



# State Representative **EZEQUIEL SANTIAGO**

## HEALTH CARE

### SUSTINET PLAN

Over 750,000 Connecticut residents went without health insurance at one point during 2007 or 2008. Healthcare costs everyone more each year and taxpayers pay more to supplement the people who do not have it. This year, we took major steps towards reforming our broken healthcare system with the passage the Sustinet Plan. This legislation:

- » Provides a framework for expanding high quality coverage to more residents
- » Establishes a nine-member board of healthcare providers and experts
- » Creates new public health insurance options that will be affordable
- » Allows Connecticut to take full advantage of Obama's federal reforms

### EARLY DETECTION OF BREAST CANCER

Women with dense breast tissue have higher risks of cancer. Therefore we passed legislation that will require mammography reports to include breast density data so women can identify their risk level.

### HEALTH INSURANCE FOR AUTISM TREATMENTS

Connecticut has become the twelfth state to require insurance coverage of critical treatments and benefits that will greatly help the lives of people with autism.

These treatments are:

- » Diagnosis to determine if an individual has an autism spectrum disorder
- » Behavioral therapies for children 14 years or younger including, but not limited to, applied behavior analysis and cognitive behavioral therapy
- » Prescription drugs
- » Psychiatric and psychological services
- » Physical and occupational therapy
- » Speech and language pathology services



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State Representative

# Ezequiel Santiago

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# CAPITOL NEWS 2009



Dear Friend:

As a newly elected State Representative, I was very eager to begin working for you. I had many ideas for legislation I wanted to introduce during my first term that would benefit the 130<sup>th</sup> District and the members of our community. Unfortunately, many of my ideas were placed on hold due to an issue that became much greater in importance for our city and the state – the ever increasing budget deficit.

Even while the state's fiscal crisis dominated much of our work, my colleagues and I fought hard for the people of Connecticut. We were able to pass landmark health care reform legislation, as well as bills protecting children, seniors, military families, homeowners and students.

I am proud that Connecticut's families gained substantial protections through the passage of these important bills during the past legislative session, and I will continue to work to ensure that the citizens of our city and state are remembered throughout the process.

This newsletter highlights some of the important legislation that was adopted this year. Should you have any questions pertaining to these or any other bill passed, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

*Ezequiel Santiago*



State Representative

# Ezequiel Santiago

Proudly Serving Bridgeport | 130<sup>th</sup> District



## IMPROVING REGIONAL COOPERATION

Making government function more efficiently is especially important during these difficult economic times. This year we took important steps by passing legislation that improves regional cooperation. This legislation:

- » Allows regions to enter into mutual agreements to promote regional economic development
- » Allows regions to share property tax revenue from the new developments
- » Allows municipalities with approved regional agreements to share part of the sales and use tax

## PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Connecticut's natural beauty is one of the state's treasures that must be maintained and protected. This year, we took steps to protect our environmental heritage for future generations. A bill aimed at protecting Long Island sound was adopted. This legislation creates a bi-state commission to review environmental, ecological, & energy issues and allows cooperative protection of Long Island Sound and the lower Hudson River Valley.

## KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE

Protecting our children from the numerous harms that exist is important to me. That is why I worked with my colleagues to pass legislation to do just that this legislative session.

### HEALTH CARE FOR STEPCCHILDREN

Health insurance companies providing insurance coverage to residents in our state had differing guidelines pertaining to the coverage of stepchildren. Therefore, I worked with my colleagues to ensure that health insurance policies provide the same benefits to stepchildren as biological children.

### PREVENTING CARDIAC ARREST IN SCHOOLS

Each school is now required to have an automatic external defibrillator (AED).

### PROTECTING OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS

New legislation will restrict how credit card companies can solicit students on our public college campuses. It prohibits credit card companies from soliciting students during class registration and bans the use of gifts and other marketing incentives. Colleges would also be prevented from providing student information to credit card companies.

### NEW SAFEGUARDS AGAINST SEX OFFENDERS

Beginning September 1, 2009, the Department of Public Safety will be required to notify the superintendents of schools in communities where sex offenders live or plan to live.

### PROMPT TREATMENT OF ALLERGIES IN SCHOOLS

Some students with asthma or allergies will be permitted to carry inhalers and epi-pens in school. They will be allowed to self-administer with proper authorization. Additionally, licensed athletic trainers have been added to the list of school personnel permitted to administer medication.

### REQUIRING CYSTIC FIBROSIS SCREENINGS

Early detection and treatment of Cystic Fibrosis can improve health, longevity, and quality of life. That is why all hospitals will be required to test for cystic fibrosis in infants beginning October 1, 2009.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Ensuring the public is safe and secure in our neighborhoods and on our streets is one of my top priorities. I supported several bills that will make several advancements in protecting our streets.

### "BLOCKING THE BOX"

Beginning October 1, 2009, cities and towns will be allowed to adopt "blocking the box" rules. This law prohibits cars and trucks from going through certain intersections if doing so blocks other vehicles from being able to cross the intersection.

### STREET RACING

New penalties for illegal street racing have been adopted. Vehicles used for street racing will be impounded for 30 days. Additionally, anyone racing a vehicle that is not registered to them will be subject to increased fines - up to \$2,000 for the first offense and up to \$3,000 for each additional offense.

### IMPROVING BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The Department of Transportation is required to set aside funding for the purpose of improving bicycle and pedestrian access. This will enhance bicycle and pedestrian use in our neighborhoods. Additionally, this legislation increases funding to municipalities for bikeways and sidewalks with curb cuts or ramps and also establishes a board to create new policies and procedures that improve the bicycling and walking environment in Connecticut.

### "MOVE OVER" LAW

Effective October 1, 2009, motorists approaching stationary emergency vehicles on travel lanes, breakdown lanes, or highway shoulders will be required to immediately slow down and move over one lane from the lane that an emergency vehicle is located if it is safe and reasonable to do so.



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