

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
SEAN SCANLON

PROUDLY SERVING THE 98TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT | BRANFORD, GUILFORD

CAPITOL UPDATE 2015

Dear Friend,

In June, the legislature adjourned for the year and I wrapped up my first session as your state representative. I wanted to take a few minutes to share with you some of the things I've been working on at the Capitol and some important pieces of legislation we passed this year.

Listening to you

I do my best to stay in touch with my constituents as much as possible. It's why I sent you a survey earlier this year (and will do so again next year!) and hold "Coffee and Conversation" office hours regularly so that people can easily tell me what's on their minds. For as long as I have this job, listening and accessibility will always be my biggest priorities.

Working across the aisle

Last year when I ran for office I told people I wanted to work across party lines and in my first six months I tried to do just that. 12 of the 15, or 80%, of the bills I either sponsored or co-sponsored this year had a Republican co-sponsor. In addition, I was honored to be elected co-chair of the Young Legislators Caucus which is comprised of legislators from both parties under the age of 40 who work together on issues facing our generation and state.

Fighting for local families

By far my favorite part of being a state representative has been assisting Guilford and Branford families when they need a little help. Whether it's a problem with DMV or an issue with health insurance, it's been a privilege to assist dozens of people from our community. If there is something you or someone you know could use assistance with, please don't ever hesitate to contact me!

It's been an honor to serve as your voice in Hartford and I hope you will always feel free to let me know how I can do a better job for you and your family.

Sincerely,



Representative Sean Scanlon

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Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Capitol: 800-842-8267

www.housedems.ct.gov/Scanlon

Sean.Scanlon@cga.ct.gov

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THE STATE BUDGET



One of the toughest decisions I had to make this session was whether to support our two-year state budget. While there were a lot of things in the budget I do support — an investment in our transportation infrastructure, the restoration of funding for our libraries and parks, and services for the disabled and mental health— ***I decided after hearing from and listening to my constituents that I could not support the final version of the budget and therefore was one of only 11 Democrats who voted no.***

TACKLING PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

The shoreline and our whole state have recently seen an increase in prescription drug and heroin abuse, especially among teenagers and young adults. After meeting with local students, parents, and health experts, I made this issue a top priority of my first term and co-sponsored a bill (Public Act 15-198) that seeks to address this growing problem. This new law seeks to educate doctors about the dangers of over-prescribing, requires doctors to report what they are prescribing and cracks down on “doctor shopping”. The law also allows pharmacists to prescribe lifesaving anti-overdose drugs to family members and loved ones of people struggling with addiction.



Governor Malloy signs the first law I helped pass.

LONG ISLAND SOUND BLUE PLAN AND RESOURCE AND USE INVENTORY

The Long Island Sound remains one of our most precious state resources. The “Blue Plan,” which I worked to pass in committee and in the House, will inventory the resources, uses and conservation areas of our portion of Long Island Sound. With this plan in place, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection along with the newly established 16-member Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory and Blue Plan Advisory Committee will be able to more clearly and effectively manage our offshore waters through a data-driven process. It will also help streamline, allocate and coordinate our resources which include state agencies, academic institutions, user groups and other stakeholders.



ADOPTING A STUDENT LOAN BILL OF RIGHTS

This year I co-sponsored a bill (Public Act 15-162) that makes Connecticut the first state in the nation to adopt a Student Loan Bill of Rights. As the cost of college rises and the web of student loans becomes more and more complex, families need somewhere to turn when they have questions or concerns. This law creates an Office of Student Loan Ombudsman who will regulate student loan services, educate students and parents on the loan process, and assist those having disputes with loan companies.

ENSURING SENIORS & ALL PATIENTS GET CARE

Some patients end up returning to the hospital soon after discharge because they had not been instructed properly on their follow-up care or were unable to follow unclear instructions. This year, I helped pass the CARE (Caregiver Advise, Record, Enable) Act which requires a hospital to allow a patient to designate a caregiver, at or before they receive a written copy of their discharge plan, and for the hospital to document the designated caregiver in the patient’s discharge plan. The hospital must then attempt to notify the caregiver of the patient’s discharge and instruct the caregiver on any post-discharge tasks with which the patient will need assistance.

BANNING VARIABLE ELECTRIC RATES

This year Connecticut became the first state in the nation to protect residents from predatory electricity providers who offer a low introductory rate that increases rapidly afterwards. The protections enacted require competitive electric suppliers to give their customers a 60-day notice before the end of their contracts. Suppliers cannot charge these customers a termination or early cancellation fee and must allow customers who want to switch to standard service the ability to do so within 72 hours. We also set up a process for state utility regulators to further investigate and take measures to completely eliminate variable electric rates when a customer’s contract expires.

HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES AND CUSTOMERS

I was proud to secure \$446,000 in state funding to restore and upgrade the municipal parking lot behind the Guilford Green. This project, which will be completed by the summer of 2016, consists of paving and drainage upgrades in addition to installation of lampposts, traffic islands, and crosswalks. Downtown Guilford is a vital part of our local economy and I am thrilled to have worked with First Selectman Joseph S. Mazza to make this parking lot safer, well-lit and pothole-free so residents and visitors can better access our wonderful small businesses and restaurants.



Announcing new funding for Guilford with First Selectman Mazza.