

PAY EQUITY AND FAIRNESS

To reduce wage inequality and increase transparency, we provided protections for employees who wish to discuss their wages with fellow employees. Employers are now prohibited from barring an employee from discussing his/her wage with another employee and are also prohibited from requiring that an employee sign a document banning them from doing so. Any employer who violates this law will be subject to compensatory damages, including attorney's fees and punitive damages.

REDUCING HEALTH CARE COSTS FOR NEW BRITAIN

Allowing municipal employees and retirees to join state employee health plans will reduce healthcare costs for towns and cities considerably. Healthcare costs are reduced because employees from participating towns would join a shared risk pool with state employees and other participating towns. The state comptroller is now required to offer this coverage to towns and cities and to undertake certain actions to ensure that coverage is maintained. New Britain can save real money by participating.

PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

I am proud of the steps the legislature took this session to implement a state paid family and medical leave program. A new law requires the state labor commissioner to contract with a consultant to create a paid family and medical leave program. Ensuring that this plan is implemented will remain one of my top priorities when the legislature reconvenes in February 2016.



Rep. Tercyak standing up for workers at a press conference to raise the minimum wage.

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

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Si deseas una copia de este boletín legislativo en español favor de llamar al 860-240-8585

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CAPITOL UPDATE 2015

Dear Neighbors,

It has been an honor to continue to represent you in the Connecticut General Assembly. There were many intensely debated issues this legislative session and it was a privilege to represent the people of New Britain in each of those discussions.

Connecticut's economy continues to recover and looking back at the 2015 legislative session I am proud of the steps the legislature took to grow our state's economy.

We have continued to make important investments in Connecticut's Small Business Express Program, which has succeeded in helping to grow our small business community. The property tax burden has also remained a primary concern for many small businesses, and thankfully we worked to increase municipal aid in order to ease property taxes.

We also made historic investments in our transportation system and increased Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding for New Britain. These investments are critical to growing our economy as businesses will not come to Connecticut if their employees cannot get to work in a safe and timely manner and if we do not have an educated workforce ready to fill 21st century jobs.

I hope you find this information to be of use and please do not hesitate to call my office if you have any questions.

Thank you for your support,

Peter Tercyak

Peter Tercyak
State Representative

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WHO PAYS LESS

Most car owners will see a cut in their motor vehicle tax beginning in 2016 as we capped the car tax mill rate statewide. New Britain will see their mill rate fall from 49 mills to 32 mills for 2016 and 29.36 mills in 2017. No one's car tax goes up under this plan.

In addition, increased state aid for New Britain will allow us to lower our mill rate. Private colleges that own off-campus properties, and larger non-profit hospitals that begin to buy property will start to contribute to a town's tax base to help pay for services they use such as fire, police and public works. This lessens the property tax burden currently borne solely by families and small businesses in our community.

Towns with a larger number of tax-exempt properties (e.g. state property, churches, colleges and hospitals) will receive additional aid for further property tax relief as well. Moreover, military veterans' retirement pay will now be 100% exempt from state income tax.



INCREASING STATE AID TO NEW BRITAIN FOR FISCAL YEARS 2016 & 2017

Education Cost Sharing	\$173,357,324
Priority School Districts	\$5,015,720
School Transportation	\$2,666,388
Adult Education	\$1,202,624
PILOT: State Owned Property	\$7,428,300
PILOT: Colleges & Hospitals	\$5,558,752
Pequot/Mohegan Revenue Sharing	\$4,618,996
Local Capital Improvement Program	\$1,982,754
Town Aid Roads	\$1,540,040
Grants for Municipal Projects and MRSA	\$7,985,192
Total State Funds to New Britain	\$211,356,090

FUNDING FOR LOCAL PROJECTS

To ensure the success of Connecticut's CTfastrak in New Britain we have secured \$250,000 for redevelopment projects around CTfastrak stations.

We have also obtained a \$1.5 million grant-in-aid for the Hartford area Habitat for Humanity to help create 20 affordable, owner-occupied homes in New Britain, East Hartford, and Hartford. The program will focus on homes within a quarter mile of public transportation such as CTfastrak. The funding will be available to homebuyers with incomes less than 80 percent of area median income.

Additional housing will be created through a \$550,000 loan to Veterans Inc. to assist with the rehabilitation and creation of a 17-unit rental housing complex for homeless veterans in New Britain. The location of this development is within walking distance of the main CTfastrak station located in the central business district, providing mass transit for veterans.

We also gained funding for other important local projects. A total of \$597,199 will be split between Diloreto, Pulaski and Slade schools for necessary renovations, and a \$100,000 redevelopment grant for the former police station site on Columbus Boulevard. The Hospital for Special Care will receive an additional grant-in-aid of \$82,925 to create a Multisensory Stimulation Environment Room in collaboration with Oak Hill, Inc. Lastly, Beehive Stadium will receive an \$1,000,000 grant for renovation and required accessibility improvements.

DOUBLE DAMAGES FOR STOLEN WAGES

As Co-chair of the Labor Committee, I listened to profound cases of wage theft here in Connecticut. My colleagues and I worked together to pass a bill that allows victims of wage theft to collect double the amount due to them and lifts the burden of proof from the employee to the employer.

Effective October 2015, this law requires a court to award double damages plus court costs and attorney's fees if it finds that an employer failed to (1) pay an employee's wages, accrued fringe benefits, or arbitration award or (2) meet the law's requirements for an employee's minimum wage or overtime rates.

The double-damage requirement does not apply to employers who establish a good-faith belief that their underpayments were legal. However, such employers must pay full damages plus court costs and attorney's fees. Existing law also allows the labor commissioner to collect unpaid wages and payments or bring a civil suit on the employee's behalf.

BANNING VARIABLE ELECTRIC RATES

Starting October 2015, a new law prohibits predatory retail electric suppliers from giving customers the "bait and switch." Now, suppliers may not enter into variable rate contracts for residential electric generation services or automatically renew such contracts.

PROTECTING SENIORS

This session I supported the House passage of a bill enacting a Uniform Power of Attorney Act, which represents an important bipartisan effort to help prevent abuse and financial fraud on our senior citizens. The bill, which was supported by the Connecticut AARP, clarifies power of attorney duties, sets standards for third parties and adds liabilities for those who violate the law.



Inaugural bus ride on CTfastrak to New Britain.