



Jason discussing the domestic violence bill with Rep. Holder-Winfield, Vice Chair of the Judiciary Committee.

## Reducing Domestic Violence

We have made great progress in helping families affected by domestic violence in recent years, but the problem persists in our communities. Building on earlier successes, this year we strengthened the state's laws (PA 12-114) to better protect victims, hold abusers accountable and give new tools to law enforcement by:

- Improving access to and enforcement of protective and restraining orders.
- Giving police officers new tools, including a model policy for responding to domestic violence incidents.
- Allowing victims to report email and texting violations of restraining and protective orders in the town where they reside, where they receive the communication or where the communication was initiated.
- Extending the maximum length of restraining orders from six months to one year.
- Ordering a feasibility study for a 911 texting system.
- Requiring the courts to share protective orders with schools that victims attend, upon request of a victim.
- Strengthening the definition of stalking to ensure that stalking incidents—including digital stalking—are appropriately punished.

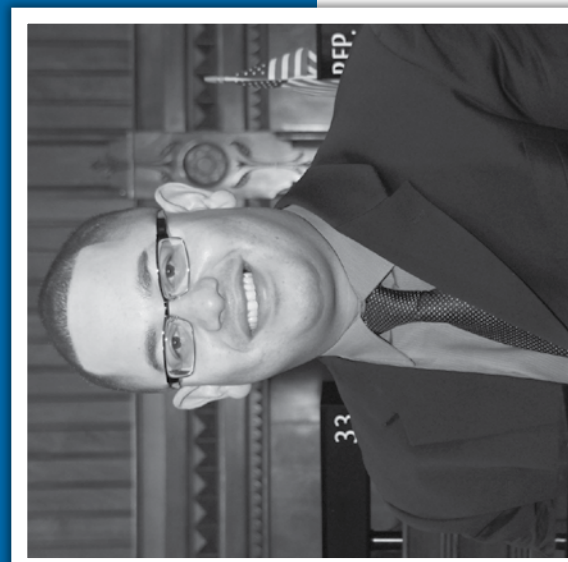
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# State Representative Jason Rojas

East Hartford, Glastonbury and Manchester | 9th House District

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Dear Neighbors,

Another legislative session has wrapped up and while it was a "short" session, lasting three months, a significant amount of work was accomplished, particularly around the issues of education, criminal justice and job creation. The economy continues to slowly improve, but we still have a business community that is hesitant to begin the large scale hiring that will help us reduce unemployment.

From jobs to education to improved response to natural disasters, we passed legislation that improves the quality of life for citizens across our state. It started last October when the legislature passed comprehensive, bipartisan jobs bill that invested in small businesses, gave firms hiring incentives, aligned education programs with employer needs, encouraged entrepreneurship and innovation and eliminated red-tape for growing companies.

I am proud to have played a critical role in helping craft the historic reforms in education policy. We increased accountability while respecting the teaching profession and we sent the message that we will no longer accept chronically underperforming schools. We made strategic investments in early childhood education and highlighted the critical importance of literacy and how it is taught.

Being a state legislator is a difficult but rewarding job, but I find that I am able to better reflect the will of the district when I hear from you about where you stand on issues. Together we can shape the direction of our state, our district and our communities.

Sincerely,



Recycle!



# State Representative **JASON ROJAS**

9th Assembly District | [www.housedems.ct.gov/Rojas](http://www.housedems.ct.gov/Rojas)



Jason answers a question on the education reform bill for Rep. Elaine O'Brien.

## Jobs Are Priority #1

We created new job opportunities for young people by funding the Youth Employment Summer Jobs program (Public Act 12-104). We also supported adult evening education programs, as well as the Small Business Express program and a Connecticut Made initiative to promote products from local businesses. Additionally, high level job opportunities will result from economic development funding for projects that support bioscience and biotechnology.

## Brownfields

We also passed legislation allowing swifter conversion of contaminated and long-abandoned properties to productive sites for economic development, open space and other public uses. This session, we directed the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to perform an in-depth analysis of the state's brownfield remediation and development programs and recommend changes to those programs.

## Promoting Collaboration and Strategic Planning



Jason speaking to a state agency liaison on pending legislation.

I co-sponsored Public Act 12-147, which creates the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) which will be responsible for developing a strategic plan that coordinates the operation of investments made in six regional assets. Those assets include the Connecticut Convention Center, the Connecticut Science Center, new planned housing along the riverfront and Rentschler Field. This bill allows for better planning and decision making related to housing and economic development while still respecting the individual authority of member towns.

## Education Reform

Our education initiative (Public Act 12-116) provides new support to help turn around underperforming schools. The education reform package has long-term implications for our children and for the state's economic well-being. The better we prepare children for the 21st Century workforce, the stronger we'll make Connecticut's economy. The bill:

- Includes more funding for school-based health centers and family resource centers.
- Recognizes the critical importance of early childhood education by underwriting 1,000 school readiness slots for preschoolers and funding initiatives to improve early reading success.
- Creates the Commissioner's Network to provide the intensive supports and interventions needed to turn around 25 of the most chronically low-performing schools.
- Gives the state commissioner of education the needed authority to develop or modify plans with teachers and parents at "turnaround" schools.
- Transforms how we teach reading and places significant emphasis on literacy during the pre-kindergarten to third grades years.



Jason and colleagues from Black and Puerto Rican Caucus present recommendations on education reform.

## Storm Response and Power Outages

In the aftermath of the October Nor'easter and Tropical Storm Irene that left much of the state without power, I co-sponsored sweeping reforms (Public Act 12-148), that better prepare for future severe storms and avoid widespread and lengthy loss of utility service, where:

- Utilities will be held to minimum performance standards for emergency preparation and response.
- Noncompliance could result in penalties of up to 2.5 percent of an electric or gas company's annual distribution revenue, approximately \$25 million in the case of Connecticut Light & Power.

## Protecting Children with Special Needs



Jason was awarded the Children's Champion Award at the Capitol for the third year in a row.

Several new laws offer protections and support for children with special needs. One bill eliminates the unnecessary use of so-called seclusion or scream rooms. Another bill improves the special education student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and another creates a study on workforce development, training and employment of young adults with autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities.

## Preventing Sexual Violence on Campuses

Public Act 12-78 gives students better tools to stay safe on campus. This law protects students by requiring colleges and universities to adopt and disclose policies on sexual assault.

## Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund

Continuing my focus on long term fiscal planning, I co-sponsored Public Act 12-46, which increases the amount of resources retained in the unemployment compensation trust fund by changing the method used to calculate the ideal amount of money the fund should contain. For too long, the state neglected to make this adjustment to the funding ratio, which left us unprepared for the level of employment benefits needed for Connecticut residents who were out of work. Connecticut's fund eventually ran out of money to support unemployment benefits requiring the state to borrow over \$800 million from the federal government. This is \$800 million employers have to pay back, a burden on them and the state economy. This bill ensures the state is better prepared to meet the challenges that arise when there is a downturn in the economy.



Jason speaking at a forum on manufacturing issues.