

SESSION WRAP-UP

It remains a privilege and honor to serve as your state representative. The 2023 legislative session is in the rearview mirror, and I wanted to take a moment to check in and share some highlights from the past several months.

We worked hard to deliver a budget that adheres to our fiscal guardrails while still providing hundreds of millions in more funding to our local schools, colleges and universities, and services for our most vulnerable residents. As part of our historic tax cuts, families of four who make \$50,000 annually will pay no state income taxes. This is another important step in making CT affordable for everyone.

We did it by working together – without the fighting you see in Washington.

I'd love to hear from you if you would like more details or have any questions on the initiatives addressed in this legislative update.

Sincerely,



BIG WINS FOR NORWALK

- ✓ Historic funding for schools
- ✓ Massive deposit into Rainy Day Fund
- ✓ Sensible/sustainable budget
- ✓ CT a beacon for reproductive healthcare
- ✓ Modern voting system with early voting
- ✓ Invest in growing healthcare workforce

NEW LAWS FOR 2023-24

FROM STATE REPRESENTATIVE TRAVIS SIMMS

PROUDLY SERVING NORWALK

Representative Travis Simms
Legislative Office Building, Room 4000
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

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NEW LAWS IN CONNECTICUT

2023 2024



FROM STATE REPRESENTATIVE TRAVIS SIMMS

PROUDLY SERVING NORWALK



- 860-240-8585
- Travis.Simms@cga.ct.gov
- housedems.ct.gov/Simms
- facebook.com/StateRepSimms

ISSUES SPECIFIC TO NORWALK

LOCAL FUNDING TO TOWNS – HELPING STABILIZE AND LOWER PROPERTY TAXES

- Reformed retirement plans for municipal employees – saving towns hundreds of thousands of dollars annually
- Allowed towns to accept electronic signatures from contractors – helping streamline local government and business permitting
- Provided \$60 million in new funding for town governments

HISTORIC FUNDING FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS

- Prevented any town from receiving a funding cut to their local schools (\$6.5 m)
- Continued our commitment to funding local boards of education with an honest ECS formula (\$45 m)

Invests over \$240 million in public education for the 2024-25 school year:

- Capped tuition payments that local districts pay for kids attending choice programs
- \$164 million in new funding to local boards of education
- \$9.3 million in new funding for charter schools
- \$53.3 million in new funding for magnet schools
- \$11.4 million in new funding for Open Choice
- \$7.2 million in new funding for vocational agriculture programs

GETTING PEOPLE BACK ON THEIR FEET

- Ensured those leaving prison have a state ID or driver's license
- Made more people convicted of a crime before the age of 21 eligible for parole
- Created reentry success plans for kids getting out of correctional or judicial facilities
- Expanded assistance to refugees
- Assisting people who no longer qualify for Medicaid to enroll in the health insurance exchange by providing two months of premium assistance
- Created pilot programs for substance abuse and mental health issues at correctional facilities
- Expanded eligibility to short-term financial assistance

OUR BIPARTISAN BUDGET INCLUDES HISTORIC TAX CUTS!

A STATE BUDGET FOCUSED ON:



CUTTING YOUR TAXES

Our budget includes the **largest Personal Income Tax cut in CT history** by cutting marginal income tax rates, increasing the Earned Income Tax Credit, capping mill rates, and eliminating even more retirement income taxes.



INDUSTRY GROWTH

Our budget **supports CT's growing industries** such as childcare, adult-use cannabis, manufacturing, and media, film, and theater production.



INVESTING IN OUR STUDENTS

Our budget **invests over \$240M in public education** by stabilizing our state colleges and universities, expanding debt-free community college, fully funding our schools and local boards of education, and increasing scholarships and student debt relief.



SAFETY NET SERVICES

Our budget expands Temporary Family Assistance, increases Husky C. eligibility, provides funds to community action agencies for residents facing immediate economic hardship, supports the 9-8-8 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, and increases Medicaid rate reimbursements for providers and specialists.



IDD SUPPORTS

Our budget **invests over \$30M to better serve Intellectually or Developmentally Disabled individuals** by addressing agency waiting lists for services, bolstering employment opportunities, increasing Husky C eligibility, and breaking down silos for better coordination and data collection.

SUPPORTING WORKERS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

- Required full disclosure of hidden fees on small business loans, ensured access to judicial hearings in a dispute, and required any loan offers to be good for at least three days
- Cut the number of reporting requirements for businesses
- Allowed existing cigar bars and clubs in our larger cities to serve alcohol
- Permanently allowed restaurants to sell alcohol for off-site consumption
- Supported CT farm wineries by allowing them to open up to three retail locations
- Protected workers whose health benefits are terminated by an employer following a strike or labor dispute
- Cut business taxes to promote expansion of childcare facilities
- Made it easier for small contractors to bid on state projects
- Allowed cannabis businesses to deduct their expenses on their taxes
- Expanded JobsCT to increase employment and job creation in our state.

SUPPORTING SENIORS

- Established a new coordinator of state services for people with dementia
- Strengthened patients' involvement in their homemaker care plans and streamlined the process for filing complaints
- Expanded eligibility for seniors to participate in adult day services (serving those with early onset dementia)
- Expanded Medicaid coverage for services like primary healthcare, physical therapy and meals
- Increased funding for elderly nutrition and Meals on Wheels
- Allowed banks to freeze transactions when they suspect a senior is being scammed
- Required homemaker companion companies to provide notice to their clients before they abruptly close and prohibited any increases in rates without at least 60-day notice.

PROTECTING RENTERS

- Increased municipal fines to \$2,000 for rental property violations (unsanitary or unsafe living conditions)
- Required landlords to offer walk-throughs prior to signing a lease
- Capped rental application fees at \$50
- Erased judicial records for renters who win eviction cases
- Required a more timely return of security deposits
- Capped late charges for past due rent