

SUPPORTING OUR SENIORS

Taking care of our older citizens is a priority. We passed legislation to make sure patients are notified of their rights and available services when nursing homes or long-term care facilities close or reduce the number of beds. We also required nursing homes to allow residents being discharged to pick a caregiver to help them with their discharge plan. Other legislation allows for elderly or disabled tenants of state-assisted housing to pay security deposits in installments.

STANDING UP FOR VETERANS

We stand by our veterans. The legislature passed measures that will facilitate veteran employment by creating a resource network through the Department of Labor for veterans with specialized skills and giving a preference to veteran-owned small businesses bidding for state contracts. We also broadened the scope of the law that bars discriminatory practices in our state's armed forces and approved a resolution urging our nation's leaders to recognize Blue Water Navy Veterans' exposure to Agent Orange.

DYSLEXIA

States around the country have been working to improve their laws on reading intervention to address the growing problem of undertreated dyslexia. Connecticut continues to make ground in this area by establishing new requirements for teachers who obtain endorsements in remedial reading and language arts as well as for reading consultants. Beginning next year, teachers seeking such endorsements will take a reading and language diagnosis and remediation program as part of their teacher preparation.

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

This year the House passed numerous laws to promote the wellbeing of children in Connecticut.

The House passed legislation to combat childhood obesity and ban toxic chemicals from kid's products. While this legislation didn't make it to a vote in the Senate, I will continue to support these measures in the next legislative session.

We're also ensuring children receive a high-quality educational experience by safeguarding student data used by schools and making improvements to the Office of Early Childhood, such as improving notification to parents when a childcare facility is unlicensed.

NO "PASSING THE TRASH" IN SCHOOLS

Our top priority is to ensure that children are safe when they go to school and to shield students from sexual predators. Colloquially known as "passing the trash," a teacher who has been accused of sexual misconduct may be able to get a job in another school district or another state. This new law requires local and regional boards of education to share findings of misconduct or abuse with other boards of education to prevent them from unknowingly hiring an unfit teacher.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

PATRICIA BILLIE MILLER

PROUDLY SERVING THE 145TH HOUSE DISTRICT | STAMFORD

Legislative Office Building

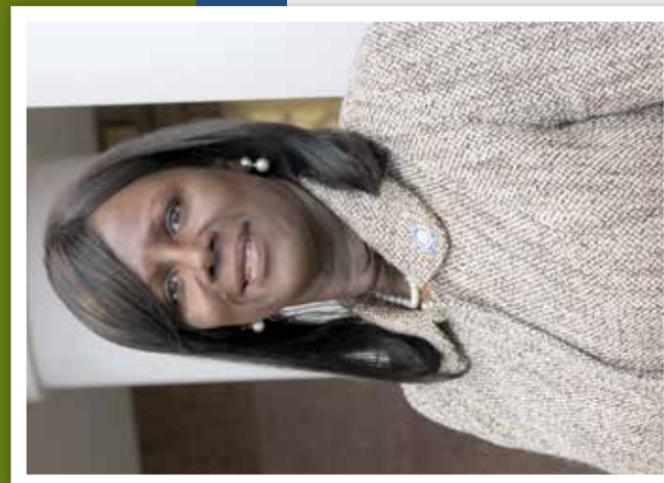
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STATE REPRESENTATIVE PATRICIA BILLIE MILLER

PROUDLY SERVING THE 145TH HOUSE DISTRICT | STAMFORD

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

House Democrats led the way in passing significant legislation during the 2016 session of the General Assembly to help protect and improve the quality of life for Connecticut families.

This was a session dominated by the budget. Although there were no easy solutions this year, after a lot of hard work we approved a budget that is balanced, without borrowing and without tax increases. Cutting \$830 million is painful, but these long-term structural changes will help put Connecticut's budget on a sustainable path – not just this year, but into the future.

Improving public health, increasing access to education, and encouraging financial security for everyone were featured elements of some of the major bills approved by the legislature this year.

Keeping Connecticut a great place to live, work, and raise a family is our ongoing objective as well as our responsibility. Though the 2016 legislative session presented one of the toughest budget challenges in decades, we succeeded in helping move our state forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pat", enclosed in a large, loopy oval.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Women in abusive relationships are 5 times more likely to be killed if their abuser has access to a firearm. Connecticut is taking great strides in protecting women and children from domestic violence by requiring a person to surrender firearms after being served with a temporary restraining order. Another new law was created to help prevent sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

AFFIRMATIVE CONSENT

We passed legislation to ensure that all Connecticut colleges and universities students have the same level of protection against sexual assault. The legislation will require that all public and private universities adopt policies establishing 'affirmative consent' as the standard definition of consent in their investigations of sexual assault. Affirmative consent is defined as an active, clear, and voluntary agreement by a person to engage in sexual activity with another person.

TACKLING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

In recent years, Connecticut, like other New England states, has seen a heartbreaking increase in fatal opioid overdoses. Earlier this year we passed groundbreaking legislation to combat this crisis. This lifesaving law will allow any licensed healthcare professional to administer drugs that reverse opioid overdoses, require municipalities to equip their first responders with the opioid reversal drug Narcan, and cap first-time opioid prescriptions at a seven-day supply.

BAN THE BOX

An Act Concerning Fair Chance Employment was created to prevent employers from requiring people to disclose a criminal record when first applying for a job. On job applications, people are frequently asked to "check the box" for any arrests or convictions. Under this legislation, the box would be banned and employers would be prohibited from inquiring about a criminal record during the initial application process – but would still have the ability to inquire about criminal history during the interview process. Some employers, such as law enforcement and school districts, which are required to verify an applicant's criminal history, would be exempt.



With Paola Ortega, Jill Hummel, and Fran Pastore at the Women's Business Development Council's 14th annual Business Breakfast held at the Stamford Hilton



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CASH REFUNDS FOR GIFT CARD BALANCES

I authored and co-sponsored a new law that will allow customers to receive cash back on gift cards with a remaining balance of less than three dollars.

This consumer-friendly legislation will help people hold onto more of their own money:

- Consumers often never redeem small remaining balances on gift cards.
- Almost a billion dollars of gift card sales went unredeemed in 2015.
- Eleven other states have enacted similar legislation.

The legislation ensures that we're not putting an undue burden on businesses by:

- Requiring customers present the gift card receipt to get cash back.
- Exempting gift cards donated by retailers to charity.
- Including only businesses with a storefront in Connecticut.

JOBS: ASSISTING CONNECTICUT BUSINESSES

To ensure job growth and improve Connecticut's business climate, we passed laws that would allow first-time business owners to receive reimbursement for the initial costs associated with starting up a business, address the teacher shortage issue in the Connecticut Technical High Schools System (CTHSS), develop programs to introduce students and their parents to careers in manufacturing, and adopt the Connecticut Uniform Limited Liability Company Act to offer companies a greater level of consistency to regulate the formation and dissolution of LLC's.

Connecticut 500 Project - The main goals of this bold economic development plan are to create a net increase of 500,000 private sector jobs over the next 25 years; increase the state's population by 5,000 new residents; create 500 new startup businesses; increase by 500 the annual number of students graduating from state colleges and universities; and maintain CT's top five-ranking with respect to productivity, higher education and per capita income.

Support for Growing Small Businesses - We're investing \$1 million a year for 5 years to support firms that have made it past the startup phase and mature companies that have the potential to grow.

REPLACEMENT OF HOUSING PROJECTS BY HOUSING AUTHORITIES

Public housing plays a key role in our communities so it's important to preserve it. Beginning October 1st, the State Housing Commissioner must give approval before the sale, lease, transfer, or demolition of a housing project. The following criteria must be met: An adequate supply of low- or moderate-income rental housing will remain within the municipality; the project is in the best interest of the State and municipality; and provisions are established within the project plan to allow participation by residents and representatives of the city or town. I believe this is a good law that will benefit everyone involved.

ELECTIONS

The legislature took another step this year to ensure that everyone can exercise their right to vote. We expanded Election Day Registration to include anyone in line on Election Day at their registration location by 8 pm. In addition, we moved back the deadline for online registration to seven days before a regular election, in line with mail-in and in-person procedures.