

OPIOID CRISIS

To combat the growing opioid crisis, the most comprehensive legislation in the nation aimed at helping those currently struggling with opioid addiction and preventing new cases of addiction received unanimous support. By increasing the availability and use of the overdose antidote Narcan, and by limiting the supply of excess painkillers, we can save lives and stop these drugs from falling into the wrong hands.

REDUCING SEXUAL ASSAULT

To help reduce the rising incidence of sexual assault on Connecticut’s college campuses, we adopted an affirmative consent standard that all public and private universities must adopt. Affirmative consent is defined as an active, clear and voluntary agreement by a person to engage in sexual activity with another.

PATIENT-DESIGNATED CAREGIVERS

Thanks to recent Connecticut laws, patients discharged from hospitals are now given the option of designating a care provider who can work with the hospital to determine the appropriate home care for the patient. Now, nursing homes will also be required to allow the resident being discharged an opportunity to designate a caregiver who will work with the nursing home on a discharge plan which will include any necessary instruction in post-discharge tasks. This will not only free up space in hospitals and nursing homes, but allow for patients to spend more time in their own homes.

REAPPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ELDERLY PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

This bill changes the deadline, from March 15 to April 15, that elderly and disabled homeowners must reapply for property tax relief for three income-restricted programs: the state-funded Tax Relief Program for Elderly and Totally Disabled Homeowners (i.e., Circuit Breaker Program); and both the local option and state-funded Elderly Property Tax Freeze Program. Program participants must reapply for tax relief every two years by submitting copies of their tax returns.

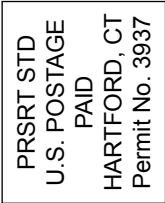
RETIREMENT SECURITY

With over 600,000 Connecticut workers lacking an employer-based retirement plan, we created a voluntary program to help encourage and assist people to save for retirement. There is no cost to taxpayers for the program, and the bill was a top priority of AARP.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

MARY M. MUSHINSKY

PROUDLY SERVING THE 85TH HOUSE DISTRICT | WALLINGFORD



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2016 CAPITOL UPDATE

Dear Neighbors,

Although there were no easy solutions this year, after a lot of hard work we approved a budget that is balanced, without tax or fee increases, without borrowing, and without dipping into the Rainy Day Fund. Revenues, particularly capital gains, were down. Cutting \$830 million was painful, but long-term will help put Connecticut’s budget on a sustainable path – not just this year, but into the future.

Virtually every line was cut. We made structural changes that reduce long-term obligations and create a more sustainable budget over time:

- Non–union wage freeze & insurance co-pay increase
- Pension cap of \$125,000 for retiring non-union state employees
- Reduces size of state government

We delayed some of the Governor’s transportation initiatives in order to protect legislative priorities like:

- Hospital funding
- School funding
- Property tax relief
- Funding for colleges and universities

Most of my effort was spent on the efficiency recommendations of my committee and those of the Connecticut Institute for the 21st Century.

Please email me or call if you need assistance or details on legislation.

Sincerely,

Mary Mushinsky

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A blue historical marker sign titled "THE PARADE GROUND" stands in a grassy area with trees in the background. The sign contains text about the site's history, including its use as a parade ground and its connection to the Connecticut State Capitol.



LINEAR TRAIL/ LYMAN HALL  
ATHLETICS/ PHOSPHOROUS FUNDING

At long last, Phase III of the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail will open to public use on July 8, 2016. This extension continues the trail from the tunnel to Fireworks Island in the Yalesville part of Wallingford, creating a total length of 2.25 miles.

While bonding is now tightly restricted because of the drop in state revenues, earlier in January I was able to gain release of a \$250,000 grant for the next phase of Lyman Hall athletic fields.

The legislature approved our bill to increase Wallingford’s funding for phosphorous removal to 50%, giving our town another \$3.4 million towards this clean water project.

POLLINATOR HEALTH

The collapse of bee colonies has been a growing concern and Connecticut has taken a step to lead the way in ensuring our pollinators remain healthy. This bill ensures that the use of harmful chemicals are not used or used in very specific cases only. Pollinator habitat will be included in conservation plans, farm preservation programs and the Department of Transportation will even help by planting vegetation in deforested areas to help bees who are so important to farmers and agriculture and a healthy natural habitat.

PENALTY FOR CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

The penalty of malicious and intentional animal cruelty is now considered a class C felony. This carries the potential of jail time and/or a fine of up to \$10,000 for anyone found guilty. This new law provides some advocacy for animals that are otherwise voiceless and holds accountable abusers whose poor track record with animals reveals a higher propensity for other forms of violence.

USE OF DRONES

Last year Connecticut garnered national attention when a YouTube video went viral of a drone firing a hand gun, an illustration of the current lack of regulations in the area. A study in 2014 conducted by my committee, Program Review and Investigations, identified several areas where regulation could address serious public safety concerns. This past legislative session, the House passed the bill that would regulate the use of drones, but the Senate failed to vote on it.



Checking out new  
linear trail bridge to Fireworks Island



Working with Rep. Vin Candelora  
on a Wallingford bill



Manufacturing sector legislation  
passed on a bipartisan vote

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
MARY M. MUSHINSKY  
PROUDLY SERVING THE 85TH HOUSE DISTRICT, WALLINGFORD

CONNECTICUT JOBS: OUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY

This year we made economic growth and support for small business a priority. Here are some of our 2016 initiatives:

- **Innovation Places** - Concentrates groups of entrepreneurs, tech talent, support organizations and research institutions in walkable, transit-connected, mixed-use neighborhoods.
- **Tech Talent Development Fund** - 10-year goal to at least double Connecticut’s stock of software developers and other tech talent we’re short on.
- **University Innovation Ecosystems** - \$10 million of seed funding to strengthen the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems at all of Connecticut’s colleges and universities, public and private.

These initiatives follow the economic development recommendations of my committee, Program Review and Investigations.

SUPPORTING CONNECTICUT’S GROWING MANUFACTURING SECTOR

We are working to make Connecticut the area leader in high-tech manufacturing jobs with an educated workforce that will meet the growing demand for the advanced, computer based, and technical positions of the future. Several innovative measures were passed that will ensure we are prepared for the growing manufacturing demand that will:

- Establish an Entrepreneurs Learner’s Permit Program that will allow new businesses, particularly information services, biotechnology and green technology, to be reimbursed for fees associated with state filing, permitting and licenses.
- Form a committee of educators, agencies, manufacturers and workers to inform middle and high school students about careers in manufacturing, provide manufacturing training and study workforce needs to introduce students and their parents to careers in manufacturing.
- Direct the Department of Labor to update their website to provide information on manufacturing apprenticeship opportunities.

Many of these recommendations came from the economic development and workforce reports by my committee, Program Review and Investigations.

WORKFORCE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Certificate programming is an instrumental part of achieving the state’s goal regarding higher education attainment and its workforce needs. The programming provides students the ability to receive industry-recognized credentials and a path towards employment.

In recognition of the importance of certificate programming in achieving Connecticut’s goal of 70% of Connecticut’s workforce having some level of post-secondary education by the year 2020, the legislature passed a bill to provide greater oversight of certificate / sub-baccalaureate programs at institutions of higher education.

This stems from a report by my Committee, Program Review and Investigations, on Higher Education Certificate Programs.

SUPPORTING VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES

In order to help our veterans who own micro-businesses, we passed legislation that will give a price preference of up to 15% for veteran-owned micro-businesses for certain Department of Administrative Services open market orders or contracts. A micro-business is a business with gross revenue of up to \$3 million. Veterans who start a micro-business will be offered some business tax relief for the first tax year after they’re established.