



State Representative

LINDA ORANGE

Dear Neighbor,

Crafting a state budget is typically the most important duty of the legislature and Governor. This year we encountered a budget deficit larger than any in the history of Connecticut, with rapidly changing economic conditions to adapt to.

This massive recession began with last year's collapse of the banking sector. Due to the recession, state revenues declined significantly. We have had important and lengthy debates in past years about closing deficits of a few hundred million dollars — perhaps 3% of our budget. This past year and a half, it was a crippling 25%. Two key agencies disagreed over the size of the problem for many months, and it took a long time to find the right balance of cuts, tax and fee increases, borrowing and labor concessions. This challenge is not over, and we will continue working to address it.

It is a true honor to represent our district in the legislature, and I will continue to be vigilant in watching over our community. If you have any questions about the budget or other matters, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

Linda A. Orange
State Representative, 48th District
Deputy Speaker of the House

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Keeping us Healthy

In addition to the major health care reform proposals passed this year, the legislature implemented several public health measures aimed at improving preventive care and access to coverage.

HEALTH INSURANCE FOR AUTISM TREATMENTS

PA 09-115 | SB 301 – EFFECTIVE: 01.01.10

Requires insurance coverage of critical treatments and benefits that will greatly help the lives of people with autism.

These treatments are:

- » The diagnosis to determine if an individual has an autism spectrum disorder
- » Behavioral therapies to children 14 years old or younger including, but not limited to, applied behavior analysis and cognitive behavioral therapy
- » Prescription drugs
- » Psychiatric and psychological services
- » Physical and occupational therapy
- » Speech and language pathology services

The results are:

- » Higher quality of life for the individual
- » Decrease in lifetime costs of treatment
- » Connecticut has become the 12TH state to require this comprehensive coverage

“MOVE OVER” LAW

PA 09-121 | HB 5894 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- » Establishes a new CT law regarding stationary emergency vehicles on travel lanes, breakdown lanes, or highway shoulders
- » Requires a motorist approaching stationary emergency vehicles to immediately slow down
- » Requires a motorist to move over one lane from the lane of an emergency vehicle, when safe and reasonable

SUSTINET PLAN

PA 09-148 | HB 6600

- » Provides a framework for expanding high quality coverage to more residents
- » Establishes an eleven-member board of healthcare providers and experts
- » Creates new public health insurance options that will be affordable
- » Allows Connecticut to take full advantage of federal reforms

PREVENTING CARDIAC ARREST IN SCHOOLS

PA 09-94 | SB 981 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- » Requires each school to have an automatic external defibrillator AED
- » Provides training to school staff for its use and for CPR

PROMPT TREATMENT OF ALLERGIES IN SCHOOLS

PA 09-155 | SB 755 – EFFECTIVE: 08.15.09

- » Permits some students with asthma or allergies to carry inhalers and epi-pens in school
- » Allows students to self-administer with proper authorization
- » Adds licensed athletic trainers to the list of school personnel permitted to administer medication

Protecting your Home, Savings, & Credit

We took action to aid consumers hurt by recent events and protect you from the recent sub-prime mortgage crisis and corrupt money managers like Bernie Madoff.

CONSUMER PRIVACY & IDENTITY THEFT

PA 09-239 | SB 838 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- » Broadens the definition of “identity theft” and increases the penalty, especially when the victim is elderly
- » Creates a reimbursement account for victims
- » Allows a victim to sue for damages, and for prosecution closer to the victim’s home area
- » Streamlines the process of correcting one’s identification after a theft is discovered

RELIEF FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

PA 09-19 | HB 5930 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- » Requires state agencies to perform a small business impact analysis before adopting regulations, so that the impact of such regulations on businesses under 75 employees may be meaningfully measured.
- » Requires state agencies to notify the public about how to obtain a copy

PREVENTING PROPANE TERMINATIONS

PA 09-218 | HB 6306 – EFFECTIVE: Upon passage

Propane suppliers may no longer terminate service to customers in residential communities under certain hardship circumstances. If eligible, a customer cannot be shut off without being provided 14 days written notice, and with the steps they may take to reinstate service.

These shut-offs cannot occur:

- » On a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday (or the day before) or less than one hour before the supplier’s offices close for the day
- » Between November 1 and May 1, if the customer documents that they’ve applied for energy assistance

SAFEGUARDS AGAINST MORTGAGE FORECLOSURES

PA 09-209 | SB 948 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09/10.01.09

- » Implements federal reforms
- » Creates many new safeguards against future foreclosures to better protect homeowners
- » Regulates the mortgage lending process
- » Expands eligibility for state foreclosure prevention programs

PROTECTING COLLEGE STUDENTS CREDIT

PA 09-167 | HB 6483 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- » Requires the Board of Governors of Higher Education to adopt policies
- » Regulates credit card marketing practices on public college campuses
- » Protects young consumers from being unfairly targeted

EMERGENCY MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE

PA 09-219 | HB 6481 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09/10.01.09

- » Expands eligibility for the Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program
- » Assists more families so that their loss of income due to illness or job-loss won’t result in a family losing their home

Farms and Open Space

As a member of a working group on this, I strongly advocated against losing our locally-produced food and dairy products.

DAIRY FARM ASSISTANCE

PA 09-229 | SB 891 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.09

- » Dedicates funds to assist and preserve Connecticut dairy farms
- » Protects farms that have trouble meeting milk production costs
- » Preserves the character of farmland in the state
- » Allows CT dairy farms to remain competitive with out-of-state farms

STOPPING INVASIVE PLANTS

PA 09-52 | HB 5277 – EFFECTIVE: 10.01.09

- » Authorizes the inspection of nurseries for illegal plants
- » Places a \$100 fine per plant on possessing one of 81 illegal invasive plants
- » Permits transportation of these plants for educational or research purposes

PRESERVING STATE FARMLAND

SA 09-8 | HB 1082 – EFFECTIVE: Upon Passage

- » Requires the review of state-owned agricultural land
- » Evaluates preservation methods and makes recommendations for future actions

IMPROVING REGIONAL COOPERATION

PA 09-231 | HB 6585 – EFFECTIVE: 07.01.11

- » Allows regions to enter into mutual agreements to promote regional economic development
- » Allows regions to share property tax revenue from the new developments
- » Allows municipalities with approved regional agreements to share part of the sales and use tax



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