



**The Budget – On the right path**

My primary focus this session was how to balance a budget with a projected \$3.5 billion deficit, the largest per capita state deficit in the country. Thanks to the firm leadership of Governor Malloy, we have a balanced budget and a commitment to greater transparency regarding government spending and debt. But we still have a long way to go.

As much as I admired the Governor’s courage in facing the fiscal reality, **I ultimately voted against the budget.** I simply couldn’t vote for a budget based on a \$2 billion placeholder, which existed because the state workers hadn’t yet ratified the negotiated agreement. Several months after the Legislature approved the budget, the workers finally yielded, making for a very tense summer.

I also argued against many of the sales tax increases which hurt both consumers and small businesses. There’s no such thing as a perfect budget, but I had hoped we would have done more to identify long-term savings by streamlining government operations.

This was the Governor’s first budget and mine as well. I will continue to pursue further operating efficiencies, so we can roll back these taxes and establish a culture of year-round budget reform and accountability. I will also be working with the Results Based Accountability (RBA) group at the legislature to assess the effectiveness of programs and agencies and recommend operational reform.

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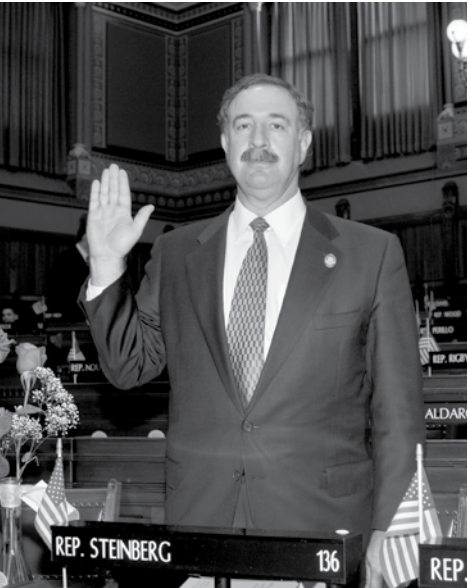




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If you need additional assistance or have questions, please contact me:

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## CAPITOL REPORT 2011

### I want to hear from you

The best way for me to represent your interests is for me to know what they are! Of course, Westporters are known for their diverse opinions, so I doubt I can always make everyone happy. But I thank the many of you who shared your thoughts, suggestions, and ideas this past year—it helped me focus on what is most important for our community.

I look forward to seeing and talking with you around town, but in the meanwhile feel free to email me at [jonathan.steinberg@cga.ct.gov](mailto:jonathan.steinberg@cga.ct.gov) or call me on my cell at 203.722.7477.



### Jobs and the Economy –

#### *A long-term plan with near-term results*

With all the debate on the budget, some people have wondered what’s happening with jobs. The Governor and his commissioners have all vowed to prioritize initiatives that grow jobs in the state.

October has been a critical month for this effort. The Governor convened a jobs summit, drawing public and private experts from across the state and beyond to define a strategy for job creation. This input was integrated into the development of a package of jobs bills, debated at a special jobs legislative session. A few key insights include:

- » **Industry clusters:** Connecticut will prosper if it can foster an environment where entrepreneurs feel supported and if we can achieve critical mass in industries where we already have distinctive advantages, such as precision manufacturing and stem cell research.
- » **“Right-skilled” labor force:** Tomorrow’s jobs will require world-class talent as well as specialized jobs training, particularly technical skills, which the state’s community and technical colleges are well-positioned to address.
- » **Business climate:** Connecticut is not a homogeneous economy, requiring different business and policy strategies for different regions of the state, but there are common goals: a more efficient regulatory process, infrastructure improvements, and a concerted effort to reduce business costs, such as energy and health expenses.

I’ve also attended the **Majority Leader’s Jobs Roundtable**, which has developed a clear strategy to help new and small companies invest and grow. Connecticut needs to improve its research and development capabilities and infrastructure—from transportation to affordable housing to communications—to attract skilled workers and convince our young people to stay in Connecticut.

The Governor’s **“First Five”** initiative guarantees at least 1,000 new jobs in the state. But this is only the beginning of our efforts to retain businesses and attract new companies to Connecticut. We can do an even better job by coordinating tax credits for companies adding jobs, providing low-interest development loans and grants, and streamlining the regulatory process so that companies can be more nimble in responding to market opportunities.

The recent announcement that **Jackson Laboratory**, world leader in genomic research, has agreed to move to Connecticut shows that the Legislature’s approval of the UConn bioscience center and research triangle concept (in conjunction with Yale) is already paying off. We’re on the path to achieving critical mass as a supportive environment for cutting-edge innovation. To do so, we will need to continue investing in our economic future.

### Our Energy Future – and we do have one

Everyone’s heard that one of the biggest barriers to job growth in Connecticut is our high cost of energy. I’m pleased to report that we are finally addressing our state’s energy problems while also creating the environment that will lead to new jobs and more competitive businesses.

We recently passed **landmark energy legislation** encompassing a broad range of initiatives. Most importantly, it calls for a well-defined energy policy, something Connecticut hasn’t had for many years, an absence that has made our state less competitive. Some of the key elements include:

- » Making government leaner and more efficient by creating one streamlined agency—Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)—to oversee the state’s energy needs
- » Promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency programs, including financing to replace inefficient heating equipment and funding for residential solar installations
- » Requiring reduced energy use in state buildings by at least 10 percent by 2013 and another 10 percent by 2018
- » Enhancing consumer protections requiring electric suppliers to provide customers with a written contract explaining all rate-related charges, including any hidden fees and how they may change
- » Establishing a one-stop shop program to proactively reach out to businesses and consult with them on available programs and reducing their energy costs

My direct contribution to the energy bill was creating a pilot program to increase energy efficiency in state buildings. The objective, besides reducing energy costs, is to qualify a cadre of energy auditors and contractors who can then be part of a state-wide effort to make municipal, commercial and residential buildings more energy efficient, creating hundreds of new jobs and reducing the state’s energy consumption.

*Return the attached card, reply at my website or call my office.*



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