

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

PETER TERCYAK

PROUDLY SERVING NEW BRITAIN

Dear Neighbor:

I am pleased to share with you this update on the recently concluded legislative session. Each year brings a new set of challenges, and the 2014 session was no different. There was a clear need to encourage economic growth, help working families, and make critical investments in the future of our children and our state.

Meeting these priorities while also adopting a balanced budget with no new taxes took a lot of hard work, but I am happy to report to you that my colleagues and I were able to achieve our goals.

Working in a bipartisan manner, we were able to increase funding for education and enable more New Britain children to attend pre-school. We also made additional investments in job creation programs such as STEP-UP, which encourages employers to hire veterans and the unemployed, and will help our economy grow.

Recognizing the struggle of many working families, we raised the minimum wage to \$10.10 in 2017. By helping thousands of minimum wage earners, millions of dollars will pour into our state economy and help businesses grow and flourish.

I hope you find the enclosed information helpful and will feel free to call or email me for any reason — legislative or otherwise. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your state representative.

Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

State Representative

Peter Tercyak



Aby otrzymać kopię tej broszury w języku polskim, proszę napisać lub skontaktować się z Peter Tercyak:

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MINIMUM WAGE INCREASED

With the minimum wage already set to rise to \$9.00 in January 2015 we passed new legislation this year to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 in 2017. Raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 will help thousands of struggling working families in our state, add millions of dollars to our economy, and is the right thing to do. As House Chairperson of the Labor Committee I was proud to bring out the bill. I am pleased that governors of neighboring states are submitting legislation to do the same thing; Vermont has passed a bill to raise their minimum wage to \$10.50 by 2018.

LOWERING COSTS FOR BUSINESSES

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

In response to a recent court ruling that created confusion about workers compensation insurance payments to hospitals, there are now over 4,000 unresolved hospital bills awaiting a hearing at Workers' Compensation Commission. We held hearings on the issue over two years across the state. This year we passed legislation to establish a rate process. This will eliminate the backlog, stabilize workers compensation insurance costs for businesses and ease access to care for injured workers.

ELECTRONIC FILING FOR PUBLIC WORK PROJECTS

To ease the requirement that businesses report wages for public work projects to the Department of Labor (DoL), this session we voted to make electronic filing possible. Online reporting not only makes it more convenient for businesses to report their workers' wages but will also allow for increased transparency for the general public once data is compiled. This is in response to business suggestions.

PAID SICK LEAVE BENEFITS

In 2011, we required employers to provide paid sick leave benefits to their employees. This session we updated the paid sick leave law to allow businesses to administer paid sick leave annually, the way they do other benefits. The law also allows employers to determine the number of employees in the same way as they do for the state's Family and Medical Leave Act, to make it easier to give this benefit.

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HELPING OLDER WORKERS RE-ENTER THE WORKFORCE

In order to ensure that job programs succeed, the Department of Labor and the Superintendent of the Connecticut Technical High School system will report information regarding traditional and adult students to the Education, Higher Education and Labor Committees annually. They will report collected data on all students, including completion rates and what courses were taken, and wage rates for the students before and after they graduated from these programs.



Working on legislation

MORE JOBS, BETTER JOBS

Creating more and better jobs for our citizens continues to be one of our top priorities. Three such initiatives include:

- Establishing the Veterans' Opportunity Fund, a pilot program that will help our veterans re-enter the workforce.
- Providing assistance to the long-term unemployed in the form of job training, financial coaching and the opportunity to go back to school.
- Increasing funding to give our economically disadvantaged youth more access to jobs and work experiences.



Polish Day at the Capitol



Rep Tercyak at A-1 Machining Co. in New Britain. The New Britain delegation helped A-1 get state funding to expand to a new building and create 63 new jobs.

According to the Connecticut Business & Industry Association, 15,100 private sector jobs have been added this year. Seven of the 10 major business sectors show gains, specifically the durable manufacturing sector which was up 1,100 jobs in a single month. Though the unemployment rate has remained at 6.9%, that is largely because 13,000 new participants have begun looking for work again, causing a somewhat elevated unemployment level.

PROMOTING RETIREMENT SAVINGS

Due to a decline in access, 50 percent of Connecticut workers aged 25-64 are not covered by an employer-sponsored retirement plan, resulting in a massive decrease in retirement savings for the average Connecticut resident. This has caused lower income and middle class residents to increase their dependence on Social Security. This year we worked to promote retirement savings by establishing the Connecticut Retirement Security Board and requiring it to (1) conduct a market feasibility study on implementing a public retirement plan and (2) develop a comprehensive proposal for implementing the plan. Among other things, the proposed plan must allow private sector employees to have a portion of their wages automatically deposited into state-administered individual retirement accounts with a guaranteed rate of return. In later years, Connecticut will have more retirees with disposable income to spend. That will bolster our economy, nearly 80 percent of which is consumer spending.



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CAPITOL UPDATE 2014