



Dear Neighbor:

It has been another tough year to craft a state budget. We found ourselves with a hole to fill and significant budget cuts were the only way to fill it. Despite the gloomy outlook, I am happy to report some good news for taxpayers: No tax increases and more money for towns in the 48th District. I believe Connecticut's economy is not where it should be and we must continue to pursue policies that boost the economies of towns like Colchester, Lebanon, Mansfield and Windham.

It is also important to recognize the tragedy in Newtown. The event shook Connecticut – its residents and elected officials – as we all struggled to cope with and make sense of the tragedy. Let's keep the Sandy Hook families in our thoughts as we approach the 1st anniversary.

I put together this newsletter to shine a spotlight on some of the high-points of the 2013 legislative session and to look ahead to some important issues for 2014. You will find information on our efforts to curb storm-related price gouging, our push to protect seniors and our ongoing investments in the economy and job growth.

I hope you find it informative. Please feel free to contact me anytime if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Linda A. Orange
Deputy Speaker

STATE REPRESENTATIVE LINDA ORANGE

PROUDLY SERVING COLCHESTER | LEBANON | MANSFIELD | WINDHAM 48TH DISTRICT

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CAPITOL UPDATE 2013

STOPPING PRICE GOUGING DURING SEVERE WEATHER

When catastrophic weather events hit our state, it is important that people have access to the goods and services they depend on. This law ensures reasonable pricing during a severe weather emergency. During one of these events no one can sell or offer to sell a good or service for an "unconscionably excessive price." (SB 320)



FUNDING STROKE RESEARCH

Stroke is the fourth leading cause of death in the U.S. and a leading cause of adult disability. The Department of Public Health may now award grants for stroke research from the state's Biomedical Research Trust Fund to non-profit tax-exempt colleges and universities or hospitals in Connecticut that conduct stroke research. (SB 63)

DOCTORS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS WORKING TOGETHER

Research shows physical and mental health are closely related, linking depression and stress to a host of physical ailments. We passed a new law that allows physicians and psychologists to practice together, integrating primary and behavioral health care. This patient-centered approach wraps services around the patient and encourages more coordination between doctors and psychologists. (SB 1069)

HELPING SENIORS IN NURSING HOMES

It is very important to protect the most vulnerable residents in our state who reside in nursing homes. With a goal of protecting the frailest members of our society, we approved legislation that affirms a patient's right to file a complaint against nursing home staff without the fear of retaliation. This law provides for education and awareness, nurtures an environment of open communication and ensures that both residents and staff are aware of their rights. (SB 519)

STATE REPRESENTATIVE | DEPUTY SPEAKER

LINDA ORANGE

PROUDLY SERVING COLCHESTER | LEBANON
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IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE OR
HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT ME:

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BRINGING YOUR STATE TAX DOLLARS HOME

Despite the difficulties surrounding our biennial budget, I am proud to have not only maintained, but increased funding for the 48th District. I was committed to preserving the safety net our community depends on while keeping property taxes down and I was able to accomplish both these goals.

This 2013-2014 budget passed by the General Assembly:

- Includes major investment in science and technology at the University of Connecticut
- Provides funding for the landmark public education reforms passed in 2012
- Continues Economic Development Programs
- Maintains aid to cities and towns

Cities and towns across Connecticut are increasingly hard-pressed to generate resources necessary to support essential public services and educational systems. **This year's budget raises the state's investments in our towns by \$700,000 over the next two years.** Without this state aid, our towns would not be able to maintain their services or stabilize property taxes.



Promoting job growth with House and Senate Leadership.



Serving as Deputy Speaker.



Leading a student tour from Taiwan with Dr. Henry Lee.

CONNECTICUT'S ECONOMY

REMOVING THE ENERGY AUCTION

After hearing from so many of you regarding the proposed energy auction, which would have sold off standard offer customers, I became a leader in the fight to remove it from the budget. Connecticut energy costs are already too high, and this one-time revenue gain would have pushed those costs even higher.

JOB GROWTH

Both the House and the Senate unanimously supported the passage of a bill to encourage Connecticut manufacturers to recruit, hire, and train apprentices, preparing Connecticut's workforce for manufacturing jobs in the future. We increased the hourly tax credit - per apprentice - and as part of a coordinated approach with the state's public schools, colleges, and private sector companies. This will ensure a well trained, experienced workforce here in Connecticut. **(SB 1079)**

SMALL BUSINESS EXPRESS PROGRAM

We increased our investment in the Small Business Express program, which provides loans and matching grants to businesses with 100 or fewer employees. Funds were moved from the Manufacturing Assistance Act program into the Small Business Express account so that more funds will be available for this very successful program that has helped many small businesses in the state to create jobs. **(SB 801)**

EBOOKS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Our public libraries are some of our most valuable resources, bringing affordable knowledge and culture to our communities. With the growing popularity of electronic books, it is important to ensure that our libraries have access to this new medium. New legislation requires the Department

of Consumer Protection to work with the State Librarian and the Attorney General to conduct a study of the availability of electronic books to users of public libraries and what problems may exist regarding their availability. **(HB 5614)**

AGRICULTURE

LOCALLY GROWN POULTRY

Most consumers would like to buy food that is locally grown. This legislation makes it easier for consumers to buy poultry raised in Connecticut. Previously, Connecticut farmers or poultry producers were limited to selling only to household consumers, restaurants, hotels, and boarding houses. This legislation expands our regulations to allow Connecticut farmers the ability to sell fresh poultry to grocery stores. **(HB 6313)**

IMPROVING AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Prior law restricted a municipality's ownership of agricultural development rights to land within its border. This legislation allows a municipality that has paid part of the purchase rights to share ownership of the development rights to agricultural land with the state of Connecticut even if part of the land is outside its border. This law also makes changes to the state's community farms program by applying certain requirements for development rights under the farmland preservation program. **(HB 6316)**

GMO LABELING

I'm very pleased we now have strong labeling legislation for Genetically Modified Organisms that will become a first-in-the-nation law, and that Connecticut will not go it alone in this fight. The requirement becomes effective once similar laws are enacted in four other states, including one that borders Connecticut, with an aggregate population totaling 20 million. This is a significant victory in the fight to know what is in the food we eat and what we feed our families. **(HB 6527)**