



Dear Neighbor,

I'd like to extend my thanks to the citizens of Norwalk for giving me the opportunity to represent our wonderful community at the State Assembly. It is a privilege to serve in this capacity, and I will serve you honorably.

I am excited and determined to make a real difference, as the legislature tackles important issues such as health care access, energy costs and education funding.

To best represent your interests and opinions, I need to keep you informed and to hear back from you. I invite you to play an active role in making the laws of Connecticut by contacting me to share your expertise or express your thoughts. You can contact me at the legislature either by phone at (800) 842-8267, or by mail at the Legislative Office Building, Room 4054, Hartford, CT 06106, or by e-mail at Bruce.morris@cga.ct.gov.

I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Bruce V. Morris

State Representative - 140th District

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State Representative
Bruce V. Morris
140th District
Norwalk



**2007 Legislative
Session Preview**

A Few Hot Topics for Session 2007...

There are literally thousands of bills introduced each year in the Connecticut General Assembly. Here are a few of the big issues we expect to debate this year:

EDUCATION FUNDING

Despite projections of a significant budget deficit, it is imperative this year the legislature re-examine the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula. The ECS formula is how the state determines how much education funding to give each town's public schools. Many towns throughout Connecticut are struggling with rising costs of education, and the unhappy solution of either raising local taxes or cutting services. A fairer and better-funded ECS formula will help address the problem.

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

Connecticut has one of the highest property tax burdens in the nation. Again, this drives families, seniors, and businesses to consider re-location elsewhere. Property taxes are driven in large part by the state's under-funding of public education costs, which are largely supported through local property taxes. Proposals for property tax relief include better funding of education to enable towns to reduce their mil rates or, conversely, giving income tax credits directly to property tax payers.

HEALTH REFORM

Connecticut has an estimated 400,000 uninsured individuals. We need to assure that all businesses and individuals have access to affordable benefits and are encouraged to purchase them. Small businesses in particular find the cost of health insurance prohibitive, in spite of their desire to maintain their employees' health and productivity. Health reform must address two major problems: how to reduce costs for those currently insured and how to encourage and enable the uninsured to obtain coverage.



ENERGY

Connecticut's electric rates are high – indeed, higher than surrounding states. This hurts not only residential consumers, but businesses, and makes Connecticut uncompetitive in attracting new businesses. Options for immediate relief appear to be primarily related to better conservation of energy to reduce demand. However, the long term options relate to construction and ownership of new power plants. Since de-regulation, our power vendors have been prohibited from owning their own power generation infrastructure. This winter, save money and stay warm. Keep your energy bill and your pollution output low this winter by practicing the following simple steps:

- *Keep the draperies and shades on your south facing windows open during the day to allow the sunlight to enter your home and closed at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.*
- *By placing thermostat from 72 degrees to 65 degrees for eight hours a day (for instance, while no one is home or while everyone is tucked in bed) you can cut your heating bill by up to 10 percent.*
- *Weatherize your home - caulk and weatherstrip any doors and windows that leak air.*
- *Properly maintain and clean heating equipment (i.e. replace furnace filters regularly).*

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

I have been assigned to the Judiciary Committee, Human Services Committee and the Select Committee on Housing. I chose these committees to better serve your interests. The following are bills that I have introduced for the 2007 session:

- **Legislation that will provide universal health insurance for all Connecticut residents.** *Working towards a solution for better health care would positively impact all aspects of life.*
- **Because the City of Norwalk hosts many retail centers,** I introduced a bill that would give money back to the towns that host large retail centers in order to pay for the cost of road repair, police protection and other services relating to the business of retail. This in turn would boost property tax relief.
- **Legislation that will increase funding for summer youth employment.** *This bill will provide quality experiences and exposure to career opportunities for our youth as an alternative to boredom which may lead to teen pregnancies and criminal mischief.*
- **Legislation to provide legal representation for students facing expulsion from school.** *Taking away a child's education is failing that child and society in the long run. My hope is to give the troubled student a chance to correct their mistake and continue their education with the confidence that the system works for them, not against them.*



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