

ENRICHING OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

AFRICAN AMERICAN, BLACK, PUERTO RICAN AND LATINO STUDIES

We are expanding social studies curriculum to include an important part of our shared culture: African-American, Black, and Puerto Rican and Latino history. By including these topics, we all become more aware of both the hardships and accomplishments of our fellow Americans. It helps all students to have a fuller picture of the challenges and resilience of our African American and Latino populations. This also gives students of color the opportunity to learn more about their own history and the significant contributions their cultures have made in Connecticut and the rest of the country. PA 19-12

MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

As the Co-Chair of the Minority Teacher Recruitment task force, I am proud to announce that the Governor signed legislation which ensures school boards will employ at least 250 new minority teachers and administrators. This experience will be important to all students in our state, as they meet and learn from people of different backgrounds, and minority students especially will have more teachers who not only look like them, but understand the challenges they face in our society. PA 19-74



I was fortunate to have two very bright interns this year, Marcus Spinner from UConn (left) and Paige Sorenson from CCSU (right).



Meeting constituents at Three Brothers Diner.



I welcomed my friends from Harris and Tucker School, Inc. to the House floor.



Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106-1591
Capitol: 800-842-8267
www.housedems.ct.gov/Porter

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ROBYN PORTER

PROUDLY SERVING THE 94TH DISTRICT | HAMDEN AND NEW HAVEN

CAPITOL UPDATE 2019



www.facebook.com/RepRobynPorter

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HARTFORD, CT
Permit No. 3937



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

This year's legislative session concluded in June with the passage of our two-year state budget and new legislation that will help Hamden and New Haven's families.

As Chairwoman of the Labor and Public Employees Committee this year, I led the passage of legislation that establishes a Paid Family and Medical Leave insurance program, and increases the minimum wage to \$15 by 2023. This newsletter contains more details on both.

I also championed legislation that will make our criminal justice system more fair and transparent. New laws include the creation of the Council on the Collateral Consequences of Incarceration, a requirement for further data collection about prosecutors' decisions, and new police accountability measures.

Our low-income residents will benefit from the state budget due to an expansion of HUSKY A eligibility to 160% of the Federal Poverty Level. Also, our budget protects seniors by maintaining the tax exemptions for Social Security and pension income, as well as by rejecting an asset test for the Medicare Savings Program. The budget also expands funding for Meals on Wheels, and provides a rate increase to nursing homes. Not only does the rate increase provide staff with a more livable wage, it also prevents unnecessary state spending during a labor strike for federally required temporary staffing.

More work remains, and I welcome your ideas. 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 Hamden and New Haven.

Sincerely,

Robyn Porter

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
ROBYN PORTER

PROUDLY SERVING THE 94TH DISTRICT | HAMDEN AND NEW HAVEN

CAPITOL UPDATE 2019



My colleagues and I at a Progressive Caucus press conference in support of criminal justice reform bills.

INCREASING FAIRNESS AND TRANSPARENCY IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

COUNCIL ON THE COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES OF INCARCERATION

I am proud to lead a new Council charged with gathering and reporting data to develop legislation aimed at helping formerly incarcerated folks fully reintegrate into society. With this information, we can make sure that no person with a criminal history is discriminated against. People with a criminal history need to have a fair chance to move forward with their lives, and be treated as fully capable and fully human. We must ensure that those who have already served their time are not sentenced to a lifetime of discrimination. If it wasn't a life sentence going in, it should not be a life sentence coming out! *PA 19-142*

PROSECUTORIAL TRANSPARENCY

We passed a bill which establishes new prosecutorial data collection and reporting requirements. New demographic data of the accused, and data on charging, plea deals, and sentencing will help us see how and why prosecutors make decisions. This is a vital step to end the injustices and inequities in our current criminal justice system. *PA 19-59*

POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

A new law requires police departments to submit an annual use of force report, narrows the instances during which deadly force is justified, and prohibits an officer from discharging a firearm into a fleeing motor vehicle. The law also requires certain body or dashboard camera footage to be released to the public within 96 hours after an incident. *PA 19-90*

STRENGTHENING OUR DEMOCRACY

RESTORING PAROLEES' RIGHT TO VOTE

I championed a bill that increases voter access by restoring the right to vote to formerly incarcerated individuals, as many other states allow. When formerly incarcerated individuals are treated as fully human, and fully capable of accepting the responsibility of voting, they can confidently rejoin society. And being connected to society will reduce recidivism. Though this bill stalled in the Senate, I am looking forward to once again championing this concept in our next legislative session. *HB 7160*

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

A new law will expand health insurance coverage for pre-existing conditions. Passed unanimously, this protects Connecticut residents against any changes to federal law. Prior to the Affordable Care Act, if someone had a pre-existing or chronic condition, insurance companies could refuse to insure them – impacting fifty million people. As a result, hospital emergency rooms and Medicaid were forced to absorb these costs, resulting in higher prices for everyone. Now, our healthcare system is a little more fair for everyone. *PA 19-134*

SENSIBLE GUN REGULATIONS

Three new gun laws will further reduce gun violence in our state. We banned “ghost guns” – homemade weapons that have no serial numbers and circumvent our background check laws. *PA 19-6*

We passed Ethan's Law, which requires the safe storage of all firearms in a home with children under 18. *PA 19-5*

We now require guns in a car to be kept out of sight, locked away, either in the trunk, a locked glove box, or a locked safe. This will reduce the number of stolen guns that end up on our streets. *PA 19-7*

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

We are creating a Green Jobs Career Ladder website for jobs in the green technology industry, including a listing of careers and the jobs available in the state.

Additionally, a bill I supported will promote the construction of high performance green state buildings that have reduced emissions and conservative water resource management. We will create new and viable career opportunities, benefit the environment, and help protect our planet for generations to come. *PA 19-35*

GIVING WORKING FAMILIES THE SUPPORT THEY DESERVE

It was my honor to lead the passage of a new law which establishes a Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance (PFMLI) Program in our state. In the event of a medical emergency, the PFMLI program allows workers to care for themselves or a loved one without having to face the threat of financial ruin. By providing up to 12 weeks of Family and Medical Leave Insurance per year, equaling up to 95% of an employee's weekly paycheck, we will provide financial protection to those who find themselves in an unanticipated medical emergency. This will help pregnant women on medically-ordered bed rest, families with an infirm or aging parent, and new parents who want to bond with an infant. The program is funded by employee contributions. If you or your family has an emergency, there will now be financial peace-of-mind. *PA 19-25*

RAISING WAGES

In May, I led a 14 hour debate on raising the minimum wage. I am proud to say this successfully made it through the legislative process, and over 300,000 Connecticut workers will receive a raise as the state's minimum hourly wage gradually rises to \$15 by 2023. In 2024 and years thereafter, the minimum wage will be indexed to the rate of inflation. Here is the schedule of the incremental increases in the minimum wage until we reach \$15 an hour:

- \$11 an hour on October 1, 2019
- \$12 an hour on September 1, 2020
- \$13 an hour on August 1, 2021
- \$14 an hour on July 1, 2022
- \$15 an hour on June 1, 2023 *PA 19-4*



Meeting with constituents in New Haven alongside Senator Winfield.



Yes, it took 14 hours of debate in the House, but we succeeded, and the minimum wage will increase!