



Jason was recognized as a Children's Champion for his work on education and domestic violence.

REDUCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

We continued our efforts to improve our state's response to incidents of domestic violence. About 30 percent of the state's criminal court dockets stem from domestic violence arrests. Improving law enforcement response and prosecution is critical when you consider the immeasurable impact domestic violence has on victims, families and society at large. This session our efforts included:

- » Increasing access to restraining and protective orders
- » Improving information sharing between public safety and judicial agencies
- » Facilitating victims' access to support services
- » Providing police with more tools to protect communities
- » Requiring the judicial branch to recommend long-term solutions

In addition we tackled a long standing problem regarding the protection of victims by reforming the bail bond process. We passed legislation I sponsored (PA 11-152) that was aimed at reducing "undercutting" by bail bondsmen. This is a practice in which bondsmen compete for business by discounting the bond premium that is statutorily required to be paid by domestic violence offenders. As a result, defendants post bond more easily and are quickly released back into the community outside of the letter of the law without any "cooling off" period.

State Representative
JASON ROJAS

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State Representative

Jason Rojas

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CAPITOL REPORT 2011



Dear Neighbors,

This past legislative session proved to be another challenging one with much of the focus on the state budget. We began the year with a \$3.6 billion deficit which was addressed through a combination of spending cuts, tax increases and concessions from state employees. I can appreciate the balanced approach that was taken to address the deficit but in the end I did not vote for the budget that was adopted.

In the face of the deficit and a state still reeling from the recession we did pass legislation that is good for the state, our district and our communities. I continue to focus on the important issues of tax policy, education and increasing regional cooperation which is linked to real property tax reform and job growth.

I am proud to have worked on legislation which continues our efforts to improve our response to domestic violence. I co-authored legislation that advances education reform so outcomes match the investments we make in education. I pushed to create a Regional Incentive Performance Grant program so we can move our state away from an over-reliance on property taxes by increasing regional collaboration and efficiency while still delivering quality service.

Please share your thoughts and opinions on issues as they make me a more effective and better informed legislator. Many of you have already contacted me and I appreciate your efforts. Together we can shape the direction of our state, our district and our communities.

Sincerely,

State Representative

Jason Rojas

Proudly Serving East Hartford, Glastonbury and Manchester

9th Assembly District



If you need additional assistance or have questions, please contact me:

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CITIES AND TOWNS

Promoting Efficiency and Collaboration

I continue to work on increasing regional cooperation in delivering services with the intent of making the best possible use of public dollars. This session I pushed for and was successful in the funding of a Regional Performance Incentive Grant Program, Section 5 of Public Act 11-61, that will allow towns and cities on a voluntary basis to come together to deliver services on a regional basis resulting in long term savings. Connecticut is strongly committed to local control and this is a way to move us in a direction that allows for local control while also producing efficiencies in government. The state should play an integral part in reducing the burden of property taxes.

Reducing Red Tape

Local tax collectors will now be able to send statements and process bills for residents and businesses electronically which will be more convenient to save money. Certain conditions apply and include:

- » Taxpayers must consent to the new process
- » Transactions must have receipts
- » Municipal websites need updating to process transactions



Jason and State Rep. Mae Flexer testify in support of a bill requiring all surplus revenue to be directed into the budget reserve fund (Rainy Day Fund).

CREATING JOBS & PROMOTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Promoting Job Growth and Economic Development

Despite difficult budget choices, we were able to make significant investments in our state's economy and in higher education. We made strategic decisions to support and build upon our strengths in the biosciences and healthcare which are major components of our state's economy. We continued to make investments at the University of Connecticut through a new long range plan for the UConn Health Center as well as the creation of a technology park that will help commercialize research and innovation. These public investments will attract private and foundation resources to expand research and business incubation resulting in job and small business creation.

Connecticut Airport Authority

One of my priorities for the last three years has been to reduce bureaucracy and improve the ability of Bradley International Airport to adapt and meet the demands of a global economy. This past session I worked to create the Connecticut Airport Authority (PA 11-84) which created an 11-member board that will have the autonomy, flexibility and power to improve airport operations where previously it had to navigate the red tape of the Department of Transportation. Regional economies rely on efficient and successful airports and Bradley will now be positioned to become the economic driver that it should be.

Brownfield Remediation Creates Jobs

I am pleased to have co-sponsored a bill (PA 11-141) that could be one of the most important job generators in Connecticut. We funded clean up and re-use of "brownfields"- contaminated and long abandoned properties that can be remediated and turned into productive and safe sites for economic development, open space or other public uses. This program will lead to reinvestment in former manufacturing sites in our towns.



Jason and State Rep. Patricia Widlitz work on changes to the budget in the House Chamber.

INVESTING IN EDUCATION, INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

Innovation in Connecticut Schools

I have continued my work in education policy to address the underperformance of too many of our public schools. This work is a continuation of efforts I undertook during my first term to improve the quality of education we provide for all students. I was a lead co-author of Public Act 11-85 which contained a number of important provisions to address the achievement gap. One important change was allowing for the use of a technology-based tool to assess reading proficiency in our children. Our current tool is outdated and potentially ineffective. This is particularly important for low income students who often come to kindergarten with limited literacy skills. This program was awarded an \$850,000 grant from a private foundation to fund the study in five school districts.

Model Architectural Plans for School Building Projects

In an effort to make better use of public dollars, I authored Section 132 of Public Act 11-51 that would move us in the direction of creating model blueprints for school construction. School construction is a major cost of government and we spend millions every year on architectural services for designing schools. Having model blueprints for use by municipalities will reduce the duplication of efforts and expenditure of dollars that go into school construction. The language forms a School Building Projects Advisory Council which will develop model blueprints for new school building, conduct studies and make recommendations for improving the school construction process.

Adult Education Programs To Offer Remedial Education Courses to Students of Community-Technical Colleges

In an effort to better utilize limited education dollars, I authored Section 204 of Public Act 11-48 which creates a college transition pilot programs. Community colleges in recent years have had to provide non-credit remedial courses for students who are not adequately prepared for college level courses. This is straining already limited resources and this bill will allow adult education providers, with already existing resources, to provide those courses at a lower cost. One of the pilot collaborations will be between Manchester Adult Education and Manchester Community College. (Note: Funding was not allocated for 2012. I will work with my colleagues to restore funding in 2013.)



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