

Dear Neighbors,

As your voice at the Capitol, it's important to me that you voice the questions, comments, and concerns you have so that I can do my job and help. During this precious time when there is no legislative session, together we can discuss laws that we passed, laws that we need, and the future of our community. Please fill out the card below and feel free to contact my office at 240-0082. I look forward to continuing my work for our town and please remember... I'm working for you!

Sincerely,

Russell A. Morin

Rep. Russell A. Morin
(D-28th)

**IMPORTANT
&
VALUABLE!**

PLEASE CUT OUT AND RETURN!



Please rank the top 3 issues that you find important from most important to least:

- Energy Healthcare Education Taxes
- Environment Transportation

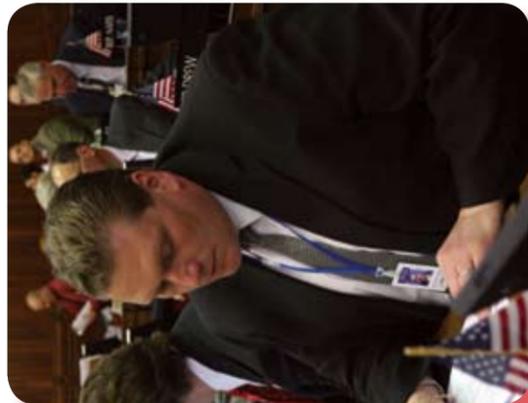
Do you have any suggestions for legislation that you would like to see discussed next year? If so, please explain.

How can I better serve you as your state representative?

Is there any area of our community that you think needs particular attention right now? If so, please explain.

State Representative Russell Morin

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JOIN ME
for a **LIVE** call in show
Channel 14, 2nd Friday of the Month
Beginning in the Fall
7 p.m.

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**PRESENTING:
YOUR GUIDE TO THE
2007 LEGISLATIVE
SESSION!**

**STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Russell A. Morin**

PROUDLY SERVING
Wethersfield
28TH DISTRICT

Teachers' Retirement System



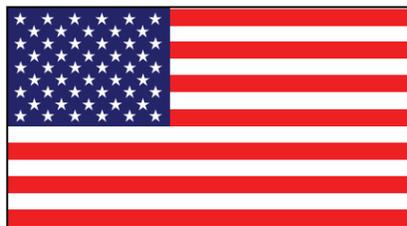
I am proud to report that this session my colleagues and I took steps to shore up the finances of the Connecticut's Teachers' Retirement Fund, and ultimately save taxpayers an estimated \$2.8 billion over 25 years. There has been a history of shortchanging on the state's contribution to the Fund and, as a result, the fund has an unfunded liability that has grown to an astonishing \$6.9 billion. This legislation

authorizes the sale of \$2 billion in pension obligation bonds, payable over the next 25 years at current interest rates (about 5.6%). The debt from the bond sales will cost less than the rate the state is currently being charged (8.5%) on our unfunded liability. The transaction is similar to refinancing a mortgage at a more favorable interest rate. Over the life of the bonds, the state will be committed to making annual payments into the fund equal to 100% of what the actuaries for the fund say is required. Had the state funded it at 100% of the recommended contribution over the past 13 years, the Fund would have accrued an additional \$2.5 billion in additional investment income. I am pleased that this legislation will finally bring the state's unfunded liability under control. This plan will put the Teachers' Retirement Fund on the road to fiscal health, while saving taxpayers billions. It will allow the state to meet its obligation to our educators by ensuring that teachers receive the pensions they have counted on and deserve. Finally, a stronger Teachers' Retirement System will ensure that Connecticut will continue to attract and retain highly qualified teachers who can provide an excellent education to our students.

Veteran's Issues

ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL IN A STATE VETERANS' CEMETERY

In an effort to better recognize those who protect our freedoms everyday, we have extended the rules regarding who can be buried in a state veterans' cemetery. Under the new law, Connecticut National Guard members who have completed at least twenty years of guard service and were killed in action or died as a result of an accident or illness they endured while in active service would qualify, as well as one spouse.



HONORING OUR FALLEN HEROES

We have had to enact a state law to protect military funerals. Protestors must stay 150 feet away from the entrance to a funeral location when making noise or creating diversions that are not part of the ceremony. Protestors must stay 300 feet away if their presence impedes an entrance or exit. Violators can be punished up to one year in prison, a fine of up to \$2,000, or both. This new law should allow individuals who find themselves having to bury a loved one to do so in peace.

THE BUDGET



In the newly adopted two-year state budget, we have led the fight for historic increases in local education aid and health care. Overall, the new state budget addresses the fundamental needs of our state's citizens with only a minor tax increase.

- ✓ Statewide, town aid increases by \$221.3 million for the upcoming fiscal year and an additional \$131.5 million for FY 09. What that means to us: \$8,958,419 for FY 08, an increase of \$2,154,703, and \$9,296,370 for FY 09, an increase of \$337,951.
- ✓ A \$336 million increase for healthcare funding is aimed at increasing coverage and access for the uninsured, mainly for children through the existing state HUS-KY program. It will also have automatic enrollment for newborns; expanded eligibility, school-based health clinics and higher Medicaid reimbursement for doctors form the cornerstone of the plan.
- ✓ Weatherization products are exempted from our sales tax.
- ✓ Vehicles that get greater than 40 mpg are exempted from our sales tax.
- ✓ Education Cost Sharing formula was increased from \$5,891 to \$9,687 per student. This means that Wethersfield gets \$7,680,711 this year and \$8,018,662 for FY 09.
- ✓ An additional \$2 million in funds for the After-school Competitive Grant Program, so that more students will have the opportunity to participate.
- ✓ An increase from \$700 to \$1,350 per student will benefit the state's Vocational Technical Schools.

Fire Fighters



★ The Connecticut General Assembly, realizing the high cost of training our paid and volunteer firefighters, will be reimbursing municipalities and state agencies for one-half the cost of the Firefighter I certification program. Firefighters who are paid personnel must be certified as Firefighter I and II, which are their entry level criteria. Volunteer personnel must be certified as Firefighter I prior to being able to enter a building which is on fire. This should help with the recruitment and retention of firefighters while at the same time alleviating some of the cost of certifications for the town.



★ The legislature is cracking down on the serious offense of misusing the E-911 system. As of July 1, 2007, individuals convicted of misusing the E-911 emergency system will be given a class B misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000, imprisonment for up to six months, or both. "Misuse" is defined as calling in a false alarm or purposefully reporting false information. This new law extends beyond land-line telephones to mobile devices. A monthly fee to fund the E-911 program will be charged to those who subscribe to companies that offer voice over internet protocol (VOIP), which enables a router to transmit telephone calls and faxes over the Internet, or companies providing pre-paid phone services.

School Bus Emissions



One of the issues on which I received calls, letters and e-mail was Senate Bill 1500, which deals with creating a healthy environment for our children to live, play and learn. This piece of legislation makes an effort to do just that! The Environment Committee,

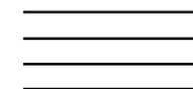
of which I am a member, took a major step forward this year by requiring certain full-sized school busses to be retrofitted with new pollution reducing emissions systems. A bus must meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emissions standards or use compressed natural gas or another alternative fuel certified by either the EPA or the California Air Resources Board in order to reduce soot emissions by 85%. Busses must be in compliance with the standards by September 1, 2010. Towns and school boards will be reimbursed for these costs by the Department of Environmental Protection as long as they meet the guidelines and are within the costs set by the Department of Administrative Services and the Department of Environmental Protection. In addition the Department of Environmental Protection will develop an outreach plan to educate municipalities, school boards, and bus companies about the emissions requirements and to help them retrofit their busses.

MAKING THE GRADE



As we are all aware, children are very impressionable and given the opportunity to learn about the branches of government, how laws are made, the election process and citizenship, may develop an interest in the great nation in which we live. It can also enhance their knowledge of our rich and powerful history.

Students will actively take part in the democratic process as part of their civic and U.S. History study, thus paving the way for what I hope is greater participation in the electoral process later in their lives.



PLACE
POSTAGE
HERE

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