



Dear Friends,

Thank you for giving me the privilege to represent you in the General Assembly. It is an honor to serve you in Hartford as I work with so many of you to make our state the best it can be.

As a freshman legislator, I introduced bills related to Affordable Housing, Bicycle Safety and Infrastructure, Regulation of Electronic Cigarettes, Microbeads, and fines for snow dumped in handicapped parking spaces. With the support of Fairfielders, advocates and fellow legislators, all but one became law. In addition, I was honored to be named one of this year's Environmental Champions by the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters.

There were many other bills I supported and even co-sponsored, but the most important and difficult vote was my vote on the state budget. Though I support many important programs within the budget, including transportation investments and care for our most vulnerable, I was one of 11 Democrats who voted no on the biennial budget. Together with a group of Democrats, I brought concerns to leadership and was successful in eliminating some of the new taxes proposed (data taxes) while working to restore critically necessary funding for the most vulnerable in our greater community, and mitigating others.

Here in Fairfield we face the possibility of GE's departure and this is causing much anxiety within our community. Many of our neighbors and friends are employed by GE, which creates further stress for Fairfielders. As one of two legislative appointees to the new Commission on Economic Competitiveness, I will continue to fight for a Connecticut that is competitive while retaining jobs with the priority of caring for the most vulnerable.

The challenges we face are real and there are many difficult conversations ahead. I will continue to bring stakeholders together, listen to all who are interested in thoughtful dialogue, and create sustainable solutions. I remain confident in Fairfield's strength and resiliency, and vow as your state representative to continue to fight for the people of Fairfield and for our amazing state.

Cristin McCarthy Vahey

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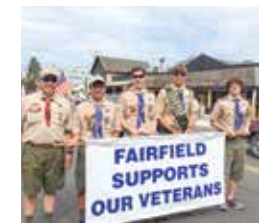
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COMMISSION ON ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

I was appointed to serve on the new Commission on Economic Competitiveness. The nine-member group was created to develop policies that promote economic growth and grow jobs in the state. The Commission will analyze the impact state tax policy has on state business and industry and will also examine the needs of small and large businesses as they strive to maintain economic competitiveness.

PA 15-5



Rep. McCarthy Vahey with students from Mr. Flynn's class at Warde High School



TRANSPORTATION

LET'S GO CT

The legislature approved initial funding for the Governor's \$4 billion initiative to remake the state's transportation infrastructure, including funding for Metro North, transit, Though there was much discussion of a statutory "lockbox," action is needed on this and on financing of future plans.

PA 15-244

THE BIKE BILL

This year, I co-introduced and championed the Bike Bill. Passed with nearly unanimous support, it allows for more modern and flexible bicycle infrastructure in our state. The bill also empowers bicyclists to make the determination as to how far to the right they can safely ride.

PA 15-41

HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES

Another issue I pushed for, along with the help of a dedicated constituent, was a fine for those who dump snow in handicapped parking spaces. The new fine matches current penalties for those who park in spots designated for our disabled.

PA 15-5

UPDATES TO OUR EDUCATION LAWS

STUDENT ASSESSMENTS

As a member of the Education Committee and parent of a high schooler, I strongly supported a bill to replace the junior year SBAC testing with the SAT. Beginning this year, high school juniors will take the SAT as their required student assessment. Here in Fairfield, students will take the test for no cost during the school day. The law also creates a Mastery Examination Committee to study all student assessments and make a recommendation to the Legislature's Education Committee.

PA 15-238



PROTECTING SCHOOL CHILDREN

We passed a new law changing the penalty for mandated reporters who fail to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Under certain conditions, the penalty will change from a class A misdemeanor to a class E felony.

PA 15-205



LIFE-THREATENING FOOD ALLERGY TASK FORCE

After hearing from Fairfield parents and legislative colleagues, I introduced a bill creating a food allergy task force to examine the effectiveness of the implementation of current guidelines and make recommendations for improved practices.

SA 15-17



DYSLEXIA BILL

The State Department of Education is now required to designate professionals to help parents and boards of education implement measures for detecting and providing services to students with dyslexia. The bill also includes improved teacher preparation programs and in-service teacher training.

PA 15-97

PROTECTING OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

PROTECTION FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT

To protect seniors from potential abuse, the legislature expanded the definition of neglect to include a situation in which a caretaker fails to arrange services necessary to an elderly person's health. The Department of Social Services is now required to notify a nursing or residential care home resident's designee of suspected abuse or neglect within 24 hours.

PA 15-150

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR RESIDENTS OF CONTINUING CARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

This year, we also created a bill of rights for senior citizens living in continuing care retirement communities. The bill of rights requires transparency regarding the financial stability of the facility, and notification to residents of major construction or any changes of ownership.

PA 15-115



REGULATING VARIABLE ELECTRIC RATES

Electricity providers can no longer enter into variable rate contracts or automatically renew those contracts. This law will offer protection from electricity providers who offered low introductory rates only to see a rapid increase upon completion of the initial contract.

PA 15-90

ESTABLISHING A WOMEN VETERANS' PROGRAM

The Department of Veterans Affairs will now be required to conduct benefits and services outreach for female veterans, and offer recommendations to the legislature on what types of service initiatives would be best for female veterans.

PA 15-8

Thank you to the hundreds of people who have contacted me this session. Please continue to reach out to me. Your input is critical.