

Dear Neighbor,

It is an immense privilege and honor to serve as your state representative. The 2024 legislative session concluded in early May, marking another year of hard work and significant accomplishments. Together, we have advanced meaningful legislation, focusing on key areas such as education, mental health, housing affordability, and public safety.

In particular, we made substantial progress by allocating \$370 million in expiring federal pandemic funds to vital sectors including higher education, mental health, and childcare. While the biennial budget passed by the General Assembly last year remained unchanged, these additional funds are a testament to our commitment to addressing the pressing needs of our community.

I am eager to share more details and discuss any questions you may have about the initiatives highlighted in this legislative update.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

All my best,

## WINS FOR NEW HAVEN

- Over \$172 million invested in New Haven Public Schools
- An additional \$5 million to support our community organizations and nonprofits
- Secured \$1.5 million directly for the city from the American Rescue Plan Act
- Nearly \$100 million provided to the city to keep your taxes down
- Bringing in over \$300 million in total funding for our city



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**TONI E. WALKER**

PROUDLY SERVING NEW HAVEN

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**CAPITOL  
UPDATE 2024**

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**CAPITOL  
UPDATE 2024**



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# IMPROVING EDUCATION

- Expanded state-backed student loans to students under 18
- Invested in nonprofits that assist students with college and financial aid applications
- Required CT colleges and universities to disclose to students any reductions in their financial aid when they are awarded a scholarship
- Expanded employer-based student loan repayment tax credits and reduced rates for state-backed loans for in-demand occupations
- Modified the automatic admissions program so students will be automatically admitted to certain public and private universities based on GPA, not class rank
- Capped the amount of money all districts pay to send kids out of district – saving millions of dollars for local schools
- Required the State Department of Education to provide school districts an estimate of their next year’s funding by the end of the current year, to ensure better budgeting
- Provided help to classroom paraeducators to pay for their health insurance
- Established the Education Mandate Review Advisory Council to review proposed and existing mandates on local Boards of Education
- Required same day parental notification when a child hurts themselves or others

## CONTINUING EFFORTS ON JUVENILE JUSTICE AND THE INCARCERATED

- Expanded eligibility for wrongful incarceration compensation, recalculated awards based on median household income and gave those who were wrongfully incarcerated or loved ones the opportunity to receive compensation
- Expanded the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee to establish a gender responsiveness subcommittee and work in conjunction with the Trafficking in Persons Council and the Transforming Children’s Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee
- Extended the reentry success plan to include requirements for job readiness and career training programs
- Expanded guidelines on the use of police body cameras and required those guidelines to be included in police training
- Eliminated the limit set on an incarcerated individuals pay per week so they can earn a fairer wage



## GROWING OUR ECONOMY

- Expanded the small business loan program in lower-income communities and enabled more out-of-state businesses to expand into CT
- Created a fund to improve and manage our small harbors
- Made it easier for out-of-state nurses and social workers to move to and practice in CT
- Cut certification red tape to make licensing faster and enable teachers to teach more subjects across more grades

## OUR BIPARTISAN BUDGET INCLUDES PROTECTING TAX CUTS

WE PASSED A BIPARTISAN BIENNIUM BUDGET THAT INCLUDES HISTORIC TAX CUTS AND INVESTMENTS FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

- **LARGEST INCOME TAX CUT** in state history
- **Biggest investment in public education ever**
- **New supports for the IDD community**
- **Expansion of debt-free community college**
- **Protected safety net programs**

THIS SESSION WE PROTECTED THESE TAX CUTS AND INVESTED MILLIONS OF FEDERAL FUNDS IN:

- **Higher Education - \$160 million**
- **Early Childcare - \$21.8 million**
- **Mental Health - \$24 million**
- **Nonprofit Organizations - \$50 million**

# HOUSING INITIATIVES

- Incentivized towns to develop more multi-family housing
- Required 45-day notice of rent increases
- Streamlined the process for converting vacant nursing homes into housing
- Prioritized surplus state-owned land to be used for affordable housing
- Increased the value of state rental vouchers



## PUTTING HEALTH FIRST

- Made it easier for people on co-pay only health plans to access body scans and physical and occupational therapy
- Covered victims of sexual assault under the state’s Paid Family and Medical Leave program up to 12 weeks
- Cut red tape for operating plasma donation centers
- Banned paperwork and payment requirements for receiving critical ambulance rides
- Improved coordination across state agencies and streamlined the process for residents to access nutrition programs - encouraging farmers’ markets to participate in these programs
- Extended telehealth provisions for in-state and out-of-state residents adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic without letting the practice sunset
- Expanded access to medical diagnostic equipment and examination rooms for persons with a disability at doctors’ offices that are group practice