

Food, Farms, Jobs



Longmeadow Farm, Cornwall

A Cornwall farmer contacted me with a problem he faced selling his poultry. State regulations were preventing small producers, like him, from selling directly to consumers. This represented a critical loss of potential income. If we are serious about promoting farming and encouraging the production of fresh, local foods, we need to remove barriers such as this. I brought this issue to the attention of the Farm Bureau and my colleagues. Working together, we created a law that removed roadblocks to marketing agricultural products, including allowing locally grown poultry to be sold directly to consumers and restaurants.

Meeting the Demand for Nurses

The Connecticut State Universities will now be able to award doctoral degrees in nursing education. Connecticut nursing programs have had to turn away hundreds of qualified students, because of a lack of faculty. The program will produce up to 80 new faculty over the next ten years. These educators will be able to prepare 2000 new nurses.

Northwestern CT Community College will soon become the 6th community college in Connecticut to offer a nursing program. The first class is expected to begin in January 2011 with 24 students.

Credit for Fishing & Hunting Licenses

Enthusiasts who bought their licenses early this year and paid a higher price will be eligible for a credit that will be applied to the next license, permit, or tag purchase.

The DEP will reserve the credit and apply it to purchases made after October 1, 2010.

State Representative

Roberta Willis

Proudly Serving Cornwall, Goshen, Salisbury, Sharon & Torrington | 64th District

Legislative Office Building
Room 1800
Hartford, CT 06106-1591
Capitol: 800-842-8267
Roberta.Willis@cga.ct.gov
www.housedems.ct.gov/Willis

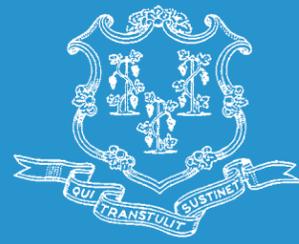


State Representative

Roberta Willis

CAPITOL NEWS 2010





State Representative Roberta B. Willis

Proudly Serving Cornwall, Goshen, Salisbury, Sharon and Torrington | 64th District



Investing in Job Growth

Job Creation Will Pull Connecticut Out of the Recession

Working with the Governor we passed significant new job bills

- Created a revolving loan assistance program and lines of credit for up to \$500,000 to get capital flowing to small businesses and nonprofits
- Created angel investment tax credits in order for the state to leverage private capital and direct assistance to attract new and emerging technologies. To stimulate economic prosperity, we need to enable entrepreneurs and businesses to flourish
- Enacted tax credits for small business, up to \$200 per month, for every job created. For every new job, there is a multiplier effect on our economy
- Provided student loan reimbursement and training grants for education and careers in green technology, life sciences and health information technology
- Provided sales tax exemptions for machinery, supplies, and fuel used in renewable energy industries
- Reformed environmental rules that streamline permitting process and insures we protect environmental quality
- Fostered a plan for the development of an emerging bioscience industry. It is expected to create more than 5,000 new jobs over the next 10 years across the newly created UConn Health Network.

In addition, the new proposed plan for the expansion of the UConn Health Center will help attract and retain high quality physicians and researchers to the state.



UConn Health Center Bill Signing Ceremony

Addressing the Budget Crisis and Creating Jobs

From the beginning of this legislative session, there were two priorities: Jobs and the Budget

It was an enormous challenge to put together a budget in the midst of a national and global economic crisis. Demand for state services rose as more of our neighbors needed help. People are struggling with lost jobs, lost savings, lost health insurance and in some cases, lost homes.

While we faced major increases in the demand for healthcare, food and fuel assistance, the state was facing its worst economic downturn in history. About 100,000 people lost their jobs and state revenues dropped by 24%. We needed to reduce spending, so hard choices had to be made.

After much deliberation, we were able to close the budget without increasing income, sales or corporate taxes, or cutting aid to our towns. We were able to protect social programs, education and healthcare by making judicious cuts. Spending cuts were made, money was borrowed and federal stimulus funds were used to balance the budget. This is not a long-term solution, nor a perfect budget, but a solution to keep us whole at a critical time.

There are signs that the economy is improving, but we are not 'out of the woods' yet. We need to put people back to work to move our state further down the road to economic recovery.

Growing an Educated Workforce

Preparing our Students for the 21st Century Workforce

Building a highly skilled workforce for Connecticut is critical to our economic growth. Businesses need employees that can help them have a competitive edge in an increasingly technological and knowledge-based economy. This year we passed a landmark education reform plan to improve students' performance by:



- Raising the bar on high school graduation standards by increasing the minimum credits required for high school graduation with greater emphasis on math, science and world languages, beginning with the Class of 2018. Students will be required to pass end-of-year exams in algebra, geometry, biology, American history and 10th-grade English to graduate

- Promoting advance placement courses in high school
- Building tracking systems that measure and monitor student academic growth and success, and identify the best ways to improve instruction
- Addressing the state's achievement gap with new high school accountability standards
- Providing an alternative route to teacher certification for those with workplace experience
- Improving vocational schools by adding members with manufacturing and vocational education experience to the state Board of Education

