



*"I am very pleased to announce that by negotiating with the Governor and the Democratic leadership, I can confirm that the city of Norwalk will be moved into a higher tier of educational grant funding. This agreement represents a pivotal moment in our city's history, as the special needs and help that our schools require are fully being acknowledged."*

*Rep. Perone presiding over a technical session of the General Assembly.*

### HealthFirst CT and Healthy Kids Initiatives

I am happy that we were able to make several improvements to our current health care system in an effort to expand access to quality, affordable health care. These improvements include:

- ✓ Expansion of HUSKY to give access to around 10,000 more residents.
- ✓ Establishment of a broad outreach program to reach all eligible participants.
- ✓ Expansion of HUSKY A coverage for pregnant women and requiring automatic enrollment of uninsured newborns.
- ✓ Rate increases under Medicaid will allow health care providers to see more patients.
- ✓ Additional funding for School-Based Health Clinics so that they can provide transportation and increased access.
- ✓ A state commitment to public health data collection and online license renewal system to allow health care professionals to expedite renewal process.

### Protecting our Children

- ✓ There are proven dangers and health risks associated with exposure to pesticides. This session we have approved legislation that would extend an existing state ban on pesticide use on preschool and elementary school grounds to include schools with students through grade eight. Our school fields and playgrounds will be safer for our children as a result of passing this bill. It offers better protection for both our students and all school employees.
- ✓ In an effort to fight the trend of underage smoking the legislature doubled the penalty for minors who purchase tobacco products. Dealers and distributors will also see higher fines for selling to minors.
- ✓ Concerned for the safety and security in Connecticut's public schools, we have created the Security Assistance For Education (S.A.F.E.) program to help schools assess their security, provide security infrastructure improvements, and ensure that school personnel receive appropriate training.



*Dear Neighbor,*



*I write to provide you with a summary of the 2007*

*legislative session of the Connecticut General Assembly.*

*I was particularly pleased that we were able to pass a budget which addresses the needs of our state but does not contain an increased income tax. I am disappointed that we were not able to address gasoline zone pricing that unfairly discriminates against our community. It's an issue of fairness and I will continue to advocate for a change.*

*We made a historic commitment to funding education with hopes that increased funding should help us keep our local property taxes under control. We added \$336 million to health care funding over two years and increased coverage and access for the uninsured, mainly for children on the state HUSKY program. I am especially pleased that we were able to increase Medicaid rates for physicians, the first bump in rates after 18 years.*

*Personally, it is most rewarding to work with and have the support of the many individuals and community groups within the 137th District. I am honored to represent you in Hartford.*

*Chris Perone*

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## CAPITOL NEWS - FALL 2007



*State Representative*

**Chris Perone**

### HISTORIC INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

There is no better state investment than the education of our children. Providing a high quality educational system - from early childhood education to college and graduate school education - will help all Connecticut citizens reach their full potential.

The State of Connecticut this year made an unprecedented commitment to expanded educational opportunity for all its students in grades kindergarten through 12. The keystone of this commitment was the addition of nearly \$182 million in the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant to cities and

towns, up to a total of \$1.81 billion for the fiscal year that began July 1, 2007. Just as important, the General Assembly approved an increase in the ECS foundation from \$5,891 to \$9,687 per student.

These commitments are evidence of the General Assembly's determination to provide our young people with the highest-quality instruction to help prepare them for higher education and the ability to be successful in an increasingly competitive national and international workplace.

# Overview of the 2008 Budget



*"This budget makes a solid increase in educational funding and begins to address the health needs of our children and uninsured."*

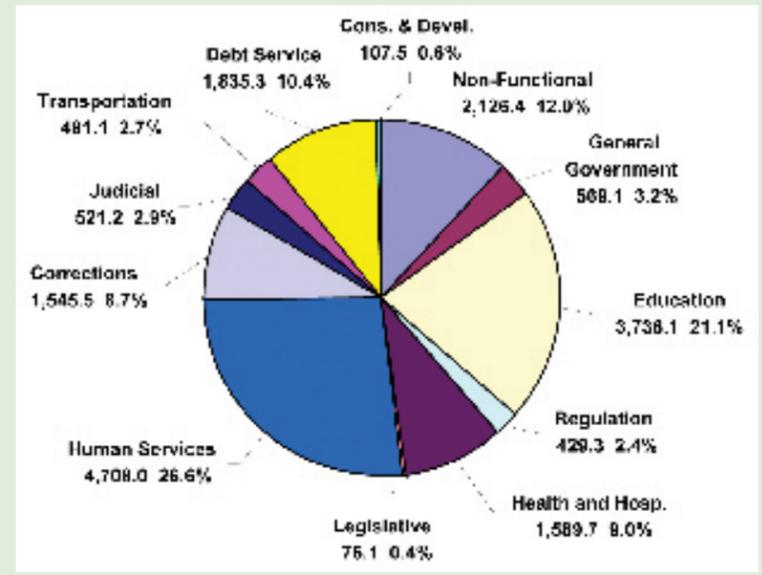


## Capitol News 2007



### Budget Highlights

- ✓ Allocates an additional \$47 million in state health care, ranging from expansion of the HUSKY health insurance program to financial assistance for insurance premiums.
- ✓ Provides \$39 million to nursing homes for a 2.9% rate increase for next fiscal year.
- ✓ Increases the Educational Cost Sharing grant by \$442 million over the next two years.
- ✓ Creates a Division of Autism Spectrum Disorders under the newly named state Department of Developmental Disabilities.
- ✓ Sets aside \$136 million of this year's nearly \$1 billion surplus for the state's Rainy Day Fund.
- ✓ Exempts vehicles that get greater than 40 miles per gallon from the state's sales tax.
- ✓ Provides \$94 million in fiscal year 2008 and \$121 million in fiscal year 2009 to increase reimbursement rates to doctors, hospitals, clinics, dentists and ophthalmologists who treat patients covered by Medicaid.
- ✓ Sets aside \$27.2 million over two years for grants to students attending public colleges and \$16.2 million over two years for students attending private colleges.
- ✓ Expands the state's tax credit program for the film industry. This time, it provides tax credits for capital projects, such as new studio space for film and digital media.
- ✓ Fully funds all 270 students who are clients of the Department of Mental Retardation who will graduate from high school and need supportive adult services.
- ✓ Expands after school programs over the next two years with over \$2 million in new funding.



### State money secured for Norwalk

| Grants 07-08                       | FY 07-08             |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| PILOT: State Owned Property        | 251,471              |
| PILOT: Colleges & Hospitals        | 1,075,626            |
| Town Aid Roads                     | 441,327              |
| Local Capital Improvement Program  | 628,640              |
| Pequot/Mohegan Aid                 | 1,360,028            |
| Adult Education                    | 86,375               |
| Public School Pupil Transportation | 448,019              |
| Non-Public School Transportation   | 47,314               |
| Adult Education                    | 86,375               |
| Educational Cost Sharing           | 9,674,295            |
| <b>Total State Aid</b>             | <b>\$ 14,013,095</b> |

#### No Mandates for Storm Shutters

As of July 1, 2007, insurers are prohibited from refusing to issue or renew homeowner's insurance policies solely because expensive hurricane shutters were not installed. In addition, insurers will be required to offer sound premium discounts to homeowners who install permanent storm shutters or impact-resistant glass to mitigate loss from hurricanes and other severe storms.



#### Controlling Cancer Treatment Costs

Costs can be prohibitive when patients can only receive their treatment at a hospital outside the network of their health insurance policy or HMO contract. Now, for certain cancer clinical trials, patients will only need to pay their usual in-network service co-payment or deductible required under their health plan.



#### Protecting Long Island Sound

Broadwater Energy is proposing developing a liquefied natural gas terminal (LNG) in Long Island Sound. In order to insure the safety of Connecticut's coastline we took action that calls for hazard and security zones around any LNG terminal. Shoreline towns must develop a response plan to handle any emergency at the terminal.

#### Megan's Law

Megan's Law is based on keeping track of where sex offenders reside, so it makes sense to also track their location on the Internet. Under the new legislation, sexual predators are required to register e-mail and instant message addresses. The law also toughens the penalties for sex offenders by requiring mandatory minimum sentences for certain offenders and makes it easier for a child to submit testimony against an accused sex offender.



#### Eminent Domain

We made an effort to balance individual property rights with a town's need to grow their tax base. A town may still take land by eminent domain but there are more barriers to do so and property owners have a greater chance of redress.



#### Juvenile Court Jurisdiction

Connecticut was one of only three states that treated its 16 and 17 year olds as adults for criminal matters. This session changes were made to place these young people under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. However, those juveniles who commit the most serious of crimes will continue be referred to the adult system. In the juvenile system, the focus will be on rehabilitation instead of punishments.