

Dear Neighbor:

I am pleased to share with you this update following the 2013 legislative session. Every session offers its own set of challenges, but this year's were unique because it began just a few short weeks after the Sandy Hook tragedy, requiring the entire state to grapple with its aftermath.

I am proud we worked in a bipartisan manner and made progress on school safety, mental health, supporting first responders and protecting the privacy of victims of violent crimes.

We also completed an on-time balanced budget that protects the safety net with no sales or income tax hikes. We took steps to build a better future with increased education funding for our towns and renewed investment in our flagship university.

I hope you find the enclosed information helpful. Please feel free to call or email me for any reason—legislative or otherwise. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your state representative—Thank you!



Chris Perone

STAMPING OUT PRICE GOUGING

In the aftermath of recent severe storms, certain unethical businesses took advantage of consumers by price gouging for storm-recovery services and lodging. A new law makes it a crime to sell goods or services for excessive prices during weather emergencies.

ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

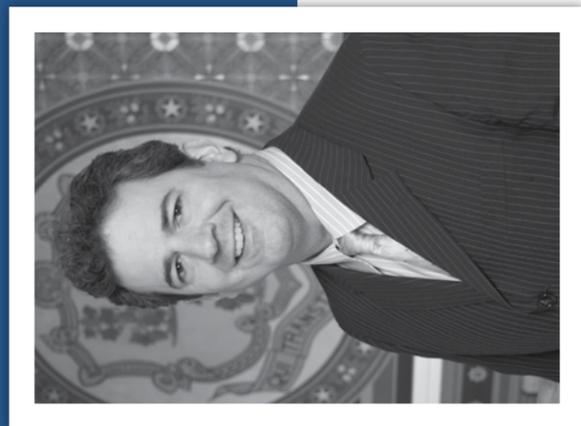
Connecticut Housing Finance Authority is a quasi-state agency that creates affordable housing opportunities for individuals and families in the state. This law increases from \$1.5 billion to \$2.25 billion the amount of funds available for CHFA mortgage purchases and loans that are not guaranteed by certain state and federal entities. This allows CHFA to provide more mortgages, create construction jobs and boost economic activity in the state.



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HOME SAFETY

Being assured that the homes we are living in are safe is peace of mind that all residents should have. To help prevent another tragedy similar to the one that took the lives of a Stamford family on Christmas Day 2011, we passed legislation that promotes the installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detection equipment in all residential buildings.

PROTECTING SENIORS

Homemaker companion agencies must now notify a client in writing that a background check was performed before a companion is sent to a home. It is also now prohibited to bill for higher skilled services than needed.

SYNCHRONIZING PRESCRIPTION REFILLS

This law protects patients' drug coverage by requiring that insurance companies cover prescriptions filled in a synchronized manner as long as the patient, their doctor and their pharmacist approve this medication plan. By simplifying the prescription refill process this legislation helps small pharmacies that traditionally offer home delivery of prescriptions, allowing them to cut down overhead costs by only delivering to a specific home once a month.

HELPING VETERANS

Streamlining access to programs and assistance for our veterans was one of our priorities this session. A new law requires cities and towns that do not have one to appoint a town employee to serve as a veteran's service contact who acts as an ombudsman that can guide veterans to the appropriate local, state or federal resources.



PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST

SCHOOL SAFETY

Parents need peace of mind knowing that their children are safe in their schools. Many districts have armed school resource officers and others have security guards. This law requires that an armed guard working in a school must meet certain requirements. If they are not a police officer, they must be a retired police officer or state trooper who was in good standing at the time of their retirement. They must receive training from the Police Officer Standards and Training Council on school security in compliance with recent firearms legislation. This law ensures that if an armed guard in a school is not a current police officer they are receiving the same training on school security and firearms as active duty police officers.

MAKING POOLS SAFER

This new law establishes and phases in statewide safety standards for all public school swimming pools. It is now required that a "qualified educator," "qualified swimming coach" or "qualified lifeguard" be present, in addition to the individual who is instructing the group. The qualified individual's sole responsibility will be to observe the safety of participants in a qualified pool activity. Extracurricular activities will require that there is a qualified lifeguard present to observe safety. Physical education classes will require that a physical education teacher and at least another qualified educator, swimming coach or lifeguard be present.

REVISITING STANDARDIZED TESTS

How well do standardized tests really measure what our students are learning? The state is examining the effectiveness of these tests to see how we can improve things. Students can now take their final Mastery Test in 11th grade rather than 10th grade.

COLLEGE READINESS

Not all high school graduates are immediately ready for college and preparing them is key to their success. Local adult education programs can now offer college preparatory classes to high school grads ensuring college readiness for all.



PROPERTY AND CASUALTY INSURANCE

This law takes several steps to assist homeowners with problems reported after the recent historic storms. First, it prohibits insurers from declining, cancelling or failing to renew a homeowner's policy solely because of damage due to a catastrophic event such as a hurricane. It also requires that insurance policies cover repairs that match the undamaged areas of a house in color, size, quality and type of material. The law also increases, from three to five calendar days, the time a homeowner has to rescind a contract they have signed with a public adjuster and requires that this right to cancel be disclosed on the first page of the contract.

SMALL BUSINESS EXPRESS PROGRAM

This legislation creates jobs by helping small businesses in the state through the Small Business Express Program implemented in the special session of June 2012. It adds money to 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.

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

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