



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Like many of you, over the past year I've been working hard and keeping my head down trying to hold on to my other job—as a practicing lawyer in Stamford—which, truth be told, is the job that pays the mortgage. Elizabeth and I are just trying to hang on, and keep our jobs, our home, and the life in Stamford we have worked so hard to build.

I know you're trying to hang on, too, and you're counting on me. That's why I voted against raising taxes. It is not easy to oppose the Governor and the leadership of my own party. But I do not believe we can support massive tax increases when businesses are closing and people are still losing their jobs.

The state of Connecticut is just trying to hang on as well. State tax revenue is in a freefall, and we faced a \$8.5 billion deficit out of a \$36 billion budget. The legislature made deep cuts totaling \$3 billion in many important services. But even in this difficult environment, we need to find a way to get things done. I passed a bill this year to help those suffering from chronic Lyme Disease get the medical attention they need. For the first time, my bill to ban zone pricing of gasoline was passed by the General Law Committee, where it had died year after year before I got to Hartford. We still have a lot of work to do—Big Oil is as powerful as ever—but I'm confident we'll get there.

Record surpluses have turned into unprecedented deficits. Tough and ugly choices have been made, and there are many more to come. But this is when the job needs doing, and I am honored you have given me the chance to do it.



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2009 Report from the Capitol



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
WILLIAM TONG



STATE REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAM TONG



SCOFIELDTOWN DUMP CLEAN-UP

Like many of our neighbors, Elizabeth and I moved into the area unaware that the Scofieldtown Recycling Center and Park in Stamford sat on top of a decades-old dump. We had no idea that industrial waste was recklessly dumped here many years ago, and that tests had detected chemicals and pesticides like dieldrin and chlordane over the years. Recent tests have shown elevated levels of these contaminants in many water wells in the immediate vicinity of the dump. Some residents have not been able to drink the water or bathe in it.

That's why I am working with the Mayor, the Board of Representatives and the Board of Finance, and the state of Connecticut to do everything possible to protect our neighbors and families from contaminated water and to implement short- and long-term solutions to this problem as soon as possible. We are fighting this public health issue on many fronts, including:

Water Tests. The state Department of Public Health (DPH) has been testing wells at homes near the dump. When I heard that DPH was not moving fast enough, I asked them to authorize overtime and increase capacity to process tests as fast as they can, which they did.

Charcoal Filters. For those residents with contaminated wells, the City and state have been working together to provide charcoal filters that have been shown to be effective in removing contaminants. I am also applying pressure on the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to install these filters as soon as possible.

City Water. In addition to the charcoal filters, the City has authorized several million dollars to connect those affected by the contamination to City water. Work is underway on water mains to Hannah's Road, Larkspur Road, Cousins Road and Very Merry Road. The contract date for water supply connections is December 15. The Mayor has also requested an immediate supplemental appropriation of \$750,000 to fund water main extensions to Alma Rock Road and Mary Joy Lane as quickly as possible.

Long-Term Clean-Up. I led an effort to pass legislation to authorize millions of dollars in state bonding to contain, remove, or mitigate identified hazardous waste disposal sites, for new water mains to replace supply from contaminated wells, and for clean and potable water projects (PA 09-2). I will be working with the City, state and the EPA to develop a long-term plan that includes installation of groundwater monitoring wells to enable a more complete groundwater analysis; a ground-penetrating radar survey of the landfill itself; soil and surface water sampling; and an overall clean-up.

For more information, please see the City's website at <http://www.cityofstamford.org/content/25/52/138/164/711/106329.aspx>. You can also call the City's Director of Operations at 203.977.4141.

WHY I VOTED AGAINST THE BUDGET

I voted "no" on the 2010-2011 budget because (1) it made the state even more dependent on a very small number of taxpayers; (2) our dependence on these taxpayers (many of whom work in banking and finance) made the state budget even more unpredictable and volatile; (3) the budget called for too much borrowing; and (4) we could have done more to streamline state government and cut spending.

LYME DISEASE: A VICTORY FOR PATIENTS

PA 09-128 | HB 6200
Current medical guidelines state that patients can only receive up to four weeks of antibiotic treatment. Doctors can now use their own medical judgment to prescribe an appropriate course of treatment, which may include longer-term case.

YANKEE TRAIN

The long awaited Yankee Train is now in operation. The new trains for Metro-North are now in final testing, and the Department of Transportation is projecting that the first trains will be in service in the spring.



KEEPING KIDS SAFE FROM BPA

PA 09-103 | HB 6572
The new law phases in a ban on the sale, manufacture, and distribution of products made with bisphenol-A (BPA), an industrial chemical used to make polycarbonate plastics that has been shown to be toxic in laboratory studies. The ban starts on January 1, 2010 with infant formula and baby food containers. On October 1, 2010, the ban will be extended to reusable food and beverage containers.

ESTATE TAX REFORM: NO MORE "CLIFF"

Despite a difficult budget season, we were able to pass a long overdue reform of the estate tax that makes the tax more fair. We eliminated the so-called estate tax cliff, which operated as an effective penalty on those who saved just enough to be eligible for the estate tax. The estate tax threshold is now higher and the tax rates have been reduced.

STATE EDUCATION FUNDING (ECS)

Despite an \$8.5 billion deficit, the Stamford delegation has been able to secure an increase in state education funding to the City. Stamford is the only municipality in the state to see an ECS increase in the two-year budget.

SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING IS HERE!

Recycling in Stamford has shot up 47% with single stream recycling. Now residents can put all of their recycling in one bin, which makes recycling easier, and gives a much needed boost to the environment and our management of resources. And we're not stopping there. We've introduced bills to provide no interest loans to other cities and towns so they'll follow our lead (HB 5474), expanded recycling of electronic waste (like computers, televisions) (PA 08-35), and passed the long overdue "bottle bill" to recycle plastic water bottles (PA 09-2).

BIPARTISANSHIP IN ACTION: THE BLOCK-THE-BOX LAW

Irresponsible drivers often try to "make the light" and get stuck in the intersection. We worked with Gabe DeLuca, Republican Leader on the Stamford Board of Representatives, to pass a law that allows municipalities to give local police departments the power to issue citations to drivers who block intersections unnecessarily and create traffic jams.

NEVER GIVE UP: FIGHTING FOR WRIGHT TECH

The Stamford legislative delegation has fought hard to keep J.M. Wright Technical High School open. Despite our efforts, the Governor has closed the school and students have been reassigned elsewhere. But we are not giving up. In the short term, the legislature will fund busing for students who have to travel to other schools. Long term, we authorized \$90 million in bonding to fund an immediate redesign of the school so that Wright Tech can reopen as a state-of-the art facility for our kids. Please call the Governor at 800.406.1527 to urge her to use this money to transform Wright Tech.



FORECLOSURES AND NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION

PA 09-209 | SB 948 — Effective: 07.01.09

The national foreclosure crisis has put many Connecticut families at risk of losing their homes. This year we created safeguards with regard to mortgage foreclosure, mortgage lending, and neighborhood preservation.

- » Implements federal reforms
- » Improves how lending professionals are licensed
- » Expands eligibility for state foreclosure prevention programs
- » Makes the state's foreclosure mediation program mandatory