



DEAR NEIGHBOR:

Connecticut faced many challenges in 2013. I'm proud to have participated in a legislative session that successfully met those challenges and moved the state in a positive direction.

The legislature's response to the tragedy in Sandy Hook took center stage. Even though I ultimately voted against regulating weapons, if the bill was separated into smaller, specific bills, I would have voted in favor of increased school security and access to mental health services in an effort to prevent future firearm tragedies.

Other legislative accomplishments include:

- Balancing our budget while maintaining assistance to cities and towns with no new taxes.
- Giving seniors a choice in their long-term care through "Aging in Place".
- Assisting struggling homeowners by improving the foreclosure mediation process.
- Improving safety at public school swimming pools.
- Increasing penalties for those connected to human trafficking.
- Adopting a Comprehensive Energy Strategy (CES)

I am proud to have worked on a budget that maintained state funding for Killingly, Putnam and Thompson, including funding for education and vital services to help stabilize our property taxes.

I look forward to answering your questions about any issues facing our state.

Daniel S. Rovero

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Daniel S. Rovero

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State Representative Rovero with Governor Dannel Malloy and Thompson First Selectman Larry Groh

SCHOOL POOL SAFETY

Making sure our children are safe in school swimming pools was a priority during this last legislative session. A new law phases in statewide safety standards for all public school swimming pools, requiring a qualified educator, swimming coach or lifeguard be another set of eyes. Schools will be required to develop a pool safety plan by July 1st, 2014.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Connecticut's model of "Aging in Place" is now law. Keeping our seniors in their homes is paramount to their well-being and saves money. The state will establish partnerships with municipal leaders to encourage collaborative efforts for long-term care planning.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

This new law broadens the crime of trafficking to include related activities and increases the penalty for patronizing a prostitute under age 18 or one who was being coerced or trafficked. It also makes funds and property related to prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation of a minor subject to forfeiture and protects victims by permitting anyone convicted of prostitution to apply to the Superior Court to vacate a conviction because he/she was a victim of trafficking.



COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY STRATEGY

Connecticut has enacted a new Comprehensive Energy Strategy (CES), which is our path to cheaper, cleaner and more reliable energy. Consumers will have a diversity of fuels to use to heat and cool their homes and businesses, and more access to products and programs to reduce their energy use. The CES expands access to natural gas, promotes energy efficiency and lowers energy costs for consumers. These initiatives provide significant savings to ratepayers and allow our businesses to be competitive by encouraging projects like the planned fuel cell park in Killingly.

REMOVING THE ENERGY AUCTION

After hearing from so many of you regarding the proposed energy auction, which would have sold off standard offer electric customers, I became a leader in the fight to remove it from the budget. Connecticut energy costs are already too high, and this one-time revenue gain would have pushed those costs even higher.

HOMEOWNER PROTECTION RIGHTS

We worked hard this past session to protect homeowners and facilitate a fair and speedy foreclosure mediation process. A more streamlined process helps both the banks and the homeowner come to a quicker solution to keep both parties happy. The provisions include: At least three mediation sessions before referring a case to a judge, which helps remove blighted properties from neighborhoods by shortening the foreclosure timelines for abandoned property and treating a homeowner's most recently submitted financial package as current which will end the burden of constant requests for new documents.

PROHIBITING PRICE GOUGING DURING SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS

When catastrophic weather events hit our state, it is important that people have access to the goods and services necessary to restore normality. This law extends the reach on excessive price increases to goods and services sold during any severe weather emergency, as declared by the governor. During one of these events no one can sell or offer to sell a good or service for an "unconscionably excessive price."

STREAMLINING STATE GOVERNMENT AND INCREASING EFFECTIVENESS

Making Connecticut's government more efficient is essential to building a healthy economy and business climate. This law reduces the state's costs by eliminating or reconfiguring various boards and commissions in an effort to streamline government. Many eliminated boards were no longer active or have functions duplicated in other entities.

DISTRACTED DRIVING REVISIONS

Distracted driving - especially the use of cell phones while driving - is an increasingly common complaint. This law addresses distracted driving by increasing the penalty for using a hand-held cell phone or other electronic device while driving. A first offense for distracted driving is now \$150, the second offense is \$300 and a third offense and subsequent offenses are now \$500. These violations will now appear on the offender's driving history and will be made available to insurers.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT SMALL CITIES GRANTS

Killingly, Putnam and Thompson each received funding for elderly or affordable housing projects

- Killingly — \$750,000 to renovate approximately 80 units in the Maple Court Housing elderly housing complex.
- Putnam — \$400,000 to rehab 10 units of low- and moderate-income housing.
- Thompson — \$800,000 for renovations at the Gladys Green/Pineview Court Elderly Housing Complex.

JOB GROWTH

Both the House and the Senate unanimously supported the passage of a bill to encourage Connecticut manufacturers to recruit, hire and train apprentices. We recognize both the prominent role of manufacturing in the state's economy and the need to prepare Connecticut's workforce for manufacturing jobs in the future.

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