

## PREGNANT WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

For far too long, women have been losing out on opportunities to advance in the workplace due in part to unfair treatment with respect to pregnancy. Under Public Act 17-118, current protections for pregnant and nursing women are strengthened, including requiring employers to make reasonable accommodations for these employees. These protections are critical to women's financial security and are good for families and the economy.

## TRANSPORTATION

Connecticut's aging transportation infrastructure has a real impact on our bottom line. According to a report by the American Society of Civil Engineers, the average motorist in CT pays an extra \$864 per year because of driving on roads that are in need of repair. That's why I'm glad that as part of this budget, we agreed to a long-term plan to move more sales tax revenue into the Special Transportation Fund. These resources will help the fund stay solvent. There is still a lot more we need to do, but this was an important step forward.



*Collecting Donations for Hurricane Relief Efforts for Puerto Rico*

Sign up for my electronic newsletter at:  
[WWW.HOUSEDEMS.CT.GOV/SANTIAGO](http://WWW.HOUSEDEMS.CT.GOV/SANTIAGO)



Follow me on facebook:

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/STATEREPHILDASANTIAGO](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/STATEREPHILDASANTIAGO)

# STATE REPRESENTATIVE HILDA E. SANTIAGO

PROUDLY SERVING MERIDEN

Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591  
Capitol: 800-842-8267  
[www.housedems.ct.gov/SantiagoH](http://www.housedems.ct.gov/SantiagoH)



[www.facebook.com/StateRepHildaSantiago](http://www.facebook.com/StateRepHildaSantiago)

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
HARTFORD, CT  
Permit No. 3937



## STATE REPRESENTATIVE HILDA E. SANTIAGO PROUDLY SERVING MERIDEN

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

House Democrats led the way in passing significant legislation during the 2017 session of the General Assembly to help protect and improve the quality of life for Connecticut families.

This was a session dominated by the budget. There were no easy solutions and hard decisions had to be made. The long-term structural changes we made will help put Connecticut's budget on a sustainable path – not just this year, but in future years to come.

Keeping Connecticut a great place to live, work, and raise a family is our ongoing objective as well as our responsibility. Though the 2017 legislative session presented one of the toughest budget challenges in decades, we succeeded in helping move our state forward.

I hope you find the enclosed 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. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your state representative.

Sincerely,

*Hilda E. Santiago*



*Being interviewed at a concert on the Green where we were collecting donations for Hurricane Relief Efforts for Puerto Rico*



*Discussing legislation with colleagues on the house floor*

## INVESTING IN OUR WORKFORCE

Having a highly skilled workforce is critical to attracting new businesses, keeping the high-performing companies we have, and connecting our residents with good paying, quality jobs. That's why we created a landmark initiative within the Department of Labor that will strengthen existing workforce development programs and implement new job training opportunities using a mix of public and private funds. In addition, we are moving the vo-tech schools out from under the State Department of Education so they are able to be more responsive to job market changes. These changes will make sure we have an economy that is competitive for the future. We also tried to address the gender pay gap in CT by raising a bill that would limit the bases upon which an employer can justify unequal pay, but unfortunately while we passed it in the House, it was not raised in the Senate. *HB 5591, PA 17-207, PA 17-237*

## SUPPORTING CT'S SMALL BUSINESSES

The newly passed state budget maintains funding for important programs that our small businesses rely on, including: the Bioscience Innovation Fund, Angel Investor Tax Credits, and the Women's Business Development Council. Each of these programs provides resources and guidance for growing industries and Connecticut-based entrepreneurs. While the overall state budget reduces state spending for a number of programs, it is important that we not abandon successful programs that are creating jobs. We also created a Small Business Hotline that will help provide prospective and existing small business owners with customized advice, education, and network resources in one place. Additionally, state agencies will be promoting the electronic business portal found on the Secretary of the State's website in order to encourage entrepreneurship and identify modifications to the portal to allow businesses to complete the registration process as efficiently as possible. *PA 17-103, PA 17-158*

## SPENDING CAP

The budget strengthened our existing spending cap. Under the new cap, funding for pensions, distressed municipalities, and money used to receive matching federal grants will all come under the cap over time. This is important because it more accurately reflects what we are spending as a state and will force future legislatures to prioritize spending on programs that work and that our communities need. In addition, because it passed with such a significant majority, it will be harder to change the definition of the cap in the future.

## BONDING CAP

The budget created a \$1.9 billion cap on state bonding. This cap will help to control the projected increases in debt service payments, and will require the Governor and State Bond Commission to prioritize what projects are most worthy of bonding. With this cap, by reducing bonding this year, we expect to save nearly \$30 million in debt service payments in the next fiscal year.



*Speaking at the UConn School of Social Works's Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration*



*Recognizing Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis, Inc. for their 40 years of providing services to survivors of domestic violence.*



*Speaking at the Rally for Peace and Unity at the State Capitol*

## STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# HILDA E. SANTIAGO

## PROUDLY SERVING MERIDEN

### STRENGTHENING LAWS CONCERNING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Connecticut has long been a leader in addressing intimate partner violence with strong policies that strengthen victim safety and increase offender accountability. With this bill, we continue to update our laws to reflect national best-practices by: expanding existing laws on strangulation and stalking; acknowledging the use of social media as a modern means for stalking; increasing the penalty for committing a family violence crime while on probation; and requiring a presentence investigation for anyone convicted of a family violence felony to take into account, among other things, the circumstances of the offense and victim's attitude. *PA 17-31*

### SOCIAL SECURITY TAX EXEMPTION FOR SENIORS

As a part of the budget we passed a provision that will exempt social security and pensions from the state income tax starting 2019. This will help provide much needed tax relief to those who most need it and allow them to keep more of their own money. *PA 17-2*

### AFFORDABLE HIGHER EDUCATION

Making college more affordable is one of our top priorities. With the state budget we restored over \$50 million to the University of Connecticut from a Republican budget that would have led to dramatic tuition rate increases and cuts to our flagship university. In addition, we took two important steps aimed at lowering the cost of attending our state's public colleges and universities by cutting red tape making it easier for schools to secure goods and services while still requiring strong oversight policies. Also, we required state schools to establish guidelines to minimize student costs and cut down on textbook costs. *PA 17-130*

### VETERANS

This year we passed a bill that allows municipalities to provide a property tax exemption to a parent or surviving spouse of a service member killed in action while performing active military duty. A municipality may exempt up to \$20,000 or 10% of the property's assessed value. *PA 17-65*

### GREEN BANK AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND

Unfortunately, with some of the tough budget decisions that were made the legislature made cuts to important programs such as the Green Bank and the Energy Efficiency Fund. These funds help lower energy costs, support green initiatives and create good paying clean energy jobs. Although, I am glad we were able to restore some of the Green Bank funding from other proposals, which allows them to still operate, I look forward to working on ways to minimize the impact these cuts will have on consumers, and ensure that our state can maintain its commitment to clean energy investments in the energy marketplace.