

ADDRESSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

This year, we worked to help Connecticut close the achievement gap and improve education for all students. We added money to expand early childhood literacy programs. In addition,

- More teachers will be certified in shortage areas,
- More minority teachers will be recruited, and
- Educators will be given new strategies to build better relationships with students of different cultures.

We also created a pilot program, to be tested in New Haven, to identify best practices for English Language Learners (ELL) instruction.

PA 15-5

REDUCING REQUIRED TESTING IN SCHOOLS

Standardized testing has come under a lot of scrutiny. One concern is that there are simply too many tests. Juniors in high school are currently required to take the SBAC exam at a time when many of them are taking the SAT or ACT college admission tests. New legislation allows schools to waive SBAC testing for any student taking these college admissions tests.

PA 15-238

SECURITY FREEZES ON CHILDREN'S CREDIT REPORTS

Child identity theft is an increasing problem. I co-sponsored a bill so parents will now be able to freeze their child's credit, protecting them from potential financial harm. When a child's credit is frozen, it is impossible to take out lines of credit in their name. Once a child is no longer a minor, their credit will be automatically unfrozen.

PA 15-62



Rep. Porter with her son Addison in the House Chamber



Rep. Porter with Mayor Harp, Rep. Walker and Clifton Graves

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ROBYN PORTER

PROUDLY SERVING THE 94TH HOUSE DISTRICT | NEW HAVEN AND HAMDEN



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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

ROBYN PORTER



CAPITOL UPDATE 2015

Dear Friend,

I am pleased to share with you this update on the recently concluded legislative session. It has been an honor to represent you in the General Assembly. There have been many intensely debated issues this legislative session and it has been a privilege to represent the people of New Haven and Hamden in each of those discussions.

Some of the highlights of this past session include:

- Passing tax relief for car owners in many cities and towns including New Haven and Hamden
- Creating the Student Loan Bill of Rights and establishing an Office of Student Loan Ombudsman to help student borrowers and their parents navigate the loan process
- Making major strides to reform our criminal justice system with the passage of the Second Chance and Excessive Force bills

I hope you find this information to be of use and please do not ever hesitate to contact me regarding any issue. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your state representative and I welcome the opportunity to hear from you.

Best,

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

ROBYN PORTER

PROUDLY SERVING THE 94TH DISTRICT | NEW HAVEN AND HAMDEN



IMPROVING COMMUNITY POLICING

This session, I fought for a law to ensure fair treatment by the police for all people. One of the key provisions of the new law, An Act Concerning Excessive Use of Force, is that police will now receive training in:

- 1) The proper use of physical force
- 2) Body cameras
- 3) Cultural competency and sensitivity
- 4) Bias-free policing

In addition, police departments will be required to adopt guidelines to recruit more police officers of color. The new law also requires that an independent prosecutor investigate allegations that an officer used physical force that likely caused serious physical injury or death. The law also provides more grant money for municipal police departments to purchase body cameras. Finally, we have strengthened protections for onlookers recording an officer performing his or her duties.

SS PA 15-4



Rep. Porter joins Governor Malloy and other legislators at the bill signing for the Excessive Force bill.

CAR TAX RELIEF

Car owners in both New Haven and Hamden will see a cut in their motor vehicle tax as the legislature capped the car tax mill rate statewide at 32 mills beginning July 2016 and 29.36 mills in July 2017. No car tax will surpass these mill rates under this plan that will provide much-needed car tax relief to car owners.

PA 15-244



Rep. Porter with members of the New Haven delegation in the House Chamber.

A SECOND CHANCE SOCIETY

I supported the “Second Chance Society” law that will reduce jail time for nonviolent drug offenders. Penalties for possession of small amounts of illegal drugs will be reduced from a felony to a Class A misdemeanor. A drug-dependent offender may complete a substance abuse treatment program on a second offense. During probation, the offender must perform community service. The pardon review process for nonviolent crimes will also be streamlined and now offenders must receive a “pardon eligibility notice.” These provisions will give ex-offenders a better chance to get back into the workforce and be contributing members of society.

SS PA 15-2

REGULATING VARIABLE ELECTRIC RATES

Electricity retailers can no longer enter into new variable rate contracts or automatically renew those contracts with existing customers. This law will offer consumers protection from electricity retailers who offered low introductory rates only to see a rapid increase upon completion of the initial contract.

PA 15-90



Rep. Porter speaking with constituents at New Haven Day at the Capitol.

FAIR TREATMENT FOR JUVENILES



Rep. Porter with Kelcey Perez, the Boys & Girls Club of New Haven's Youth of the Year.

To ensure that the criminal justice system treats children fairly, criminal courts will now consider evidence showing the difference between juvenile and adult brain development when sentencing for certain felonies committed by those under the age of 18. Juveniles serving sentences of over 10 years will also have a parole hearing after serving a portion of their sentence. We also increased the age when juveniles are automatically transferred to adult court from age 14 to age 15.

PA 15-84

PROTECTING THE ELDERLY

This year, we passed laws to protect our seniors from potential abuse. In situations where abuse is suspected, the Department of Social Services can now petition a probate court to gain access to that person's home to make an assessment. We also passed laws that will keep nursing home and residential care home residents safer by requiring the Department of Social Services to notify a resident's designee of suspected abuse or neglect within 24 hours.

PA 15-233



Rep. Porter speaking with “The Spirit of Frederick Douglass” at the Capitol.

PATIENT-DESIGNATED CAREGIVERS

Some patients end up returning to the hospital soon after discharge because they had not been instructed properly on their follow-up care or were unable to follow instructions. A new law called the CARE (Caregiver Advise, Record, Enable) Act, requires the hospital to document a caregiver (who has been chosen by the patient) in the patient's discharge plan. The hospital must attempt to notify the caregiver of the patient's discharge, and to instruct the caregiver on any post-discharge tasks with which the patient will need assistance.

PA 15-32