

Dear Neighbors,

This year's legislative session concluded on May 9th with the passage of our state budget and new legislation that will help to shape the future of our state. Some highlights of our state budget agreement is that it restores funding to the Medicare Savings Program, restores funding to the Energy Efficiency Fund, increases state aid for New Haven and Hamden schools by a total of over \$1.6 million (more than we received last year), restores funding for the state's health insurance program for working parents known as HUSKY A, prevents cuts and rate hikes to rail and bus services, restores and protects funding for Summer Youth Employment programs, and provides funding for the towns and non-profits that are working with students from Puerto Rico who were displaced due to Hurricane Maria.

I hope you find the enclosed information helpful. Please do not hesitate to reach out to my office if I can be of service to you or your family. Last but not least, thank you for entrusting me to represent you in Hartford. It truly is an honor and a blessing to serve our community.

Sincerely,



Robyn Porter
94th District



“UNFINISHED BUSINESS”

Although this session I had success with Pay Equity legislation and other bills mentioned in this newsletter, there is still a lot of work to do on behalf of Connecticut's working families. For this reason, I will continue to work with the business community on building more support for earned family and medical leave. Every working person in Connecticut should be allowed to take paid time off when they or a loved one gets sick. My team and I also worked tirelessly to raise the minimum wage as no one who works full time should have to work multiple jobs only to still live in poverty. Unfortunately, neither of these bills had sufficient support to become law this session. Nevertheless, I will continue to push for their passage as they remain priorities of mine because they will help to grow Connecticut's struggling economy. In addition, I will strive to pass legislation in this coming session to address our ongoing budget woes.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

ROBYN PORTER

PROUDLY SERVING HAMDEN AND NEW HAVEN



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COMBATING GUN VIOLENCE AND MAKING SCHOOLS SAFER

The tragic mass shooting in Las Vegas last year demonstrated the ability of bump stocks to dramatically increase a gun's destructive power, effectively turning semi-automatic firearms into machine guns. We responded by making it a crime to own or sell a bump stock or similar device, unless you are a licensed military contractor. Additionally, since schools must be safe places to learn, we increased funding for school security measures by \$15 million so that districts can use these resources for entrance upgrades, bullet-proof glass and security cameras.



POLICE BODY CAMERAS

Due to continued instances of fatal shootings by police officers that are in the news all too often, the outcry to equip police with body cameras is stronger now than ever. This session we reauthorized and extended the reporting deadline of the previously established task force to study the use of body-worn recording equipment by state and municipal police. In addition, we amended the language to reflect the circumstances that permit a police officer to review a recording from body-worn recording equipment prior to giving a formal statement. We also added language to address when members of the public, alleged victims or family members can be permitted to review body-worn equipment recordings during an investigation or following an allegation of excessive use of force by police.

FAIR PAY AND BENEFITS FOR HOMECARE WORKERS

By an overwhelming vote, the legislature voted to approve a contract that raises wages, increases holiday pay and provides workers' compensation for thousands of private sector, personal-care assistants who are directly employed by their elderly and disabled clients, but paid through state and federal programs. These workers help our loved ones stay in their homes and I am proud to have stood in staunch support of this fair contract because raising personal care attendants' wages is good for the workers, their clients, and our economy.

Rep. Porter stands in support with homecare workers at a press conference to raise wages and provide better benefits.



RACIAL AND ETHNIC IMPACT STATEMENTS

In an effort to prevent policies that disproportionately harm people of color, we passed a Racial and Ethnic Impact Statements bill to provide lawmakers with a tool to evaluate potential disparities of proposed legislation prior to adoption and implementation. Analogous to fiscal impact statements, these racial and ethnic impact statements will assist me and my colleagues in detecting unforeseen policy ramifications.

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CHAMPIONING PAY EQUITY

Each year, Connecticut women lose a combined \$5.5 billion due to the wage gap. Women and especially women of color still earn less than men. This inequity is perpetuated by the practice of asking for salary history during the hiring process. This session, as Co-Chair of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, I spearheaded the strengthening of our pay equity laws by preventing employers from asking about wage history. In doing so, this will help to close the gender wage gap and ensure all women earn equal pay for equal work.



Rep. Porter celebrates the signing of her pay equity legislation into law.

PROTECTING AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

As a domestic violence survivor, I continue to make strides to legislate and strengthen policies that will protect victims, and this year was no different. If you are a victim of domestic violence, you shouldn't have to fear being arrested if you call the police. However, nearly 20 percent of the time when a victim of domestic violence calls the police they are arrested along with their abuser. This is nearly three times the national average. This year we've updated the law to diminish this practice and will now direct police to arrest the person who they identify as the "dominant aggressor." Notwithstanding, law enforcement may still arrest both parties when such action is warranted.

MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT

This year my team and I championed policies from the Minority Teacher Recruitment Task Force aimed at developing a thriving and diverse teacher workforce in our state. As a result, the State Department of Education will work to develop new alternative routes to certification for paraprofessionals, charter school teachers and veterans. Additionally, they will work with vendors to allow certain teachers to retake their licensure test for free if they do not successfully pass the first time, which will help to alleviate a tremendous financial barrier for many test takers.

HEALTH BENEFITS FOR WOMEN

The Affordable Care Act contains ten essential health benefits, including maternity and newborn care, prescription drugs, mental health services and chronic disease management that all Americans deserve to have covered in their health insurance plans. As Congress and the President attempt to dismantle this program, we passed legislation to safeguard these benefits to ensure that no matter what happens in Washington, Connecticut policies must still cover these basic health services, along with twelve-month contraceptive prescriptions.



Rep. Porter speaks at a press conference to protect the 10 Essential Women's Health benefits.

FAIR TREATMENT OF INCARCERATED WOMEN AND TRANSGENDER PEOPLE

This year my team and I championed legislation that prohibits the shackling of pregnant women before or during childbirth and will provide incarcerated women with sufficient feminine hygiene products and create family-friendly visitation policies that will lead to more frequent visits in a more child-friendly setting. This bill also makes Connecticut the first state in the country to require its Department of Correction to treat transgender people who are incarcerated according to their gender identities, which will include placing them in facilities that correspond with their gender identities. Ultimately, this bill helps to restore dignity and respect to incarcerated women and transgender people.



At a press conference, Rep. Porter speaks about her legislation to protect the dignity and fair treatment of incarcerated women.