegan Aid	\$ 1,274,874
School Transportation	\$1,151,226
Total State Funds	\$ 34,790,970



Rep. Lesser is recognized as a Children's Champion by the Early Childhood Alliance. Lesser worked to save the Family Resource Center at the Farm Hill School in Middletown.

Good News for Seniors Ensuring Children with Autism Receive Quality Services

» Seniors using the CT Homecare Program for Elders will see a reduction in monthly costs for critical in-home services. New legislation reduces the percentage seniors pay.

» We reopened the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program. Governor Rell had closed the program in 2009, but working with advocates, the legislature was able to re-open the program in May, allowing Connecticut families to receive these important services.

» People age 60 and older will now be able to complete a shorter, 4-hour driving program to be eligible for a two-year discount of 5% or more on auto insurance.

» New legislation helps seniors protect their assets when their spouse needs to enter a nursing home. Currently, the spouse remaining at home must spend down half of his or her assets in order to allow the ill spouse to qualify for Medicaid coverage. This year, we increased the asset cap, so that the couple can keep assets up to \$110,000.

As a member of the Education Committee, advocating for our children's education is essential. This year, the General Assembly established clear standards for applied behavioral analysts who care for students with autism spectrum disorders.

Safer Sports Student Athletes & Concussions

Head injuries in school sports are often hard to diagnose and have turned tragic.

To avoid serious long-term injuries we enacted new protections:

- » Student athletes who sustain head injuries will need medical clearance before re-joining athletic activity
- » Athletic coaches will now be trained to recognize and respond to concussions

State Representative

MATT LESSER

Cut along dotted line.

To receive more information on any of the following issues, e-mail, call or mail me the completed form. Make sure to give your name, address and e-mail, and indicate which issues you're interested in.

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