

SESSION WRAP-UP FROM
JOSH ELLIOTT
PROUDLY SERVING HAMDEN
CHAIR OF HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Dear Neighbor,

This pandemic produced numerous challenges and exacerbated existing institutional inequities. Throughout the 2021 session, my colleagues and I worked to address these new challenges and existing injustices by passing over 350 bills and resolutions.

This past year has been uniquely difficult for each individual and family in our community, but I believe the legislation passed this year will empower everyone in our district. This session I advocated for equitable public health policies, increased access to mental health resources, and additional support for our seniors, schools, and small businesses. I also worked with my colleagues to pass a bipartisan budget that will strengthen our economy and invest in our infrastructure, sustainability efforts, and education. I fought to ensure Hamden will see increases in funding in 2022 and 2023. I am confident that these investments will help our community recover and thrive as we move out of this pandemic and help relieve our local property tax burden.

Best,



Josh Elliott



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STATE REPRESENTATIVE
CHAIR OF HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

JOSH ELLIOTT

PROUDLY SERVING HAMDEN



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CAPITOL UPDATE 2021



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SESSION WRAP-UP FROM STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOSH ELLIOTT

LEADING THE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

This year, I was pleased to be appointed chairman of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. I was proud to lead passage of several initiatives which I have highlighted below:

EVERY VOICE COALITION CAMPUS SAFETY LAW (PA 21-81)

- Took steps to more effectively combat sexual assault on our college campuses by gaining a comprehensive understanding of students' insights and concerns.
- Prohibited higher education institutions from taking disciplinary action against victims of, or anyone who reports an alleged sexual misconduct incident.
- Ensured that universities regularly survey students to better understand campus climate and the accessibility of resources.

IMPROVED CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA (PA 21-168)

- Ensured CT teachers are prepared to address the needs of students with dyslexia and improved local assessments to ensure we are identifying barriers to reading comprehension.

FULLY FUNDED DEBT FREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE (PA 21-2)

- Fully funded free community college – meaning students can work on their associate degree without having to pay tuition out of pocket. To learn more about the program, go to ct.edu/pact.

INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE TOWN OF HAMDEN

Thanks to the hard work of the Hamden delegation, we can expect significant additional state funding under the new state budget, including \$1.2 million more this year and \$2.5 million more next year for our local schools and \$3 million each year to our town.



BUDGET 2022-23

	FISCAL YEAR 22	FISCAL YEAR 23
EDUCATION AID	\$ 31,502,216	\$ 32,746,979
NON-EDUCATION AID	\$ 9,337,742	\$ 9,337,742
TOTAL STATE AID TO HAMDEN	\$ 40,839,958	\$ 42,084,721

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

During my time in the legislature, I have continued to fight for criminal justice reform throughout our state. This year we led the nation in equity by working for the rights of incarcerated people and their families. Please find highlights of the bills below that I have supported, co-sponsored and championed.

PRISON PHONE CALLS (PA 21-54)

Connecticut went from the most expensive state for telecommunications from prison, to the first state to make these calls free. Communication is critical to minimizing the trauma experienced by our children who may not hear their incarcerated parents' voices for days or weeks on end. I championed this law that allows families to connect with loved ones in prison for free, and stopped the state from profiting off working families who are struggling to afford this.

GIVING FORMERLY INCARCERATED CITIZENS A CLEAN SLATE (PA 21-32, as amended by PA 21-33)

The Clean Slate Act is groundbreaking legislation that will help thousands of formerly incarcerated citizens in Connecticut by clearing their records and paving the way for re-entry to society with access to good paying jobs, education, and quality housing.

We provided the erasure of misdemeanor crimes seven years after conviction, and for the erasure of E and D felonies ten years after conviction, with certain exceptions. This will allow individuals to fully re-enter society and have access to opportunities that would otherwise be denied.

ENDED PRISON GERRYMANDERING (PA 21-13)

Ended the practice of counting incarcerated persons as if they were registered voters when determining what districts our elected officials represent.

LEGALIZED ADULT USE CANNABIS (PA 21-1)

We crafted a comprehensive program to legalize cannabis.

- Legalized the use and possession of cannabis for adults 21+.
- Retail sales will begin around summer 2022.
- Individuals 21+ can grow up to 3 mature plants in 2023.
- Established an equity fund, criminal justice reforms, and economic opportunities to address the devastation of the War on Drugs and erased cannabis possession convictions going back 20 years.
- Created an equity commission that will work continuously to make improvements to the system.
- Invested in public health, prevention, and mental health and addiction services.
- Established a multi-level system to train police officers to recognize impaired drivers.