

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

ROBERT W. MEGNA

PROUDLY SERVING THE 97TH HOUSE DISTRICT | NEW HAVEN

Dear Neighbor,

I am pleased to share with you this update on the recently concluded legislative session.

Each year brings a new set of challenges, and the 2015 session was no different. Despite a serious budget deficit and the need to encourage economic growth, my colleagues and I passed a balanced budget that provides property and car tax relief for middle-class families and small businesses, consumer protections and programs that empower Connecticut's families.

We created the framework for a once-in-a-generation investment in our transportation infrastructure, which will spur more economic growth and create jobs. The result of all this will improve the quality of life for residents who use our roads and rail system.

In addition, legislation was passed that protects seniors and consumers, and we brought transparency to the rapidly changing health care landscape.

We also focused on protecting our environment by banning plastic microbeads which pollute our waters, and broadened the ban on harmful pesticides to better protect our children from exposure to these chemicals. The legislature also voted to ensure that future generations can enjoy one of our most valuable natural resources by developing a Blue Plan for Long Island Sound.

We stood up for military veterans, students and Connecticut workers whose jobs and livelihoods are under threat from out-of-state competition.

I hope you find the enclosed information helpful and will feel free to call or email me for any reason—legislative or otherwise. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your state representative and I welcome the opportunity to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Rep. Bob Megna

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HARTFORD, CT
Permit No. 3937

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
ROBERT W. MEGNA

PROUDLY SERVING THE 97TH HOUSE DISTRICT | NEW HAVEN



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

ROBERT W. MEGNA

PROUDLY SERVING THE 97TH HOUSE DISTRICT | NEW HAVEN



CAPITOL UPDATE 2015

Legislative Office Building, Room 2802
Hartford, CT 06106-1591
Capitol: 800-842-8267
www.housedems.ct.gov/Megna



www.facebook.com/CTHouseDemocrats



Rep. Megna and fellow legislators discussing legislation this past session



Pardee Seawall Park, Morris Cove, New Haven

STATE REPRESENTATIVE **ROBERT W. MEGNA** PROUDLY SERVING THE 97TH HOUSE DISTRICT | NEW HAVEN

VARIABLE ELECTRIC RATES - CONSUMERS PROTECTED

The state legislature took a historic step in protecting Connecticut residents from predatory electric rate providers where the elderly, in particular, have fallen victim to low introductory rates that increased rapidly within a few months above the standard rate. Competitive electric rate suppliers must now give their customers a 60 day prior notice before the end of their contracts. Providers can no longer charge their customers a termination or early cancellation fee and must allow customers to switch to standard service the ability to do so within 72 hours. The legislation also set up a process for the Public Utilities and Regulatory Authority (PURA) to further investigate and take measures to completely eliminate variable electric rates when a customer's contract expires. This Connecticut law is the first in the nation to offer residential variable ratepayers protections to better manage their electricity costs and keep them informed.

*(SB 573 as amended by Senate A / PA 15-90) [signed by Governor]
Effective Date: October 1, 2015*



Bella Vista Complex



Rep. Megna bringing out a bill

ESTABLISHING A BILL OF RIGHTS FOR RESIDENTS OF CONTINUING-CARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

This year we created a bill of rights for senior citizens living in continuing care retirement communities. This bill of rights gives residents a voice in decisions that affect them within these communities. It requires transparency regarding the financial stability of the facility, and notification to residents of major construction or any changes in ownership. It also gives residents more independence in making decisions about their medical care and assisted living services and requires reasonable accommodations for disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

*(HB 5358 as amended by House A / PA 15-115) [signed by Governor]
Effective Date: October 1, 2015*

KEEPING ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THE NATIONAL GUARD FROM BEING EXCLUDED FROM COVERAGE UNDER CERTAIN LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES

We are always looking for ways to help servicemen and women and their families. One way is to make sure that their families are able to purchase the same kind of life insurance coverage that civilian families are offered. Starting in October, insurers will be prohibited from issuing a life insurance policy or annuity that excludes coverage for the military service member in the event that his or her injury or death is during military service or war.

*(HB 6952 / PA 15-70) [signed by Governor]
Effective Date: October 1, 2015*

LONG ISLAND SOUND BLUE PLAN & RESOURCE AND USE INVENTORY

Long Island Sound remains one of our most precious state resources. To protect the Sound, the "Blue Plan" will inventory the resources, uses and conservation areas of our portion of Long Island Sound. With this plan in place, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection along with the newly established 16-member Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory and Blue Plan Advisory Committee will be able to more clearly and effectively manage our offshore waters through data-driven processes. It will also help streamline, allocate and coordinate our resources, including state agencies, academic institutions, and other stakeholders. Plans similar to this have been instituted by a number of our neighboring coastal states with great success.

*(HB 6839 as amended by House A and B / PA 15-66) [signed by Governor]
Effective Date: July 1, 2015*

CRACKING DOWN ON DIRT BIKES AND ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES

There has been growing concern about the improper use of dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles (ATV's) in many municipalities. Complaints about speeding, extremely loud noise and trespassing on state and private property have led to a need to properly manage the use of these vehicles. Beginning October 1st, municipalities may fine first-time violators of a dirt bike or ATV ordinance without providing an initial warning. Municipalities may set fines of up to \$1,000 for the first violation, \$1,500 for the second violation, and \$2,000 for subsequent violations.

*(SB 186 / PA 15-100) [signed by Governor]
Effective Date: October 1, 2015*

DRUG SAFETY LABELING ON PRESCRIPTION BOTTLES

To better protect and inform consumers we are now requiring that pharmacists include with generic drugs the manufacturer's name, website and telephone number for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's drug safety and reporting program (MedWatch). If the patient is being given a generic drug, the pharmacist must include the brand name on the label. This will help ensure that patients are aware of what drugs they are taking, where these drugs come from and where to report any adverse effects.

*(SB 28 as amended by Senate A / PA 15-219) [signed by Governor]
Effective Date: January 1, 2016*