



Friends and Neighbors,

It is a privilege and honor to serve as your state representative. The 2025 legislative session is complete and I wanted to take a moment to check in and share some highlights from the last several months.

We worked hard to deliver a budget that adheres to our fiscal guardrails while still providing hundreds of millions of dollars in additional funding to our local schools, nonprofits, childcare, senior services, and services for our most vulnerable residents

As part of our balanced budget, we invested in universal childcare & pre-k for working families, helping to ease the cost of living for young families working hard to get ahead. This is another important step in making Connecticut more affordable for everyone.

We did it by working together - without the fighting you see in Washington.

I'd love to hear from you if you would like more details or have any questions on the initiatives addressed in this legislative update.

All my best,

*Kara Rochelle*

## 2025 SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- Invested in Universal Childcare & Pre-K for Working Families
- Provided Millions for Special Education
- Cut Your Electric Bill
- Toughened Penalties for "Street Takeovers"
- More State Funds for Ansonia and Derby

## UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

- **Veterans Forum** - Sept. 15th, 10AM-12PM, Veterans Memorial Building, 2 Atwater Ave, Derby
- **Senior Fair** - Sept. 24th, 10AM-2PM, Warsaw Park, 119 Pulaski Hwy, Ansonia
- **Education Forum** - Oct. 16th, 6-7:30PM, Derby City Hall, 1 Elizabeth St, Derby

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**KARA ROCHELLE**

PROUDLY SERVING ANSONIA AND DERBY

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UPDATE 2025**

Representative Kara Rochelle  
Legislative Office Building, Room 4000  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

**CAPITOL  
UPDATE 2025**



FROM STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**KARA ROCHELLE**  
PROUDLY SERVING ANSONIA AND DERBY

- 860-240-8585
- Kara.Rochelle@cga.ct.gov
- housedems.ct.gov/Rochelle
- facebook.com/StateRepKaraRochelle





# A BALANCED BUDGET AND MORE INVESTMENT IN OUR COMMUNITY

THANKS TO SOUND BUDGETING AND STEADY LEADERSHIP, WE DELIVERED:

- ✔ More funding for K-12 education
- ✔ More funding for senior programs
- ✔ More funding for nonprofits
- ✔ More funding for childcare
- ✔ MORE FUNDING FOR ANSONIA & DERBY

## MAKING SENIORS OUR PRIORITY

- Ensured insurance coverage of biomarker testing to detect cancer early and improve treatment (PA 25-16)
- Closed a loophole so that all employees at long-term care facilities undergo a background check (PA 25-16)
- Provided free online college courses to our nursing home residents (PA 25-16)
- Required greater consideration of how close your family lives when care homes try to transfer patients (PA 25-16)
- Created anti-discrimination protections for residents of long-term care facilities and now require their staff to receive anti-discrimination training. The state Department of Public Health and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman can now investigate complaints and take disciplinary action (PA 25-17)
- Required the Department of Transportation to provide up to a 50% discount on state-owned or -controlled public bus fares for veterans, seniors, youth, and people with disabilities (PA 25-65)
- Temporarily suspended the mandatory income tax withholding on lump sum retirement distributions (PA 25-168)

## LOWERING COSTS & PROTECTING CONSUMERS

- Reduced electric bills through comprehensive reforms that cap excessive utility charges, eliminate unnecessary industry subsidies, shift costs off monthly bills, and prevent rate hikes—delivering \$780 million in savings while building a smarter grid and a stronger energy future for Connecticut (PA 25-173)
- Established an Enhanced Child Tax Credit for Families: We created a refundable tax credit of \$250 per filer (PA 25-168)
- Took meaningful steps to lower prescription drug costs by ending profiteering by middlemen, ensuring manufacturer rebates go directly to patients, and beginning the process of importing lower-cost medications from Canada. (PA 25-167)
- Protected homeowners by preventing foreclosures over small, missed sewer payments (PA 25-150)

## FUNDING FOR ANSONIA & DERBY

"I am proud to deliver additional state funding for our community and will continue to work hard for more funding in the future." - Rep. Kara Rochelle

	FISCAL YEAR 2024	FISCAL YEAR 2025	FISCAL YEAR 2026	FISCAL YEAR 2027
<b>ANSONIA</b>				
Town Funding	\$21,415,989	\$22,110,460	\$22,722,988	\$22,742,537
Education Funding	\$19,422,268	\$20,315,782	\$21,332,388	\$21,332,388
<b>DERBY</b>				
Town Funding	\$12,873,559	\$13,574,683	\$14,985,205	\$15,006,939
Education Funding	\$9,782,696	\$10,597,864	\$10,990,454	\$10,990,454

## MAJOR WINS FOR OUR COMMUNITY

- \$10,000 for Life, Health, and Wellness youth summer programming in Ansonia
- \$45,000 to ensure we can maintain a free advanced manufacturing training program for valley adults, located at Derby High School on weeknights
- \$100,000 for free year-round teen programming at the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley, with special teen hours, for all Ansonia and Derby teens
- \$167,877 in funding to make upgrades to the elevator at the Derby Senior Center
- \$200,000 to Ansonia for site assessment of 35 and 64 Main Street, the Farrell site, to continue redevelopment and determine best future use for the site
- \$200,000 to Derby for site evaluation and planning activities for the O'Sullivan's Island property
- \$3,840,000 to Ansonia for improvements to the Naugatuck River Greenway
- \$25,000,000 for the removal of the defunct Kinneytown Dam on the Naugatuck River in Ansonia



Rep. Rochelle proudly founded and co-chairs the Legislature's Blue Collar Caucus



## SUPPORTING CHILDREN & SCHOOLS

- Established a trust to provide Universal Childcare & Pre-K for families that earn under \$100,000. Those who make over \$100,000 will not pay more than 7% of their income for childcare, a major reduction in costs for all families (PA 25-93)
- Invested \$30 million annually for a new Special Education Expansion and Development (SEED) grant to school districts (PA 25-67)
- Established \$10 million in competitive grants for more in-district programming (PA 25-93)
- Provided \$221 million in annual reimbursement funds for school special education costs, a major increase (PA 25-168)
- Secured \$10 million in financing for capital projects related to special education (PA 25-168)
- Fully funded the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) Formula so Ansonia & Derby schools receive full ECS funding (PA 25-168)

## KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE

- Cracked down on street takeovers: (PA 25-80)
  - » Increased penalties for street racing and takeovers, including two-year license suspensions
  - » Empowered towns to regulate and penalize street takeovers, including the ability to seize and destroy confiscated vehicles
  - » Created a minimum fine of \$2,000 for racing, evading police, or causing property damage
- Expanded our "Fallen Hero Fund" to cover the families of police, firefighters, EMT personnel, and paramedics who are killed in the line of duty so that they can receive cash benefits and health insurance coverage (PA 25-61)
- Expanded coverage under the Firefighters Cancer Relief Fund Program to include skin cancer (PA 25-4)
- Eliminated the license fee for paramedics (PA 25-174)
- Established a program for virtual EMT training (PA 25-162)
- Secured \$1.5 million for the state highway fire call reimbursement program, providing critical funding to volunteer fire companies, delivering major funds for Ansonia and Derby volunteer fire companies (PA 25-168)
- Ensured our police officers have more flexibility in using tasers and physical restraint (PA 25-29)
- Made it easier for ICE to deport sex offenders (PA 25-29)
- Made it easier for the State to seize cryptocurrency when offenders commit cybercrimes (PA 25-41)
- Created financial aid for paramedic students through new loan programs, broader eligibility for existing aid, and greater transparency about available supports (PA 25-158)
- Created an Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Task Force to develop a State Alzheimer's Plan that, among other measures, will require dementia-specific training for law enforcement and other first responders (PA 25-16)