



Hello Friend,

I hope all is well and you are enjoying this warm weather in our great city of New Haven! I wanted to update you on the major accomplishments from this past legislative session.

During October’s special session, the Connecticut General Assembly was able to pass comprehensive, bipartisan jobs legislation that invested hundreds of millions of dollars in small businesses, gave firms hiring incentives, aligned education programs with jobs-in-demand, encouraged entrepreneurship and innovation, and eliminated red-tape for growing companies. In June, we had another special session that further built upon the jobs legislation. The 2012 bill expands business-friendly programs and introduces some new initiatives that will help to continue job growth in the state.

Starting in February, we were able to diligently work together to balance the state’s budget, while fulfilling the funding promises made to Connecticut cities and towns without raising taxes and staying below the state’s spending cap.

We also made extraordinary changes to our education system, helped make it easier for people to exercise voting rights, and demanded that utility companies respond better when storms and crises hit our homes. We repealed a capital punishment law that wasn’t effective, further protected victims of domestic violence, and legalized medicinal marijuana for those suffering.

We were able to help New Haven by obtaining money that will assist in alleviating traffic in Westville Village, provide necessary repairs for New Haven Home Recovery’s CareWays Shelter, and revitalize Bowen Field and the West River. I helped to pass legislation that will ensure the rights of grandparents, provide funding for summer youth employment training for year-round employment, rid toys of toxins, and create a program to recycle discarded mattresses.

I hope you find this report informative. I’m happy to answer any questions about these issues or any others facing Connecticut, you or your loved ones. Together we can create a better future for ourselves and our families!

Best wishes in health & happiness,

State Representative

TONI E. WALKER

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CAPITOL UPDATE 2012

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New Haven Funding

	FY 12	FY 12	Difference
Education Cost Sharing	\$139,134,760	\$142,416,001	+3,281,241
Magnet School	\$33,190,010	\$35,954,400	+2,764,390
PILOT Colleges & Hospitals	\$34,363,776	\$37,557,506	+3,193,730
Total	\$208,856,664	\$218,020,710	+9,164,046

A Balanced Budget

As Chair of the Appropriations Committee, I worked to produce a budget that would fulfill promises made by the legislature, not raise taxes for our residents, and would not surpass our spending cap (by approximately \$86.4 million).

I led debate in the House Chamber for passage of the \$20.5 billion budget that is committed to funding youth employment opportunities, adult education, Connecticut’s small businesses, economic development, arts and culture, urban youth anti-violence programs, and a variety of services that will help our residents.

Education Reform

The legislature passed an education reform package that will work toward better educational opportunities for our children in order to prepare a 21st century workforce for Connecticut. The stronger our workforce, the stronger our economy!

This monumental legislation will increase funding for school-based health centers and family resource centers, provide 1,000 additional school readiness slots for preschoolers, better fund initiatives for early reading success, and create the Commissioner’s Network which provides intensive supports and interventions for our State’s 25 lowest-performing schools.

Environmental Initiatives

Storm Response

With the hardships of last October’s Nor’easter and Tropical Storm Irene, Connecticut passed legislation that will hold utility companies to minimum performance standards for emergency preparation and response while facing a penalty of up to 2.5 percent of an electric/gas company’s annual revenue.

Coastal Management

In order to protect the interests of municipalities, individual property owners and the state from damages caused by rising sea levels in Long Island Sound, increased coastal flooding, and severe erosion, legislation was passed that will create a framework to address and encourage long-term coastal management efforts to prevent future damage.

Also, with the help of both federal and state dollars, Save the Sound of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment restored over 80 acres of tidal marsh and seven miles of river habitat for fish and other wildlife as part of the West River Tidal Marsh Restoration Project.



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Access To Healthcare

Preserving Medicare Eligibility

To help our seniors and those with disabilities, legislation was passed that would ensure continued use and access to the Medicare Savings Program (MSP) to help pay for rising co-pays and deductibles by increasing the income limit for qualification. This accommodates the 3.6 percent Social Security cost of living increase (COLA) which took effect January 1.

Medical Marijuana

Connecticut became the 17th state to enact a law that will allow medical doctors to prescribe marijuana to patients through licensed pharmacists approved by the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection. This legislation is aimed to relieve thousands of residents suffering from horrible pain and symptoms associated with illnesses, including cancer, glaucoma, and multiple sclerosis.

Hospice Care

With just two licensed hospices in the state, this new law will provide smaller hospice facilities the opportunity to provide high quality services so patients can remain closer to their loved ones during their care.



Job Growth

We created new job opportunities by funding the Youth Employment Summer Jobs program and adult evening education programs in order to provide education and future employment opportunities for our youth and working families.

The legislature also provided funding for the Small Business Express program and a Connecticut-Made initiative which will promote products from our state’s local businesses to strengthen our economy and help it to continue growing.