

Wallingford Flying Ace Honored

On October 22, 2011 the Wharton Brook connector (exit 13 off I-91) was renamed "Major Gervais Raoul Lufbery Highway" in honor of Wallingford's own flying ace, one of the most skilled and feared pilots of World War I, who was killed in aerial battle and is honored by both America and France. The ceremony, held at Wharton Brook State Park, drew Lufbery family members from near and far as well as local veterans, including Wallingford resident Robert "Doc" Sheehy, Commander of Lufbery VFW Post 591, Wallingford.



Earned Income Tax Credit

The earned income tax credit (EITC) finally became law in Connecticut. The credit helps more than 700 working, low wage families in the district. Workers who earned \$48,000 or less and were raising children and single workers without children who earned less than \$13,460 may qualify.



Left to right: Jim Hogan (CT Association of Human Services), Rep. Mary Mushinsky and Maggie Adair (Early Childhood Education) celebrate the passage of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

Preventing Drunk Driving

Ignition interlock devices (IID) will be required for repeat drunk driving offenders that will prevent them from starting the car if their blood alcohol content (BAC) exceeds .08 percent.



Rep. Mushinsky and Sen. Martin Looney at the new site of Gateway Community College.

www.housedems.ct.gov/Mushinsky

Mary Mushinsky

State Representative
Serving Wallingford | 85th District

HOUSE DEMOCRATS of CONNECTICUT

Legislative Office Building
Room 4038
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Capitol Phone 800.842.8267

Home Phone 203.269.8378

www.housedems.ct.gov/Mushinsky



State Representative

Mary Mushinsky

Serving Wallingford | 85th District

Dear Neighbor,

As we turn the corner from recession toward economic recovery, I see opportunities to build on the economic growth initiatives passed by the state legislature this year, many of them with bipartisan support.

Your input early in the session through the constituents' survey helped shape my votes in Hartford. I protected the services you felt strongly about and the state aid to towns that supports Wallingford's budget, repairs roads and helps keep local property taxes down.

Balancing the budget isn't our only successful action. First, our highest priority was job creation and retention. Many of the economic and workforce training measures we passed reflect new career realities and came directly from the bipartisan recommendations of the Program Review and Investigations Committee under my chairmanship.

Second, we saved taxpayer dollars by encouraging a leaner government and innovative approaches to providing services. Other legislative advances included health insurance reform and help for veterans, the environment and domestic violence victims. In addition, I worked to pass several Wallingford bills: honoring Wallingford's own local hero, Major Raoul Lufbery; protecting veterans with a new identification card; and allowing housing authority tenants to choose their own representative.

I am pleased to have stabilized your property taxes by supporting \$23,142,452 in state dollars to Wallingford. This report highlights some of the recent legislation.

Please feel free to contact me at mary.mushinsky@cga.ct.gov or toll free at 1-800-842-8267.

Sincerely,

Mary Mushinsky

CAPITOL REPORT 2011

HOUSE DEMOCRATS of CONNECTICUT



State Representative

Mary Mushinsky

Serving Wallingford | 85th District

Rebuilding Connecticut's Economy

In an October special session on job creation, we passed a package of bipartisan recommendations which were quickly signed by Gov. Malloy. These proposals included several reforms from Program Review & Investigations Committee reports:

- » Targeted state aid to replace inefficient furnaces and boilers in nonprofit institutions that serve residents;
- » Workforce development programs at community colleges and regional vo-tech schools that align with new careers;
- » Business assistance packages accessible through the Dept. of Economic Development's web site: www.ct.gov/ecd;
- » Improving speed and predictability of permits involving more than one agency;
- » Expanded use of "angel investor" tax credits for new ideas; and
- » Consolidated tax credits targeted to job creation.

We also allowed the \$250 business entity tax already collected to be good for two years.

A more hotly debated bill approved a significant state investment in bioscience and gene-based therapy. I believe this investment is a good fit for Connecticut as we seek to replace traditional businesses with growth industries to rebuild our state's economy.

Paid Sick Leave

This year, we passed the first in the nation employee paid sick leave law to let employees earn time off without fear of losing pay or their job. The law includes exemptions for manufacturers and certain non-profit organizations. This landmark law protects restaurant and day care center workers who until now have not been allowed paid sick days, and may come to work ill and spread their illness to other employees and the public.

Saluting Our Veterans

Protecting veterans with a new identification card

A bill I cosponsored with Sen. Len Fasano, first suggested by John Anzidei of Wallingford, became law on the first try. The measure, which provides an official designation of veteran status on a license or an i.d. prevents impersonation of veterans. The Veterans Affairs Commissioner observed the cards will better allow veterans to get help in emergency rooms when their veteran's status is known.

If you need additional assistance or have questions, please contact me:

Capitol Phone
800.842.8267
Home Phone
203.269.8378



A Balanced Budget

The new state budget (2012-13) addressed the financial crisis brought on by the worst recession since the Great Depression. This budget stabilizes the state's finances, streamlines state government, and invests funds to create jobs.

- » We revised tax credits to encourage new hiring and invested in bioscience and workforce training for new careers.
- » The budget protects the middle class by restoring a \$300 property tax credit, fairly distributing the income tax burden and eliminating increase to the gas tax.
- » Our new budget protects towns so that almost all municipalities will receive more funding than they received in the prior fiscal year.
- » Spending cuts outweigh taxes two to one in the new state budget. Yet vital programs such as rental assistance for seniors were protected from cuts.
- » The state budget forces leaner, more efficient government.

Housing Authority Tenants' Election

We passed a law on the second try to allow tenants of local housing authorities to elect their own representative to the housing authority. The bill originated with tenants from around the state, including many from Wallingford who requested the change. While we successfully passed the bill in 2010, it was vetoed by then-Gov. Rell. Tenants remained active and we passed it again in 2011; Gov. Malloy signed the measure into law. Wallingford's tenants became the first in Connecticut to elect their own representative.

Quinnipiac River Linear Trail

The trail's next section, Phase III, is fully funded and we will go out to bid the minute we receive the final permit from the state. On Sept. 22, 2011 I convened a large group at CT Dept. of Transportation (DOT) headquarters in Newington to speed up the permit, and we resolved the remaining issues. According to DOT, we will be able to go out to bid next May 2012. Phase III will extend the trail from the tunnel to Yalesville center, another 1.5 miles through woods and across 2 bridges.

Some of the complications which delayed the permit included: faulty flood map (only 1/2 of the river is included in federal flood maps as the river splits around Fireworks Island); permit paperwork is ahead of engineering design (town's contractor was not aware full build was authorized in January 2010); we were denied use of the Yalesville Commons bridge and will have to build our own bridge; and the discovery of an endangered plant species on Fireworks Island! Better agency-to-town communication, especially regarding permission to proceed, will help speed up this lengthy process.



Linear trail committee volunteers at Celebrate Wallingford.

Health Care

Affordable Health Insurance

The state is now closer to the goal of guaranteeing affordable health insurance for all Connecticut residents. The legislature:

- » Opened the state employee healthcare plan to municipal employees and nonprofits;
- » Established the Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange where individuals and companies with up to 50 employees can compare and purchase health insurance;
- » Required insurance coverage of MRIs for breast cancer screening if a woman is found to have "dense" breast tissue

Keeping Kids Safe

Stop for School Buses

There are over 600,000 children in Connecticut using roughly 6,200 school buses every school day – we want them all to arrive home safely. School bus passengers will be better protected from reckless drivers through the use of video surveillance and fines. Under existing law, drivers must stop at least 10 feet from a school bus displaying flashing red signal lights. The new law allows towns and school boards to install cameras on school buses to record motor vehicles that ignore stopped buses and issue fines from \$450 or more. 80 percent of that revenue is sent back to cities and towns.

Reporting Child and Animal Abuse

A landmark bill that would require the cross reporting of child abuse and animal cruelty was passed by the General Assembly. Research indicates a strong connection between animal abuse, child abuse and domestic violence.

Protecting Children Against Bullying

We expanded Connecticut's anti-bullying law to include bullying, harassment and intimidation using the Internet or mobile phones.

Seniors

The legislature focused on improving the quality of life for our senior citizens by:

- » Allowing people to enroll in the ConnPACE plan if they are not eligible for Medicare
- » Rejecting the Governor's proposal to significantly raise cost-sharing in the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders
- » Expanding the state's Money Follows the Person program
- » Establishing Nursing Home Grievance Committees at each facility
- » Expanding the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, making it easier for seniors to qualify and receive assistance for grocery bills
- » Protecting senior rental assistance

Environment

- » We have moved to eliminate BPA from cash register receipt paper as exposure is linked to various illnesses and cancers.
- » I supported the Community Investment Act because protecting farmlands protects locally grown food.
- » When buying paint, consumers will receive information about where to dispose of it, including procedures for collecting, storing, transporting, reusing and recycling.

