



Dear Neighbor,

I am proud to share some historic highlights from the 2022 legislative session.

Historic like more than \$650 million in tax cuts. Historic like our investment in the mental health of our children. Historic like our commitment to growing jobs and our economy. Historic like a state budget that pays off millions in pension debt and continues our record rainy day fund while investing in Bridgeport, schools, mental health, public safety and programs that work - all while honoring the spending cap.

That's not to say we aren't facing challenges. We are seeing inflation that hits everyone's wallets and housing prices that are pricing many out of even modest homes. That's why I fought hard to provide you with relief: increasing the property tax credit, phasing out taxes on retirement income, creating a childcare rebate, cutting the gas tax and more.

I hope you find this newsletter packed with useful information. It is my pleasure to serve as your state representative.

All my best,



STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**STEVE STAFSTROM**

PROUDLY SERVING BRIDGEPORT

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**CAPITOL  
UPDATE 2022**

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**CAPITOL  
UPDATE 2022**

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## A BUDGET THAT WORKS FOR BRIDGEPORT

This session the legislature passed a \$24 billion state budget proposal which provides \$650 million in tax relief for working families. The budget cuts taxes more than any other Connecticut state budget in decades.

Thanks to the hard work of the Bridgeport delegation, our city will receive millions of dollars in new state aid which allowed the city to pass a budget that will not raise property taxes. The city will also receive nearly \$189 million in state education funding for **Bridgeport Public Schools**. This budget reduces the motor vehicle mill rate cap from 45 mills to 32.46 mills. For a motor vehicle assessed at \$21,000, this would represent a savings of about \$230. To offset revenue losses associated with this provision, Bridgeport will be reimbursed over \$7 million during FY 2023.

Additionally, in December we were able to secure \$3 million for the **Wakeman Boys & Girls Club** for the construction of the Madison Avenue Community Center and I am happy to report that the City broke ground on the project earlier this year. Furthermore, we were able to secure \$250,000 in funds to refurbish the Ellsworth Park fields for the **Black Rock Little League**.

The budget also includes a \$129 million grant for the construction of the new **Bassick High School**. This represents a 78.93% reimbursement rate.

In addition to municipal funding, the budget package also makes groundbreaking investments in children's mental health, increases funding for juvenile justice programs, leverages new federal funding for important programs, and invests in childcare, education, and our workforce.

# I VOTED TO CUT YOUR TAXES

OUR STATE BUDGET INCLUDES

## \$650 MILLION IN TAX RELIEF

- ✔ Creates a Child Tax Credit
- ✔ Cuts property taxes for retirees
- ✔ Cuts the car tax
- ✔ Extends the gas tax cut
- ✔ Extends free bus service
- ✔ Ends pension and annuity tax
- ✔ Invests in healthcare workers



*Rep. Stafstrom speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of the Wakeman - Madison Ave. Boys & Girls Club*

## LEADING THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

As chair of the Judiciary Committee, I was proud to lead many groundbreaking pieces of legislation this year. I am pleased to announce that I was able to help enact new policies that will:

- Limit the use of solitary confinement and expand the office of Corrections Ombudsman.
- Further protect victim survivors of domestic violence.
- Prevent grooming and sexual exploitation of children.
- Help reduce recidivism by ending the unfair practice of placing liens on the assets of formerly incarcerated.
- Confirm new judges and a Supreme Court Justice to the CT Supreme Court.

## TIMELY NOTICE OF DEATH

This year, we enacted a law that will standardize a practice of requiring police officers to report deaths to the next of kin within 24 hours of identifying a victim.

This practice should be standard, but unfortunately this policy was necessary due to an investigation of Bridgeport police officers who failed to properly notify the loved ones of two women who died on the same day in December. The families of Lauren Smith-Fields and Brenda Lee Rawls didn't learn about their loved one's deaths from police - they learned about them from third parties. These kinds of incidents have been reported across the state.

## CONTINUING TO BE SMART ON CRIME

This session, I lead the passage of bipartisan legislation to make reasonable adjustments to Connecticut's existing criminal and juvenile justice laws. These changes were made in response to the pandemic-related uptick in crime in certain parts of the state, but without reverting to the failed, reactionary strategies enacted decades ago. This legislation will:

- Work with the Judicial Branch to speed up juvenile arraignments
- Permit GPS monitoring for repeat juvenile offenders.
- Provide flexibility with the 6-hour hold at a community correctional center or lock-up if an arresting officer is in the process of seeking a detention order.
- Punish car thefts by the number of offenses instead of the value of the car stolen
- Require local police to be notified when applicants for gun permits do not pass background checks