

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
JOHN-MICHAEL PARKER
PROUDLY SERVING MADISON AND DURHAM

Dear Neighbor,

I hope this letter finds you and your family healthy and safe. As we know all too well, the pandemic continues to present unexpected challenges for our families, businesses, and communities—and exacerbate existing inequities across our state. Throughout the 2021 session, my colleagues and I worked to address these issues and prepare us for the challenges to come by passing over 350 bills and resolutions.

While there is still much work to be done, I'm proud of the progress we made. In addition to a historically strong financial position with our surging Rainy Day Fund and shrinking budget gap over the next two years, Connecticut has a unique opportunity to leverage federal funding and make the types of targeted investments that our economy needs to ensure all Madison and Durham residents can fully recover and get on a path to prosperity—all done through a balanced budget with no new taxes.

I've highlighted a few proposals that we've advanced in the House— and a few local initiatives I'm working on—that will move these priorities forward.

Please continue reading below for more information on legislative highlights and resources developed this session that will benefit your family, our district, and our state. And don't hesitate to reach out with questions or concerns, or your ideas for ways to build a better Connecticut. Thank you.

Sincerely,



John-Michael

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RESPONDING TO COVID-19

- Expanded coverage and access to telehealth (HB 6470)
- Cut unemployment insurance taxes on local businesses by excluding pandemic-related layoffs and paying directly into the fund (PA 21-5 & SB 1202)
- Ensured access to virtual visits and monitoring for nursing home residents (PA 21-55) and reformed nursing home staffing, policies and supply inventories (SB 1030)
- Expanded workers' comp benefits for PTSD to cover emergency responders, corrections workers, dispatchers and health care providers who were on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic (SB 660)
- Strengthened numerous programs designed to keep people from losing their homes during tough times: Foreclosure Mediation, Lien Assistance and Emergency Mortgage Assistance (SB 891)
- Increased funding to local health departments (SB 1202)
- Streamlined workforce initiatives under a new Office of Workforce Strategy and made it easier for residents to know what CT colleges they can easily get into, and what certificate programs are worth taking (SB 1202)
- Expanded youth suicide prevention training (PA 21-46)
- Created more outpatient services for kids (PA 21-46)
- Required social emotional learning as part of professional development for teachers (PA 21-46)



SUPPORTING MADISON & DURHAM

- Secured a \$770,000 state grant for Madison that will help the town replace the seawall at Garvan Point which prevents erosion by waves and storms
- Ensured \$350,000 for CT Main Street Center to support local economic development initiatives in Durham - and across the district.
- Worked with local educators, students, and youth providers to expand awareness around youth mental health
- Organized informational meetings to help citizens find resources for small business supports, housing options, and arts and tourism-based economic development opportunities

A GREENER CONNECTICUT

- Required more biodiesel in home heating oil and greater transparency for consumers (HB 6412)
- Raised bottle deposits to 10 cents, applied deposits to more products and provided more money to towns and redemption centers to ensure these products don't wind up as litter or in a landfill (PA 21-58)
- Empowered towns to better manage stormwater on the local level (HB 6441)
- Improved clean-up procedures and notifications when there is a sewage spill (PA 21-42)
- Balanced ecological and recreational needs while updating our plan for Long Island Sound (HJ 53)
- Banned PFAs in firefighting foam and phased out use in packaging (PA 21-191)

DEMOCRACY THAT WORKS

- Voters will get to decide in 2022 if we should have early, in-person voting and in 2024 you'll decide if every registered voter in CT should be able to vote by absentee ballot (RA 21-1 and RA 21-2)
- Guaranteed two hours off from work to vote in state and federal elections (SB 1202)
- Paved the way for permanent drop boxes for absentee ballots (SB 1202)
- Protected voters' personal information (SB 1202)

FIGHTING FOR OUR FUTURE

- Increased awareness of behavioral and mental health services for children when they are discharged from a hospital and required the posting of the same information on school websites (HB 6510)
- Raised awareness of child sex abuse (PA 21-64) and required comprehensive background checks at athletic leagues and youth camps (HB 6417)
- Declared racism a public health crisis (PA 21-35)
- Expanded community-based gun violence prevention strategies and strengthened Extreme Risk Protection Orders (PA 21-36 and PA 21-61)