



Keeping Our Kids Safe And Healthy

Wethersfield's children need our protection from the numerous harms that exist. This legislative session I worked hard with my colleagues to pass legislation to do just that.

NEW SAFEGUARDS AGAINST SEX OFFENDERS

In order to protect school children from sexual predators, we passed legislation that requires the Connecticut Department of Public Safety to notify the superintendent of schools in the community where a sex offender lives or plans to live. The notice must be by email and include the same registry information available to the public through the internet.

PROMPT TREATMENT OF ASTHMA AND ALLERGIES IN SCHOOLS

Many children with asthma and food allergies use inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors (epi-pens) to promptly treat themselves when they experience allergic and asthmatic episodes. We passed a law this year that will allow students to self administer in school if they have the proper authorization from their parent or guardian.

GREEN CLEANING PRODUCTS IN SCHOOLS

A green cleaning program in our schools can protect students and school employees from a variety of health concerns linked to toxic chemicals. Local and regional school boards will be required to implement a green cleaning program to clean and maintain their schools with environmentally preferable cleaning products by July 1, 2011.

CREDIT CARDS ON CAMPUS

Too many college students are ending their college careers buried in credit card debt. For this reason, we adopted strict regulations for credit card issuers on our college campuses as of July 1, 2009. Credit card issuers will be prohibited from taking debt collection action against a student's parent or legal guardian, unless they agree in writing to be liable for the student's debts under the credit card agreement.

BISPHENOL-A HAS BEEN BANNED IN CONNECTICUT

Bisphenol-A (BPA) is a toxic industrial chemical used to make plastics, found in such products as beverage containers, protective food can linings, and plastic dinnerware. We have banned the sale, manufacture, and distribution of BPA in infant formula, baby food, reusable food and beverage containers.



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State Representative

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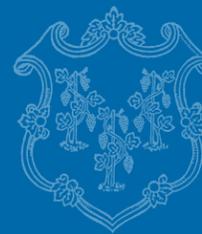
CAPITOL NEWS 2009

I am proud that Connecticut's families gained substantial protections through the passage of numerous, important bills during the past legislative session. Even while the state's fiscal crisis dominated much of our work, The General Assembly fought hard for the people of Connecticut. From landmark health care reform legislation to bills protecting children, seniors, military families, homeowners and students, we are providing you with the support you asked of us.

Keeping in step with President Obama's initiatives at the national level, Connecticut is taking the lead on accessible, affordable, quality health care. New laws taking effect this year also include affordable elderly homecare, a Silver Alert system for locating missing seniors, a ban on toxic chemicals in baby bottles and food, safeguards against mortgage foreclosures, blight prevention, promotion of safe green cleaning products, health insurance coverage for autism treatments, and relief for military families, among many others. Please feel free to contact me about any matter that concerns you.

Russell A. Morin
State Representative





Assisting Our Seniors

Improving the lives of seniors so they may be safe and economically secure is a central role of our state government. To improve their overall quality of life, we passed several new legislative initiatives.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOMECARE

We have expanded access to personal care assistance services through the Connecticut Homecare Program for the Elders. These services provide an alternative to nursing homes by aiding with daily living activities to help seniors remain independent.

SILVER ALERT

Connecticut now has Silver Alert, which is modeled after the Amber Alert system for missing children. This will help locate missing seniors and mentally impaired adults by broadcasting an emergency missing persons notice to radio and television stations through the Emergency Alert System, as well as through 2,800 CT Lottery system retailers and electronic billboards.

SENIOR DISCOUNT PROGRAMS

To make sure that seniors can take advantage of all discounts offered to them by businesses, stores must now have a prominent sign at the cash register, store entrance or point of display stating their discount policy, including the qualifying age and amount of discount.

PATIENTS RIGHTS AT A NURSING HOME

Nursing Homes cannot solicit gifts or donations as a condition of admission, expedited admission or continued stay for any patient and that protection has been extended to third parties, such as friends and family. Previously only patients who were receiving Medicaid were protected.



Rep. Morin with the Morris family at the bill signing for the Epidermolysis Bullosa bill.

Health Insurance

While I am aware of the costs of health insurance mandates, I am also mindful of the cost people have to endure when they have a condition that is not covered by their insurance plan. This year we took steps to help people with Epidermolysis Bullosa and children with autism spectrum disorders.

EPIDERMOLYSIS BULLOSA COVERAGE

Finally, we have been able to provide coverage for wound care supplies for people suffering from Epidermolysis Bullosa, a genetic disease that attacks the skin with painful lesions that if not treated properly can become infected. I am so proud to have introduced this bill for the past three years. I want to thank the Morris family for working with me to pass this very important legislation.

EXPANDED AUTISM COVERAGE

I am happy to report that Connecticut is the 12th state to pass comprehensive insurance coverage for people with autism spectrum disorders. Behavioral therapy, certain prescription drugs and psychiatric and psychological services will now be covered.

Veterans

We took steps this year to honor our veterans.

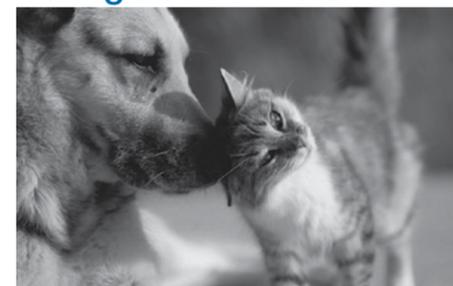
WARTIME SERVICE MEDALS

These medals are awarded to veterans who were called into service as a Connecticut resident. Medals may now be awarded posthumously to veterans who died on or after January 1, 2000. Call the Connecticut Veteran's Affairs infoline at 866-928-8387 for more information.

FLAGS FOR OUR VETERANS

In past years, there had been occasional conflicts when the placing of flags at veterans' graves had interfered with the maintenance and mowing of cemeteries. Paying respect to those who have sacrificed their lives for our country should not be hindered in any way, so there are no longer restrictions on the placement of U.S. flags on veterans' graves from the Saturday before Memorial Day until the Monday after July 4th.

Caring For Our Pets



PET TRUST

For many people, pets are an important part of their personal life. We are now giving people peace of mind in knowing that their pets will be taken care of in the event of the pet owner's death. I am pleased to have been able to work on this bill with Sen. Boucher and Rep. Hetherington.

Transportation

Keeping the public safe and secure in our neighborhoods and on our streets is one of the key functions of government. This session, we made several advancements to protecting our public pathways.



"MOVE OVER" LAW

I am pleased to have co-introduced this legislation with Rep. Joe Mioli. This is a great step forward in helping to protect our emergency responders. The new law requires a motorist approaching stationary emergency vehicles to immediately slow down and to "Move Over" one lane from the lane of an emergency vehicle, when safe and reasonable.

ILLEGAL STREET RACING ENFORCEMENT

In order to help make our streets safer for drivers we strengthened penalties for illegal street racing, by increasing the fines for anyone racing a vehicle. The court is now allowed to impound the vehicle used for racing for 30 days or if it does not belong to the driver the court can issue a fine to the driver instead.

Smart Growth

Regionalism and cooperation offer real relief for local property taxpayers. We passed legislation giving municipalities the ability to implement cost saving measures and offer real property tax reform through voluntary regional cooperation.

IMPROVING REGIONAL COOPERATION

In efforts to save municipalities money, and in turn lower property taxes, we are now going to allow cities and towns to enter into mutual agreements to promote regional economic development and provide joint services. They will be able to share property tax revenue from the new developments. Working together can reduce energy consumption and administrative costs, enhance development and preserve open space.

Protecting Business

PROTECTING SMALL BUSINESS

We now require any state agency proposing a regulation to identify the way their proposal would affect small businesses. If the proposed regulation adversely affects small businesses the agency is required to consider other less burdensome ways to achieve the regulations' goal.

Representative Morin with Governor Rell



Protecting Our Environment

This year we took steps to protect Connecticut's natural beauty and environmental heritage for future generations.

PROTECTING LONG ISLAND SOUND

In order to protect Long Island Sound, Connecticut's greatest treasure, we created a bi-state commission to review environmental, ecological, and energy issues. This commission allows cooperative protection of Long Island Sound and the lower Hudson River Valley. This takes effect when New York passes similar legislation.

DAIRY FARM ASSISTANCE

Connecticut dairy farmers provide a vital service to our state and we were happy to help them out this year. We have dedicated funds to assist and preserve the state's dairy farms. The bill protects farms that have trouble meeting milk production costs, as well as preserves the character of farmland in Connecticut. We are helping our dairy farmers to remain competitive with out-of-state farms.