



State Representative
MARY MUSHINSKY

ECONOMY AND JOB TRAINING

As co-chair of the Program Review and Investigations Committee, my top priority is a pair of investigations: (1) Connecticut's Economic Competitiveness and (2) Alignment of Education and Employment. Both studies will produce recommended changes in time for the 2010 legislative session, which begins in February.

CONNECTICUT'S ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Our first investigation is looking at focusing on the strengths and assets the state already has to create long term economic growth, and reinvigorating support for nine industry clusters (all of which increased wages in recent years), and increasing CT exporting activity, which lags behind the national average. We are also interested in increasing federal Small Business Innovation Research grants and the state's innovation score in order to be prepared for success in the new economy.

ALIGNMENT OF EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Our second investigation will determine whether the state is matching the production of skilled graduates from colleges, universities, community colleges and technical schools with the current and future workforce needs of the state's employers. Less than five percent are working in key areas for the new global economy—computers, mathematics, architecture and engineering. We are interested in a better match between occupation supply and demand, better preparation for college level work, and higher completion rates for community college degrees.

FORECLOSURES AND NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION

The national foreclosure crisis has put many Connecticut families at risk of losing their homes. This year, we created safeguards against mortgage foreclosure, mortgage lending, and emergency mortgage assistance.

FORECLOSURE PROTECTION

- » Implements federal reforms
- » Improves how lending professionals are licensed
- » Expands eligibility for state foreclosure prevention programs
- » Makes the state's foreclosure mediation program mandatory

(PA 09-209)

Call 203.777.6925 ext. 26 to apply for emergency mortgage assistance before you receive notice of intent to foreclose.

Call 860.263.2734 after receiving foreclosure notice if you need the assistance of mediation. About 70% of court cases that go to mediation are resolved successfully.



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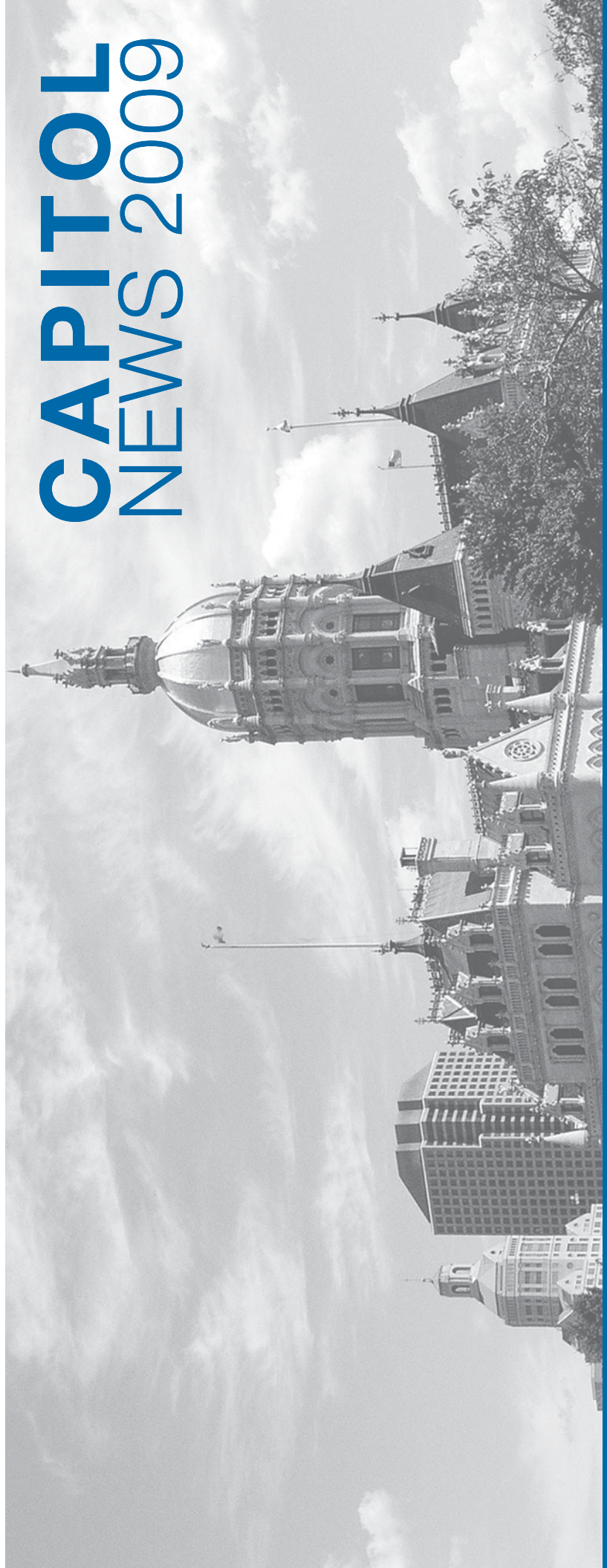
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- Career Change Tips
- 2009 Senior Laws
- 2009 Education Laws
- 2009 Major Public Acts
- 2009 Laws Affecting Children
- 2009 Laws Affecting Business

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A Difficult Budget



At the beginning of the 2009 Session, it became clear that the recession that started in Wall Street's financial district would deplete more than one of every five dollars of the state's revenues. To respond without harming vulnerable populations, including seniors and children, we cut \$3 billion over the next 2 years, accepted the Governor's recommendations for fee increases, and increased tax rates on wealthy incomes to avoid harsh reductions in health care, human services, education, municipal aid or property tax relief.

Next session will be tougher. As House Chairwoman of the Program Review & Investigations Committee, I will be reviewing government efficiencies to squeeze the most value out of limited dollars.

SAVING MONEY FOR WALLINGFORD

In 2008, working with the Commission on Children, I learned how to take credit for education and training programs we already offer to Wallingford residents and get 50% federal reimbursement for them. We passed SNAP-ET (food stamp education and training) legislation in 2009 and persuaded Wallingford to join a regional education and training effort. Because of this effort, Wallingford's Adult Education Program is now eligible for 50% federal reimbursement.

Environment

AN ACT CONCERNING ADOPTION OF A MODEL ENERGY CODE & GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS

Green building standards are building codes that require new construction to be more environmentally friendly. Green buildings are rated on many factors including energy efficiency, use of renewable energy, water conservation, indoor air quality, reuse of existing buildings and building materials, and environmentally sensitive site design. This bill makes existing green building standards more workable by tightening the scope of standards and adds a member with expertise in matters relating to energy efficiency to the Codes and Standards Committee.

(PA 09-192)



CLEAN AND GREEN

The General Assembly passed legislation that would promote the use of clean energy by creating incentives for the use of solar power, and a creative plan to install wind turbines at state prisons providing no-cost electricity to the prison and host community. We fought to ban products such as baby bottles and food containers made with the chemical bisphenol-A (BPA). BPA is an industrial chemical with reproductive and developmental effects. We also promoted the use of green cleaning products in schools.

(PA 09-103 & PA 09-184)



Public Safety

REVERSE 911

In the event of an emergency, public safety departments and municipalities may need to contact and spread information to residents quickly. This legislation will now allow municipalities to use the state's enhanced 9-1-1 database at no charge. Such a system, also known as "Reverse 9-1-1," will provide the ability to call residents and deliver short messages regarding emergency events.

(PA 09-86)

Health Care

EARLY DETECTION OF BREAST CANCER

- » Facilitates the early detection of breast cancer in order to enhance survival
- » Women with dense breast tissue have higher risks of cancer. The new law requires information on breast density be given to patients so they may seek further screening

(PA 09-41)



CONNECTICUT HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIP

Healthcare costs residents more to buy and taxpayers more for the people who do not have it. The rising cost of health care is also one of the biggest obstacles small businesses face. This year we passed the Connecticut Healthcare Partnership. This

proposal would have opened the state employee health plan to municipalities, small businesses and non-profits so they could have had access to more affordable health benefits. The state has been using the bargaining power of a 200,000-member group to successfully negotiate lower health care costs. Unfortunately, Gov. Rell vetoed this measure. We will continue to seek lower costs for everyone through the pooling method.

(PA 09-147)

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

In order to protect school children from sexual predators, this public act requires the Connecticut Department of Public Safety to notify the superintendent of schools in the community where a sex offender lives or plans to live.

(PA 09-199)

SENIOR LOOP OF THE LINEAR TRAIL

Immediately upon passage of the state bond package in September 2009, which includes \$20 million in small town grants (STEAP), Governor Rell and the State Bond Commission released our requested \$200,000 toward construction of the "senior loop," a pedestrian trail that will link the Wallingford Senior Center to the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail. The project will eventually allow safe passage away from traffic.



Protecting Seniors

PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANCE

Continuing the state's efforts to improve access to quality homecare services and keep people living in their communities, this legislation requires the Department of Social Services to provide personal care assistance services under the Connecticut Homecare Program for Elders if these services are (1) not available under the Medicaid state plan, (2) more cost effective on an individual client basis than existing Medicaid state plan services, and (3) approved by the federal government.

(PA 09-64)

IMPROVED SERVICES FOR ALZHEIMER'S PATIENTS

- » Increases the annual income limit for eligibility from \$30,000 to \$41,000
- » Increases the asset limit from \$80,000 to \$109,000

(PA 09-75)

Support For The Families of Wounded Soldiers

- » Expands the State Family and Medical Leave Act
- » Permits employees to take up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave from work to care for injured family members who are military personnel

(PA 09-70)



JOB-SEEKING ASSISTANCE

Earlier this year, I requested the Connecticut Department of Labor bus "Career Express" come to Wallingford to help residents with job-seeking, resume assistance and advice on new careers.

Please take advantage of the Career Express bus that will come to the Wallingford Public Library on the following dates: 1/19, 3/16, and 5/18 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. For more information, please call the Library at 203-265-6754.

Also, try these service centers:

CT Works (Dept. of Labor)
37 Marne Street, Hamden, CT 06514
203-859-3200
www.ctdol.state.ct.us

Workforce Alliance
560 Ella T. Grasso Blvd., Bldg. 3
New Haven, CT 06519
203-624-1493
www.workforcealliance.biz

Websites:
www.jobcentral.org
www.careerbuilder.com



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