



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

STEVEN STAFSTROM

Dear Friend,

I am pleased to share with you this update on the recently concluded legislative session. We worked to pass legislation that improves the lives of working families, encourages economic growth, and makes critical investments in the future of our children, as well as our state.

We passed a balanced budget on time. This two-year budget increases aid to Bridgeport, has no major tax increases, and preserves the largest Rainy Day fund in our state's history.

This year, I had the honor of being appointed Chair of the Judiciary Committee. In this newsletter, you'll read about some of the legislation I championed in this role. You'll also see policies that support our small businesses, spur workforce development and ensure that we are making Connecticut more affordable for our young people and our seniors.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to my office if I can ever be of help to you or your family, or if you have questions about anything mentioned in this newsletter. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your state representative.

Sincerely,

Steve Stafstrom

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

STEVEN STAFSTROM

PROUDLY SERVING BRIDGEPORT



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PROUDLY SERVING BRIDGEPORT

SUPPORTING BRIDGEPORT FAMILIES

PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

In the event of a medical emergency, Paid Family and Medical Leave allows workers to care for themselves or a loved one without having to face the threat of financial ruin. By providing up to 12 weeks of Family and Medical Leave Insurance per year, equaling up to 95% of an employee’s weekly paycheck, we will provide financial protection to those who find themselves in an unanticipated medical emergency. This will help pregnant women on medically-ordered bed rest, families with an infirm or aging parent, and new parents who want to bond with an infant. The program is funded by employee contributions. If you or your family has an emergency, there will now be financial peace-of-mind. *(SB 1; PA 19-25)*

MINIMUM WAGE

Over 300,000 Connecticut workers will receive a raise as the state’s minimum hourly wage gradually rises to \$15.00 by 2023. In 2024 and years thereafter, the minimum wage will be indexed to the rate of inflation. Here is the schedule of the incremental increases in the minimum wage until we reach \$15 an hour:

- \$11 an hour on October 1, 2019
- \$12 an hour on September 1, 2020
- \$13 an hour on August 1, 2021
- \$14 an hour on July 1, 2022
- \$15 an hour on June 1, 2023 *(HB 5004; PA 19-4)*



Left: It was an honor to lead the House debates on Judiciary bills this session.
Right: I was proud to stand with the Governor as he signed our gun safety legislation into law.



FUNDING FOR BRIDGEPORT

The chart below shows the total amount of state aid that Bridgeport is receiving in Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021 to offset local property taxes and fund education. Our city will see an additional \$8.6 million over the next two years.

FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 20 minus FY 19	FY 21 minus FY 19
\$211,103,397	\$214,007,756	\$216,885,143	\$2,904,359	\$5,781,746

In addition, the legislature authorized \$90.8 million in state bond funding for our new Bassick High School – about 80 percent of the total project cost.

The nearly century-old school will be transformed into a new school with a new focus on an Advanced Manufacturing curriculum. This project has been a priority of mine as we attempt to allow Bridgeport to tap its roots as an industrial powerhouse and help fill some of the 15,000 advanced manufacturing jobs in our state that remain vacant.

THE VALUE OF OUR BUDGET

Our two year budget will have great benefits for businesses and residents

FOR BUSINESSES:

- We repealed the Business Entity tax starting next year. This will help small businesses and encourage start-ups.
- We passed policies encouraging investments in urban, underutilized property, which will allow tax base growth for Bridgeport.
- We expanded the Angel Investor tax credit to small businesses, minority and women-owned businesses, and more industries.
- We created a new tax credit for craft beer breweries to help grow this booming industry.

FOR RESIDENTS:

- We have directed the Board of Regents to create a plan which would allow students to attend community college without worrying about accumulating massive amounts of debt. Under this plan, the state would pick up all fee costs for the first 72 credit hours after scholarships, grants, and other aid awards are applied.
- The phase-in of the income tax exemption for Social Security and pension income continues as planned, helping our seniors retire here comfortably.
- We rejected many of the Governor’s proposed sales tax expansions on items such as groceries, non-prescription drugs, and legal and accounting services.

LEADING THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

PROTECTING OUR IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

We passed a bill strengthening our Trust Act. This will establish better trust between residents and law enforcement by preventing law enforcement from detaining an undocumented immigrant unless accompanied by a judicial warrant. *(SB 992; PA 19-20)*

SENSIBLE GUN REGULATIONS

I led the passage of three new gun laws which will further reduce gun violence in our state. We banned “ghost guns” – homemade weapons that have no serial numbers and circumvent our background check laws. *(HB 7219; PA 19-6)*

Ethan’s Law requires the safe storage of all firearms in a home with children under 18. *(HB 7218, PA 19-5)*

We now require guns in a car to be kept out of sight, locked away, either in the trunk, a locked glove box, or a locked safe. This will reduce the number of stolen guns that end up on Bridgeport streets. *(HB 7223; PA 19-7)*

INCREASING FAIRNESS AND TRANSPARENCY IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

We passed a bill which establishes new prosecutorial data collection and reporting requirements. New data will help us see how and why prosecutors make decisions. *(SB 880; PA 19-59)*

A new law requires police departments to submit an annual use of force report, narrows the instances during which deadly force is justified, and prohibits an officer from discharging a firearm into a fleeing motor vehicle. The law also requires body or dashboard camera footage to be released to the public within 96 hours after an incident. *(SB 380; PA 19-90)*

We lengthened the statute of limitations on reporting sexual abuse and assault for crimes against a child 21 years old or younger. We also increased penalties for sexually assaulting a mentally incapacitated person, and increased the training required to prevent sexual harassment. *(SB 3; PA 19-16)*

MAKING STATUTES MORE BUSINESS-FRIENDLY

Modernizing our laws is an important part of attracting more businesses and jobs to our state. We closed a unique loophole that discouraged business owners from incorporating in our state because their personal assets may have been at risk. *(HB 7340; PA 19-181)*

Connecticut’s laws concerning trust accounts (money put aside for a third party such as a family member or charity) were unclear and contradictory. We streamlined and clarified the “Trust Code” and put our state in alignment with the Bar’s standard codes, which will bring business to our state. *(HB 7104; PA 19-137)*