

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Emmett Riley

PROUDLY SERVING NORWICH | 46TH DISTRICT

STATE BUDGET

When I was sworn in as your state representative in January, the state faced a \$140 million deficit. It was clear that tough decisions and financial discipline were needed to close that gap and balance the budget.

I'm proud that we were able to do just that -- passing a new biennial budget that does not raise income or sales taxes, but maintains the state's investments in smart growth and education.

The budget also:

- Restores the sales tax exemption for clothing and shoes in Fiscal Year 2015
- Continues our investment in education by funding new Common Core Standards
- Increases state funding in Norwich over the next two years

STANTON SCHOOL TURNAROUND

Thanks to the \$2.3 million in network funding from the State of Connecticut, the Stanton School saw gains in key academic areas for their elementary-aged students. With an extended school day, 95% attendance rate, new bilingual center, and special interventionists for each grade these students were able to improve over last year in math and reading. The teachers, staff and administration at the Stanton School deserve all the credit for taking the funding and putting it to great use.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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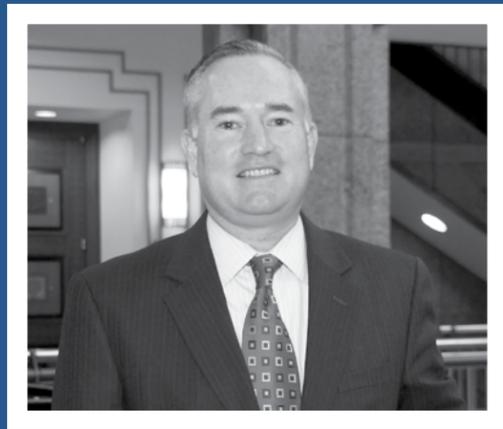
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CAPITOL UPDATE 2013

Dear Neighbor:

This year's legislative session was both challenging and rewarding. I am incredibly proud of the bipartisan work we were able to accomplish on your behalf in Hartford on critical issues such as school safety and environmental protection.

This newsletter features brief summaries of some new laws that will affect Norwich and our state. It is my sincere belief that, through teamwork and cooperation, we can improve the lives of everyone in Connecticut. To do that, I need to continue to hear from you.

Your input is invaluable to me as I serve as your state representative. Every phone call or email from you assists in making the right decisions on your behalf. I can be reached by phone: (800) 842-8267, or by email: Emmett.Riley@cga.ct.gov. You can also sign up for email updates by visiting www.housedems.ct.gov/Riley.

It is an honor to be your state representative and I look forward to continuing to serve you and Norwich.

Sincerely,

State Representative
Emmett Riley



BLUE ALERTS

A bill I co-sponsored was passed and signed into law establishing a system to alert the public when law enforcement has been seriously injured or killed or is missing, and solicit the public's assistance in apprehending the suspect or locating the officer. This is similar to the systems already in place for missing children or the elderly.

POOL SAFETY

The law that is effective now 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 pool activities.

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.

CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Childhood obesity is an issue not only throughout the country, but in Connecticut as well. The Department of Public Health has found that approximately one-third of Connecticut children in kindergarten and third grade are overweight or obese, and approximately one out of every seven children is obese. This session the legislature passed a law creating a childhood obesity task force in order to study the effects of obesity on children's health. The law also requires that schools provide elementary school students with at least 20 minutes of physical exercise in each regular school day.

HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS

CT Info Line	2-1-1
Norwich City Hall	860-823-3700
Police	860-886-5561
Dept. of Human Services	860-823-3778
Otis Library	860-889-2365
Rose City Senior Center	860-889-5960

MAKING MANUFACTURING ASSISTANCE ACT FUNDS

AVAILABLE FOR THE 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 that 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.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

This law seeks to prevent students from being improperly assigned to special education classes when they are actually in need of extra help in learning the English language. If the State Department of Education has ruled that a school district has misidentified a disproportionate number of students, that district's Board of Education will have to submit a report to the Department containing a plan that reduces such misidentifications for students who are in kindergarten through grade three. The law also requires the State Department of Education to study these plans to see what improvements can be made to teacher training.

GENETICALLY-ENGINEERED FOOD (GMOs)

Connecticut became the first state in the nation to pass a genetically modified organisms labeling law. I was proud to work on the bill that will require foods to be labeled under certain circumstances if they contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Consumers have the right to know what is in the food that they are buying. Now they will know whether or not their foods contain GMOs and will be empowered to make individual and informed decisions about whether or not to purchase them for their families.

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CARE 4 KIDS PROGRAM

In our current economic climate, parents working full-time are required to put their children in day care. The Care 4 Kids program helps low- to moderate-income families in Connecticut pay for child care costs. This session we passed a law that expands the Care 4 Kids program to include those parents who are on maternity leave. This law requires the Department of Social Services to grant up to six weeks of continued eligibility for Care 4 Kids funding to mothers on maternity leave who take unpaid leave from their jobs, securing their current child's spot in the program even when they are unable to work.



YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Legislators are acutely aware of the importance of providing affordable, accessible mental health services to those suffering from mental illness and disease, especially children. This session we passed a law that requires the Commissioner of DCF, in consultation with several related groups, to develop an implementation plan across agency and policy areas that meet the mental, emotional and behavioral health needs of all children in the state. This law also establishes a Children's Mental Health Task Force to study all aspects of mental health and will allow Boards of Education around the state to share their best practices policies.

GUN LAWS AND MENTAL HEALTH

This session the House and Senate passed a law that works in tandem with the gun violence, mental health, and school safety bill we had passed earlier in the session. SB 972 strengthens the system we have in place here in Connecticut relating to children's mental health. Pediatricians will get more training about signs of mental health, seeking to reduce mental, emotional, and behavioral health issues in children through improved early identification and intervention.