

# FOCUSED ON ECONOMIC GROWTH

As Chairman of our state's Commission on Economic Competitiveness, it is my job to help develop a new strategy to grow Connecticut's economy as we recover from the Great Recession. There is no doubt we face a new economic reality, one in which we face great competition and pressure on our businesses and workers. We are fortunate to have great assets upon which to build a new economy, and we must seize our opportunity to build a stronger and more stable foundation for our businesses and workers.

The transformation must start, and accelerate, in Hartford. I recently wrote an Op-Ed in the Stamford Advocate calling for fundamental reform to our state budget to support economic growth, including the following five principles Connecticut should adhere to:

- First, we must limit our spending to available resources. We must start with a clear recognition of what we can afford to spend, and then build a budget within those limits.
- Second, we must take action now on unfunded pensions and long-term obligations. We make more than \$2 billion in payments for pensions and long-term obligations, and that number will soon jump to billions more. The governor must negotiate new contracts with our state employees that fairly recognizes their hard work and all they do to keep us safe and improve our quality of life, but on terms that we can afford.
- Third, we must focus on core services and then construct a budget for the services we really need and can afford. We can no longer simply spend what we spent last year and through inertia look to spend more.
- Fourth, state government must be more accountable. Let the governor and his commissioners manage aggressively to save money where they can, and demonstrate efficient and high quality performance.
- Fifth, The state budget is a collection of spending and investments, and even taxes and fees, that are sponsored and supported by Democrats and Republicans alike. Republicans must negotiate, in good faith, for a budget that all can agree on, and have compromised to achieve.

For the full Op Ed, please visit <http://goo.gl/PX7Ja5>



STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**WILLIAM TONG**  
REPRESENTING STAMFORD & DARIEN | 147TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# WILLIAM TONG

PROUDLY SERVING THE 147TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT  
STAMFORD & DARIEN

## CRITICAL PRIORITY: TRANSPORTATION

Dear Friends,

Stamford and Darien enjoy the benefits of multiple transportation systems. Flanked by I-95 and the Merritt Parkway, we are also served by at least five Metro-North stations as well as the Greater New York Metropolitan transit system.

Investment in mass transit is key to improving our economy. It spurs economic development and job growth and continues to make our area an inviting place for large, medium and start-up businesses. It will attract young people building their future and help seniors to remain in our community.

Connecticut's transportation strategy must focus on all elements of our infrastructure – rail, buses, roads, bridges, and our information highway – as well as making our downtowns more walkable and accessible.

All the best,

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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## WE NEED A TRANSPORTATION LOCKBOX

I recently voted to create a lockbox to protect transportation funds ensuring they go to transportation projects and to fund a 30-year overhaul of our state's transportation infrastructure. Our transportation vision for Connecticut includes:

- Metro-North infrastructure upgrades that will improve safety and reduce commute times.
- Roadways, bridges, and interchanges that keep motorists safe while improving traffic flow and reducing congestion.
- Commuter bus and rail services that are safe, frequent, and reliable.
- Pedestrian and bicycle systems that improve accessibility and commuting options.
- Transit support for residents with special needs, including our senior and disabled population.
- Efficient freight rail and highway networks to deliver goods and products without costly delays.

None of these important projects will happen without a lockbox in place to ensure transportation dollars are invested as intended. The lockbox is a constitutional issue and will require a super-majority, or 3/4 favorable votes, in the House and Senate in order to be on the ballot for ratification in 2016.

## A SAFER AND FASTER TRAIN COMMUTE

As one of the busiest commuter rail lines in the nation, with 39 million passengers annually, the New Haven line is a critical element of our economy. Let's Go CT! seeks to invest \$20 billion over the next 30 years to:

- Re-align existing tracks and put all four tracks into service.
- Create a two-track local "subway" type service and two-track express service.
- Upgrade train signals, including Positive Train Control (PTC).
- Track repair and replacement.
- Rehabilitation and/or replacement of fixed and movable bridges.

Links to both the Let's Go CT! plan and the Transportation Finance Panel's final report can be found on my website at [www.housedems.ct.gov/Tong](http://www.housedems.ct.gov/Tong).



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