

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# STEVE STAFSTROM

*PROUDLY SERVING BRIDGEPORT - 129TH DISTRICT*

Dear Neighbors,

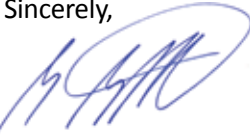
This year's legislative session concluded on May 9th with the passage of a bipartisan budget and new legislation that will shape our state for years to come. We worked on policies that support small businesses, workforce development and making our state a place where we can proudly live and raise our families.

Here are some key components of the budget agreement:

- No income, sales or other state tax increases.
- Prevents municipal aid cuts.
- Provides additional education aid to municipalities, like Bridgeport, for displaced residents arriving from Puerto Rico.
- Restores funding to the Medicare Savings and Renter's Rebate Programs.
- Restores \$12 million to the Husky A healthcare program which assists more than 13,000 people, many living here in Bridgeport.
- Prevents bus and rail service cuts, any fare increases and keeps transportation projects on track.
- Restores partial funding to the Energy Efficiency Fund, juvenile justice programs and developmental services.
- Maintains reserves in the "Rainy Day" Fund at the highest level in over a decade (over \$1 billion for the biennium).

As Vice Chairman of the Judiciary Committee and a member of the Planning and Development Committee, we were also able to pass legislation that helps Bridgeport, improves our judicial system and protects some of our most vulnerable citizens. I am proud to share information about some of these new laws with you.

Sincerely,



Rep. Steve Stafstrom



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# STEVE STAFSTROM

*PROUDLY SERVING BRIDGEPORT - 129TH DISTRICT*

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



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# STEVE STAFSTROM

*PROUDLY SERVING BRIDGEPORT - 129TH DISTRICT*



## CAPITOL UPDATE 2018

Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Capitol: 800-842-8267

E-mail: [Steve.Stafstrom@cga.ct.gov](mailto:Steve.Stafstrom@cga.ct.gov)

Website: [www.housedems.ct.gov/Stafstrom](http://www.housedems.ct.gov/Stafstrom)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RepStafstrom](http://www.facebook.com/RepStafstrom)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/SteveStafstrom](http://www.twitter.com/SteveStafstrom)





# STATE REPRESENTATIVE STEVE STAFSTROM

PROUDLY SERVING BRIDGEPORT - 129TH DISTRICT

## PROGRESS ON ISSUES THAT MATTER MOST TO BRIDGEPORT

### ENCOURAGING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

For Bridgeport to be the economic driver our state needs to thrive, it is vital that we continue to invest in the revitalization, reinvention and growth of Connecticut's largest city. This session, we successfully lobbied for seven Bridgeport census tracts including our downtown, Steelpointe Harbor, Bridgeport's West End Eco-technology Park and the Cherry Street Loft area to be designated as Opportunity Zones, making them eligible for federal tax incentives. This designation, coupled with legislation we passed to encourage brownfield revitalization and investments in the growing industries of advanced manufacturing and bioscience should encourage increased investments in real estate and businesses here in Bridgeport. We also passed legislation to put in place necessary safeguards to ensure dedicated volunteers serving on Neighborhood Revitalization Committees are protected against certain civil actions. Extending these protections will help increase committee participation and hopefully encourage more residents to have a say in how to improve their neighborhood.

### PUSHING TO REFORM THE BROKEN PROPERTY TAX SYSTEM

This session we prevented municipal aid cuts, secured \$5 million to reimburse Bridgeport for the car tax transition grant, and increased State funding for Bridgeport Schools. I also proudly led the fight against an effort that would make it harder for the State's Municipal Accountability Review Board to provide oversight for Bridgeport's finances and invest in helping Bridgeport reduce its debt obligations. And, in response to President Trump's tax law, we passed legislation aimed at protecting, as much as possible, the state and local tax deduction on federal taxes.

### IMPROVING OUR SCHOOLS AND CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

This session we passed bills to encourage minority teacher recruitment, improve school safety and protect students with food allergies. Additionally, with Central High School construction wrapping up, we are working to put in motion an innovative plan to rebuild Bassick High School with a new focus on an advanced manufacturing curriculum. The Bassick project is a real opportunity to get Bridgeport students the skills needed to fill some of the thousands of available advanced manufacturing jobs in our state and to create a real economic driver for our region.

### REDUCING PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Recognizing that prescription drug prices are the number one driver of rising health-care costs, we passed legislation to hold pharmaceutical companies accountable by increasing transparency and requiring them to explain large price increases for drugs that have a substantial cost to the state. Additionally, insurance companies must now submit information about which drugs are most frequently prescribed and which are provided at the greatest cost. By collecting more data and holding drug companies accountable, we can get closer to lowering drug costs for Connecticut residents.

### PROTECTING SENIORS

Reverse mortgage lenders sometimes prey on the vulnerabilities of those facing tough financial burdens, including seniors trying to stay in their homes. Due to the complexity of these reverse mortgages, they can result in devastating outcomes for those who do not understand the documents they are signing. I led passage of a law that now requires counseling for those considering a reverse mortgage so that they will make a decision only after receiving factual background information.

### SUPPORTING WORKING FAMILIES

In Connecticut, women working full-time earn 83-cents for every dollar paid to men. Each year, Connecticut women lose a combined \$5.5 billion due to the wage gap. This inequity is perpetuated, in part, by the practice of asking for salary history during the hiring process. This session we strengthened our pay equity laws by preventing employers from asking about wage history that will help ensure women earn equal pay for equal work. I also firmly believe every working person in Connecticut should be allowed paid time off when they or a loved one gets sick. While we unfortunately did not pass an earned family leave bill this year, I remain committed to working with the business community and all stakeholders on this issue next session.



*Steve tours ongoing construction at Central High School, one of several school construction projects he has helped secure funding for.*



*Steve is presented with the Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs' Legislative Champion award for his commitment to the local community.*

## IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY AND OUR JUDICIAL SYSTEM

### BANNING BUMP STOCKS

The tragic shooting in Las Vegas last year demonstrated the ability of bump stocks to dramatically increase a gun's destructive power; effectively turning semi-automatic firearms into weapons that can shoot as fast as machine guns. As Vice-Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, we responded by making it a crime to own or sell a bump stock, and other rate of fire enhancements. My other proposed bill, banning "Ghost Guns," which are unregistered, unserialized parts of guns bought over the internet and then assembled at home, unfortunately did not pass as we ran out of time at the end of the session. I will reintroduce this bill next session.



*Rep. Stafstrom witnesses the bill signing of legislation he introduced in the Judiciary Committee banning bump stocks.*

### STRENGTHENING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAWS

If you are a victim of domestic violence, you shouldn't have to fear being arrested if you call the police. However, nearly 20 percent of the time when a victim of domestic violence calls the police they are arrested along with their abuser. This is nearly three times the national average. This year, I worked on legislation in the Judiciary Committee to discourage this practice and now directs police to arrest the person who they identify as the dominant aggressor.

### REFORMING OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Our Judiciary Committee also championed legislation expanding the ability of those convicted of a crime to petition for a new trial when evidence that wasn't available during the original trial or petitioning process comes to light. Prior law only permitted the use of DNA, but additional forensic and scientific evidence will now be allowed.