



Dear Neighbor,

Thank you for taking the time to read my annual end of session newsletter. It is a privilege for me to represent you in Hartford at the State Capitol.

Inside you will find information on legislation passed during the 2008 legislative session that I thought might be of particular interest to you.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or if you need assistance.

Sincerely,

Frank N. Nicastro, Sr.



Rep. Nicastro at the Route 72 construction site.

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State Representative

Frank N. Nicastro, Sr.

**Working Hard
For Bristol and Forestville**



CAPITOL UPDATE 2008

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

In January, the legislature met in special session to rework our state's criminal justice system. In April, we revisited that legislation and expanded the law to include stronger penalties for repeat violent offenders. The law now calls for doubling mandatory minimum sentences for second offenses and triples those sentences after a third conviction. The bill also allocates \$10 million to implement the criminal justice reform measures we passed in January.



Rep. Nicastro, his legislative intern, and Council of the Arts student advocates.

MILITARY FAMILIES

- Makes military spouses permanently eligible for unemployment compensation when they voluntarily leave their jobs to accompany a spouse required to relocate for active duty service. PA 08-40
- Provides a tuition waiver at state colleges and universities for members of the Connecticut National Guard seeking graduate degrees. PA 08-57
- Requires state public universities and colleges to waive tuition for any state resident who is a dependent child or surviving spouse of a state resident killed in action while performing active military duty in the U.S. Armed Forces on or after September 11, 2001. PA 08-71
- Enables the state to join a national interstate compact that provides uniform standards for handling the school records of military children who transfer into our state public schools. Provides appropriate placement in courses, extracurricular activities and on time graduation. PA 08-57



Rep. Nicastro at work in the House Chamber.

IDENTITY THEFT

Legislation protecting the confidentiality of Social Security numbers was the centerpiece of my legislative activity this session. Working with the two co-chairs of the General Law Committee, Senator Colapietro and Representative Stone, I shepherded legislation through the legislature requiring entities which use Social Security numbers to:

- Shred personal information prior to its disposal,
- Create a privacy protection policy to ensure confidentiality,
- Eliminate the social security numbers of individuals from certain vital records except those used for medical, statistical or research purposes.



Rep. Nicastro, his daughter and family.

CHILD PRODUCT SAFETY

In view of the unprecedented number of toys recalled in the past year, we decided it was time for Connecticut to adopt strict limits for lead in children's products. We also banned the sale of toys and other articles marketed for children under 16 that contain asbestos.

TEEN DRIVING LAWS

Citing a guiding principle of safety – safety for teens and for everyone with whom they share the road – our teen driving reforms establish new requirements for 16 and 17 year olds and, in some cases, their parents or legal guardians. Changes include:

- Restricting passengers for new drivers from six months to one year;
- Establishing of a curfew of 11 PM for teen drivers; and
- Requiring seat belts for all passengers in cars with a teen driver.

In addition, teen drivers will be required to have 40 hours of behind-the-wheel training, instead of 20 hours. Parents will be required to attend a two hour class with their child.

It also enables police officers to confiscate a teen's drivers license for 48 hours for violating any of these restrictions, as well as for excessive speeding, reckless driving and for street racing.



Rep. Nicastro confers with his legislative colleagues on the House floor.

Questions or concerns? Call Rep. Frank Nicastro (860)240-8500 or e-mail frank.nicastro@cga.ct.gov