



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
KEVIN RYAN

Dear Neighbor,

I am pleased to share with you this update on the recently concluded legislative session. We worked to pass bipartisan legislation that improves the lives of working families, encourages economic growth, and makes critical investments in our state's future.

We crafted a two-year budget that is fiscally responsible and takes care of Connecticut residents. 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. We also rejected the governor's proposal to shift teachers' pension costs to the towns, thereby saving Bozrah, Montville, and Norwich property taxpayers from a local tax hike.

We also worked to ensure that our state becomes more business friendly by repealing the business entity tax, expanding the Angel Investor Tax credit, and making a new tax credit for craft breweries in order to help this industry continue to grow.

On top of this, the Rainy Day fund has soared to over \$2 billion. We have also taken steps to further reduce pension liabilities. New state employees now have hybrid 401K retirement plans.

I'm proud to announce that our budget is already producing results. Our state's bond rating has increased twice in four months. We will see lower long-term borrowing costs because credit rating agencies have upgraded the rating on our bonds. This is a sign that Connecticut is moving in the right direction.

I hope you find this information helpful. Our future is stronger when we work together, so please don't hesitate to reach out to my office if I can ever be of help to you or your family.

Sincerely,



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
KEVIN RYAN
PROUDLY SERVING BOZRAH, MONTVILLE, AND NORWICH

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DELIVERING FOR OUR VETERANS

We owe a great deal of gratitude, and our lives, to our servicemen and servicewomen. That’s why each year I am proud to work in a bipartisan fashion to make sure we are providing them with the very best. This year, we increased the property tax relief for certain disabled veterans, clarified state laws to ensure access to services, and developed a pilot program to help them find employment. In addition, to support those who currently serve, we made sure that if a spouse or child is enrolled in a state college that the student will continue to be charged the lower “in state” tuition rate, even if the service member gets orders out of state. Just our way of saying thanks.

GREEN ENERGY FUTURE

Connecticut has established a goal of using 40% renewable energy by 2030. In order to achieve that ambitious goal, this session, we passed legislation to encourage the construction of high performance “green” buildings that have reduced emissions and conservative water resource management when the state is constructing a new building. These buildings will also have the added benefit of saving taxpayer dollars.

In addition, we:

- Extend renewable energy programs, including traditional net metering and the Green Bank’s renewable solar investment program
- Expand virtual net metering cap which will reduce energy costs for municipalities
- Require DOT to put together a land inventory on which lands are suitable for Class I energy resources; for example, solar energy on lands adjacent to state highways

Together, these efforts will create “green” jobs in both manufacturing and construction. To make sure Connecticut residents are first in line for these jobs, we developed a “Green Jobs Career Ladder” website to track openings and help individuals get the necessary certifications to be qualified.

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SUPPORTING WORKING FAMILIES

This session I pushed my colleagues to deliver for working families. We raised the minimum wage so that no one working full-time lives in poverty and we developed a Paid Family Medical Leave program to allow you to take paid time off for a serious medical condition or to care for a loved one. Together, these programs will provide a little more economic stability for families in our community.

MENTAL HEALTH PARITY

Diseases of the brain and body need to be treated equally in society and by insurance companies. We unanimously passed the Mental Health Parity Act which gives people with mental health and substance use disorders the same access to care as those with cancer and heart disease. One in four Americans has or will be affected by mental health or a substance use disorder. It should be just as easy to receive treatment for depression or addiction as it is for heart disease or diabetes.

PRE-EXISTING INSURANCE COVERAGE

This session, we expanded 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.

This legislation will assure that patients receive treatment and insurance coverage for pre-existing conditions, codify federal Affordable Care Act protections, and prohibit some types of short-term health insurance plans from containing a pre-existing condition provision.

SAFE NURSING HOME STAFFING LEVELS

We are working to ensure nursing home staffing levels are adequate by:

- Requiring nursing homes to calculate and post daily information related to the number of nurses and nurse’s aides who provide direct care to residents during their shift.
- Authorizing the Department of Public Health to take disciplinary action against nursing homes that fail to comply with staffing requirements of 1.9 nurses per resident per day.
- Protecting from retaliation residents and employees of nursing homes who file a complaint or testify in an administrative proceeding against a home.



OTHER HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SESSION

- Raised the age limit to buy tobacco and nicotine products to 21.
- Passed the state water plan to make water a “Public Trust”.
- Require that schools teach computer science.
- Passed “Time’s Up” legislation, which increases the statute of limitations on reporting sexual abuse and assault.
- Tackling dementia and Alzheimer’s disease by modifying continuing education requirements for physicians to include diagnosing and treating cognitive conditions.



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