



Dear Neighbor,

I am proud to share some *historic* highlights from the 2022 legislative session.

Historic like more than \$650 million in tax cuts. Historic like our investment in the mental health of our children. Historic like our commitment to growing jobs and our economy. Historic like a state budget that pays off millions in pension debt and continues our record rainy day fund while investing in Derby, Orange and Woodbridge schools, mental health, public safety and programs that work - all while honoring the spending cap

That's not to say we aren't facing challenges. We are seeing inflation that hits everyone's wallets and housing prices that are pricing many out of even modest homes. That's why I fought hard to provide you with relief: increasing the property tax credit, phasing out taxes on retirement income, creating a child tax payment, cutting the gas tax and more.

I hope you find this newsletter packed with useful information. It is my pleasure to serve as your state representative.

All the best,



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
MARY WELANDER

PROUDLY SERVING DERBY, ORANGE AND WOODBRIDGE

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**CAPITOL
UPDATE 2022**

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**CAPITOL
UPDATE 2022**

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2022 CAPITOL UPDATE

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN & SUPPORTING THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

I continued to make our children a priority this legislative session. I was part of a small, bipartisan group that created the most comprehensive children’s mental health legislation in the country. Additionally, based on legislation I passed last year, over \$22 million was allocated toward new and expanded mental health services in our schools. I also created a new task force to address online abuse and exploitation of children; it will evaluate the methods used to target our children. This year, to protect our children we:

- Created new walk-ins for mental health emergencies.
- Initiated a new position at the Healthcare Advocate to help families navigate care for children and adolescents.
- Expanded 24/7 emergency mental health response.
- Established state oversight and coordination of the response to kids’ mental health needs.
- Increased training and education of sexual abuse identification and prevention.
- Designated youth camp counselors as mandated reporters.

INVESTING IN OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Provided \$10.8 million in education funding for our schools.
- Established a new reimbursement grant to assist schools in upgrading their HVAC systems.
- Extended the renewal time for teaching certificates.
- Expanded scholarships for minority teachers.
- Required the teaching of Asian American and Pacific Islander studies in public schools.

I VOTED TO INVEST IN CT FAMILIES

OUR STATE BUDGET

MOVES CT FORWARD

- ✓ Creates a Child Tax Credit
- ✓ Cuts property taxes for retirees
- ✓ Cuts the car tax
- ✓ Funds programs for CT families
- ✓ Fully funds our schools
- ✓ Ends pension and annuity taxes
- ✓ Invests in healthcare workers

DELIVERING FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

I am pleased to announce that this year, the state legislature passed a budget that not only includes historic tax relief for CT residents but also contains the largest amount of total state aid to Derby, Orange and Woodbridge ever granted. Furthermore, I - along with the other members of our delegation - was able to secure significant funding for different projects in our communities. These new revenues include:

- \$12.6 million for modernizing and improving the Derby train station.
- \$2 million for the Woodbridge community center.
- \$200,000 in bonding for the first-ever accessible public playground in Orange.
- \$10,000 to repair the historic clock in the Orange Fire Station.
- \$100,000 for the Orange Senior Center to assist in operations and needed assistance.
- \$1 million in student loan forgiveness for police officers.
- \$200,000 for TEAM, Inc. to replace its elevator and windows in its headquarters.
- \$50,000 in both FY 22 & FY 23 for TEAM, Inc. to expand programming.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

- Reduced the need for frequent in-person visits by allowing pharmacists, in collaboration with your doctor, to adjust medications directly.
- Established a statewide stroke registry.
- Made \$12 million available for tobacco prevention and cessation.
- Strengthened the state’s intervention and response to lead poisoning and prevention.
- Expanded screenings for breast and cervical cancer.
- Ensured more psychiatric treatment beds.
- Created new home visit pilot for newborns.
- Continued telehealth options.

GROWING CT’S ECONOMY AND STRENGTHENING OUR WORKFORCE

- Lowered the business tax rate for unemployment insurance, effectively making the federal loan repayment for the coming year on behalf of businesses.
- Established JobsCT program - helping companies in target industries earn rebates against insurance premiums and state taxes for meeting job targets.
- Created additional student loan assistance programs.
- Expanded the successful Manufacturing Pipeline program.
- Provided parents and students with more occupational opportunities and helped schools partner with more local businesses.
- Allowed high school graduates access to low-interest loans.



SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE US

- Guaranteed CT veterans in-state tuition rates.
- Adopted higher fire department equipment standards, collecting better data on the prevalence of cancer among firefighters, and secured more local funding for firefighters who leave service with a cancer diagnosis.
- Established a new, local-option property tax exemption equal to 10% of home values for more veterans.