

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

MAKING CT MORE AFFORDABLE -THE BIENNIAL BUDGET:

- Maintains the tax exemptions for Social Security income and the phase-in of a tax exemption on pension income to make CT more affordable for seniors
- Provides a tax credit for employers who make student loan payments for their workers
- Keeps the "Passport to the Parks" fund
- Protects the Care4Kids program
- Re-opens highway rest stops
- Repeals the Business Entity Tax
- Increases access to health care
- Incentivizes purchasing a zero-emission car
- Protects the Medicare Savings Program, and increases funding for Meals on Wheels
- Establishes the Partnership for Connecticut to strengthen public education
- Restores funds to alternative sentencing for minors who commit crimes
- Restores education funding, although, per formula rules, Wallingford's grant is slightly smaller
- Provides reimbursement for Wallingford's water line project, for a net gain in town aid
- Fixes an unfair tax affecting Oakdale Theatre
- Restores the public purpose of PEGPETIA, the cable charge that funds local programming.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE MARY MUSHINSKY

PROUDLY SERVING THE 85TH DISTRICT | WALLINGFORD

CAPITOL UPDATE 2019



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Dear Neighbor,

The 2019 legislative session has ended, and we have accomplished many of the goals set out in our agenda. Personally, I was pleased with final passage of the State Water Plan, advances in clean energy and a new partnership with AARP-CT and the Universal Health Care Foundation to lower prescription drug prices. There was a net gain in town aid for Wallingford including a reimbursement.

Our biennial budget was delivered on time, balanced and under the constitutional spending cap. It includes priorities that constituents requested such as debt-free community college and the Social Security tax exemption for seniors. **Please see the BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS section for details.**

I appreciate hearing from you about the issues that matter. If you need assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out by email, phone or social media.

Sincerely,

Mary Mushinsky

*Attorneys Robert Clark and Doug Dalena
got roses for their key language that
finally allowed the State Water Plan to
pass after a very long effort.
They are counsel to Gov. Lamont.*



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SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES

WAGE INCREASE

According to The United Way, a Wallingford household needs to earn \$24/hour just to pay for housing. Connecticut families will have more economic security as the state's minimum hourly wage gradually rises to \$15.00 by June 1, 2023. This legislation will help over 300,000 Connecticut workers who make less than \$15 an hour. The wage will increase on October 1 to \$11 an hour, followed by incremental increases over the next 4½ years until \$15.00 is reached. *(HB 5004; Public Act 19-4)*

PAID FAMILY LEAVE

In the event of a medical emergency, the Paid Family and Medical Leave law allows workers to care for themselves or a loved one without having to face the threat of financial ruin. The program provides temporary replacement wages so that patients and caregivers can take time off and make ends meet. This will help cancer patients, families with an infirm parent, and new parents who want to bond with an infant. The program is funded by employee contributions. *(SB 1; Public Act 19-25)*

PROTECTING OUR WATER

A major accomplishment of the 2019 Legislation Session was passing the State Water Plan, which protects our water supply as a "public trust" to ensure our water resources are stable, and that clean drinking water is accessible for all.

The State Water Plan manages the water resources of the state, including balancing the needs of public water supply, economic development, recreation and ecological health. *(HJ 171 / HB 7194)*

PROTECTING OUR PLANET

CLEAN ENERGY AND GREEN JOBS - We have cleared the path for offshore wind energy generation in order to lead in green energy technology and help achieve Connecticut's renewable energy goals. We anticipate the creation of good-paying jobs. Connecticut will procure up to 2,000 megawatts of offshore wind power. This will help achieve our energy consumption goal of 40% renewable energy by 2030. *(HB 7156)*

Another law will extend renewable energy programs, including the Green Bank's solar investment program. It also creates a Green Jobs Career Ladder website for jobs in the green technology industry, including a listing of careers and the jobs available in the state.

It requires DOT to put together a land inventory on which lands are suitable for Class I energy resources, for example, solar energy on lands adjacent to state highways. *(HB 5002)*

VETERANS

IN-STATE TUITION FOR MILITARY FAMILIES - Connecticut will grant in-state tuition to spouses and children of service members stationed in the state who may get orders to move elsewhere. Allowing in-state tuition to follow the student helps Connecticut support our military and their families. *(HB 7248)*

VETERANS' MEDICAL AID - This law will require EMS training for treating veterans' health conditions, especially those veterans struggling with PTSD. EMS responders will be required to undergo 30 hours of refresher training every three years focusing not only on PTSD symptoms and care, but also Alzheimer's disease and dementia. *(HB 7249)*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EXPANSION OF THE ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM - This bill expands the current pilot program into additional public high schools, and also allows for the participation of private institutions of higher education, in addition to public institutions of higher education. *(HB 5833)*

PLEASE SIGN UP FOR MY EMAIL UPDATES AT

www.housedems.ct.gov/Mushinsky

Email: Mary.Mushinsky@cga.ct.gov

HEALTH CARE

MENTAL HEALTH PARITY

Diseases of the brain and body need to be treated equally in society and by insurance companies. We unanimously passed the Mental Health Parity Act which gives people with mental health and substance use disorders the same access to care as those with cancer and heart disease.

(HB 7125; Public Act 19-159)

PRE-EXISTING INSURANCE COVERAGE

This session, we expanded health insurance coverage for pre-existing conditions. Passed unanimously, this protects Connecticut residents against any changes to federal law. *(HB 5521; Public Act 19-134)*

TOBACCO 21

We made the sale of cigarettes, e-cigarettes and vape products illegal for those under 21. Nationwide, e-cigarette use, also known as "vaping," is on the rise among middle and high school students. This law seeks to keep nicotine out of the hands of minors. *(HB 7200; Public Act 19-13)*

MOTOR VEHICLES

We have extended your vehicle registration to three years and your driver's licenses to eight year durations so that you will have more time between needed visits to the DMV. *(HB 7201)*

