

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Steve Stafstrom
PROUDLY SERVING BRIDGEPORT

Dear Neighbor,

On March 8th, Connecticut had its first confirmed case of coronavirus. On March 9th, the Governor declared a state of Public Health and Civil Preparedness Emergencies. And our lives have been radically changed ever since.

My commitment to you and your family remains the same. We will get through this period, and I know our state will be stronger on the other side.

This newsletter is intended to provide you with helpful information and resources, as well as an overview of some of the work my office has been doing.

If you have any questions or concerns, or if I can be helpful to you in working with any state agency or in understanding how our state laws and regulations can affect employment, education or any other opportunities, please call or email me anytime.

Best,



Steve Stafstrom



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CORONAVIRUS RESOURCES

For the most up to date information please visit:
portal.ct.gov/coronavirus

Both the CDC and our state are continuing to require individuals wear masks in public when you are unable to “social distance” more than 6 feet away from others.

If you are out of work, you have the right to file for unemployment insurance. Visit www.FileCTUI.com to file your claim or call 860-263-6975, 203-455-2653, 860-263-6974 or 203-455-2650.

If you are a business owner, the Department of Economic and Community Development is developing and updating guidelines on safe ways to operate your business: business.ct.gov/Recovery. They have also opened a small business hotline: 860-500-2333.

If you notice a business not operating in a safe manner, call 2-1-1.

If you are having trouble paying your residential mortgage or rent, we have worked with banks and landlords to provide you additional time to put together payments. For more information on these programs, visit portal.ct.gov/coronavirus/information-for/homeowners-and-renters.

In addition, we have worked with the federal delegation and the Governor’s office to develop and fund a number of smaller assistance programs ranging from funding for artists to farmers to helping our schools deal with unexpected expenditures. For more on these, please visit my website: www.housedems.ct.gov/Stafstrom.

Working with state agencies and our partners during this time can be complicated. Phone lines may be crowded and applications may be confusing, but please know that my office is here to help.



ADVOCATING FOR YOU

This has been a remarkably challenging time for all of us. Despite working from home, I have redoubled my efforts on serving our community. My office and I have logged countless hours working with many constituents to fix issues with unemployment applications, help your businesses apply for financial aid, work with the DMV to get cars registered. I know that it is during these challenging times when we need government help and services the most.

That’s why I have worked with my colleagues to advocate for all of you with the Governor and his administration. I am proud to say that because of our advocacy, we have expanded tele-medicine, brought additional COVID-19 testing sites to our community, expanded affordable childcare options for front-line workers, and delayed due dates for state income taxes and municipal property taxes. If there are more ways that we can make state government work better for you, please let me know.

ADDRESSING OUR LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

When we began this year’s legislative session on February 5th, I expected to be working on our shared priorities including reducing the cost of health insurance, strengthening our gun laws, reforming the criminal justice system, easing our property tax burden, and additional support for Bridgeport schools. While those remain priorities, our focus has temporarily changed to addressing the health emergency and rebuilding our economy.

As I reflect on the horrible reality of George Floyd being murdered by a police officer in broad daylight, I recall use of force incidents by police officers in our own city and state. I have been asked by many folks what we as a state have done and can do in response. In my capacity as Chair of the Judiciary Committee, I am committed to continuing to push for transparency and accountability in law enforcement. I am also cognizant of the fact that far too much opportunity in Connecticut depends on one’s zip code. We must all push to address the larger, systemic issues of access to affordable housing, inequitable municipal services and property tax burden, and segregated, underfunded schools.

There is some good news though. Thanks to the hard work of the Bridgeport delegation, our city has continued to receive increases in state aid with significant investments in education, job growth, and economic development.

Below you can see the funding increases from FY 15 to FY 21.

	FY 15	FY 20	FY 21
TOTAL APPROPRIATED AID	\$205,344,055	\$218,859,074	\$221,173,338

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

While we continue to follow the guidance of public health experts on the steps needed to safely “reopen”, we have an opportunity to build a stronger and more robust state.

We are working to ensure hospitals and health care providers such as nursing homes have adequate stock of personal protective equipment. We are also working with farmers and food banks to protect and localize our food supply chain.

Your stories and experiences are important and help to shape the policies I fight for. How well has the safety net worked for you and your family? How can we do better? What services are not available that you really need? I want to hear from you!

More than ever, it is an honor and privilege to represent you.

**SIGN UP FOR CTALERT, THE STATE’S EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM,
WHICH PROVIDES TEXT MESSAGE NOTIFICATIONS TO USERS.
TO SUBSCRIBE, TEXT THE KEYWORD COVIDCT TO 888-777.**

