



To my friends and neighbors:

With the extreme sadness of the Newtown tragedy weighing on everyone, the 2013 Legislative Session was one of the most trying but also rewarding sessions I've ever experienced.

In the spirit of bipartisanship, we passed the strongest gun violence prevention bill in the country along with several other landmark bills that will protect our children and address critical mental health issues while respecting the rights of law-abiding gun owners.

My Democratic colleagues and I also delivered on other top priorities: Passing a balanced budget that does not raise taxes and helps municipalities hold the line on property taxes while protecting investments in education, job growth and consumer protection.

As the House chairman of the Banks Committee, I continued to lead the fight against home foreclosures by passing legislation that helps homeowners get the help they need when financial hardship threatens.

And to help prevent another tragedy similar to the one that took the lives of a Stamford family on Christmas Day 2011, we passed legislation that promotes the installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detection equipment in all residential buildings.

I hope this report is informative, and I'm happy to answer any questions you have about issues facing our state or your family. Together we can create a better future for our families.

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PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN, HELPING OUR FAMILIES

2013 REPORT FROM THE STATE CAPITOL



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
William Tong



GUN BILL

Responding to the Newtown shootings in December, the legislature worked in a bipartisan manner to find solutions for preventing another tragedy. Three special committees were formed to study school safety, firearms laws and mental health services for our children. The work of those committees led to legislation that addresses those three key areas.

Legislation signed into law establishes a task force to establish minimum security standards for future school construction. It creates a grant program so that existing schools can receive state assistance to upgrade their security infrastructure. Major changes in firearms laws were also made, expanding the current ban on assault weapons, banning the sale of magazines holding more than 10 rounds of ammunition, establishing a deadly weapon offender registry and requiring a certificate for buying ammunition. Other new legislation focuses on helping individuals and their families overcome obstacles to accessing mental health treatment and support.



HOMEOWNER PROTECTION

The ability to own a home is part of the American dream, but financial hardship can threaten that dream for families, sending them to the brink of foreclosure. We worked hard this past session to protect homeowners and facilitate a fair and speedy foreclosure mediation process by passing An Act Concerning Homeowner Protection Rights. A more streamlined process will help both the banks and the homeowners come to a solution that will keep homeowners from going into foreclosure, while fulfilling their obligation to the bank or lender. This bill extends the foreclosure mediation program two years. **(HB 6355/PA 13-136)**

SAVING THE COMMUTER COUNCIL

Everyone complains about bloated government. This bill removes some of that “bloat.” In addition to eliminating 32 boards and commissions it also reconstitutes the Metro-North New Haven Rail Commuter Council as the Connecticut Commuter Rail Council, recognizing that commuter rail is a statewide issue and not something specific to one region of the state. **(HB 6363/In Concurrence)**

PRICE GOUGING

When catastrophic weather events affect our state it is important that the people most in need have access to the goods and services necessary to restore normality. This bill extends the ban on excessive price increases to goods and services sold during any severe weather emergency, as declared by the governor. During one of these events no one can sell or offer to sell a good or service for an “unconscionably excessive price.” A violation of this act is an unfair trade practice and can result in civil or criminal penalties. **(SB 320/PA 13-175)**

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SMOKE DETECTORS

REQUIRING WORKING SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS IN CERTAIN RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS AT THE TIME TITLE IS TRANSFERRED

Being assured that the homes we are living in are safe is peace of mind that all residents should have. The state legislature took a step this year to make sure that properties that are transferred during a sale are certified to be in compliance of having working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. A seller who does not provide an affidavit that details that they are in compliance with the law will have to credit \$250 to the obtainer of the property at the time of closing. This law only applies to one or two family dwellings and also changes safety standards for smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors. The new standards require that among other things carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors are battery operated, follow the manufacturer’s installation instructions, and be in the vicinity of each bedroom. Exemptions to the bill apply to transfers that are: from one co-owner to another, between immediate family members, from inheritance or under court order. Providing well-being for our residents was one of the primary goals of this legislative session.

(HB 6160/PA 13-272)