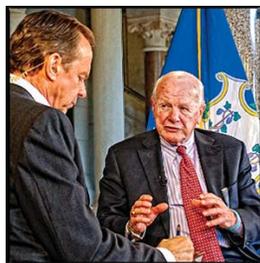


CONNECTICUT SENATE DEMOCRATS

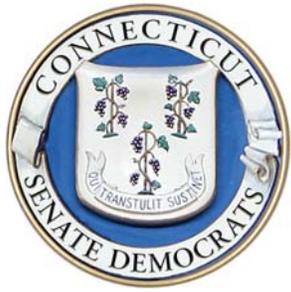


2012 SESSION SUMMARY



Donald Williams, President Pro Tempore • **Martin Looney**, Majority Leader

Beth Bye • Steve Cassano • Eric Coleman • Joseph Crisco • Eileen Daily • Paul Doyle • Bob Duff • John Fonfara • Terry Gerratana • Edwin Gomes
Toni Harp • Joan Hartley • Gary LeBeau • Carlo Leone • Andrew Maynard • Edward Meyer • Anthony Musto • Edith Prague • Gayle Slossberg • Andrea Stillman



Senate & House passed and signed by governor

Senate passed

House passed

Vetoed by governor

Job Creation

2012 Jobs Initiative

There's no greater priority for Connecticut than growing and retaining high-quality jobs. During the last legislative session and an October special session, Senate Democrats played a critical role in helping to pass a number of job-generating bills.

Senate Bill 1, the Senate Democrats' plan, builds on and expands the job-creating momentum of October's landmark Jobs Bill. It expands state workforce and small-business development programs, provides incentives to hire post-9/11 combat veterans, promotes Connecticut's economic and cultural assets, and seeks to reward businesses that are willing to relocate jobs from overseas back to Connecticut. The bill:

- **Expands the existing Small Business Express Program to an estimated 3,600 additional state businesses.** Under current law, a business qualifies for Express loans and grants if it employs 50 or fewer people; Senate Bill 1 raises that employee ceiling to 100 employees.
- **Establishes the Unemployed Armed Forces Member STEP-Up** (Subsidized Training and Employment Program) with grants to subsidize a businesses' cost of hiring unemployed veterans during their first 180 days (about six months) on the job. The bill authorizes \$10 million in bonds for the program, with \$5 million available upon passage and the balance available in Fiscal Year 2014.
- **Creates "Connecticut Made" and "Connecticut Treasures" programs** to promote products made in Connecticut and promote the state's cultural, educational and historic attractions. Part of the bill provides for the design, planning and implementation of a multiyear, state-wide marketing and advertising plan that includes television and radio advertisements showcasing Connecticut-made products and the advantages they offer.
- **Seeks to relocate overseas jobs to Connecticut** by allowing the state Department of Economic and Community Development to give a preference under the "First Five Plus" program to companies that will relocate jobs from overseas to Connecticut; assistance includes loans, tax incentives and other forms of economic development that create jobs and invest capital within a certain time frame.

AA Implementing Provisions of the State Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2012; HB 6001, PA 12-1

Job Expansion Tax Credit

The 2011 Special Session Jobs Bill created the Job Expansion Tax Credit, which enables Connecticut businesses to receive tax credits of \$500 per month for each new full-time job created. This credit is increased to \$900 if the hired individual is a veteran, unemployed or receiving vocational rehabilitative services from the Bureau of Rehabilitative Services. This legislation allows businesses to receive the \$900 monthly tax credit if they also hire individuals receiving services from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services or participating in certain Department of Social Services programs.

AA Implementing Provisions of the State Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2012; HB 6001, PA 12-1



Senate & House passed and signed by governor

Senate passed

House passed

Vetoed by governor

Small Business Innovation Program

Small high-tech businesses are the future of employment in Connecticut. We must do more to encourage these businesses to grow and prosper here in Connecticut. Under this provision, the legislature set aside \$500,000 (\$250,000 to UCONN and \$250,000 to the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology) to provide technical assistance to small businesses looking to use advanced manufacturing techniques here in Connecticut. Companies participating in the program can take advantage of technological skills and facilities available both at UCONN and CCAT. For this program, businesses defined as small (under 50 employees) and medium (50-100 employees) are eligible.

AA Implementing Provisions of the State Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2012; HB 6001, PA 12-1

Youth Employment

While the most recent recession has resulted in sustained high unemployment rates throughout Connecticut, unemployment among young people has remained significantly higher. This bill requires that the Commissioner of the Department of Labor develop a strategy for promoting youth employment in Connecticut. This strategy must include a better utilization of existing tax credit programs to get young adults into the workforce, especially in our urban centers. The commissioner must report to the Higher Education Committee in 2013 on work to implement this strategy.

AA Implementing Provisions of the State Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2012; HB 6001, PA 12-1

Learn Here, Live Here

After January 1, 2014, Connecticut's "Live Here, Learn Here" program will help even more graduating students save money toward a down payment on their first home in Connecticut. Currently, the program is only open to students graduating from regional-technical schools and in-state students graduating from state colleges and universities. The program is now expanded to include any student graduating from a public or a private college in Connecticut, or from a health care training school (such as medical or dental school, chiropractic colleges, or any other healing arts' school or institution.)

AAC the Learn Here, Live Here Program; SB 78, PA 12-75

Manufacturing Internships

A move to enroll more high school students in manufacturing internships—thereby helping to create the next generation of Connecticut's high-tech manufacturing workforce—was passed this year by the legislature. The new law allows students age 16 or older to participate in a hands-on manufacturing internship in any manufacturing establishment.

AAC Manufacturing Internships; SB 383, PA 12-154

Unemployed Individuals and Discriminatory Hiring Practices

With thousands of people still seeking jobs in Connecticut, the legislature passed a bill that prohibits stating "the unemployed need not apply" in help-wanted ads. People, businesses, labor organizations and employment agencies cannot advertise job opportunities in a way that discriminates against a person because they are unemployed, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification or need.

S AAC Unemployed Individuals and Discriminatory Hiring Practices; SB 79



Improving Education for Everyone & Closing the Achievement Gap

Education Reform

An Act Concerning Educational Reform focuses on proven educational interventions and innovative new strategies for high-need schools, provides support for children and families, invests in communities and ensures high-quality teaching in the classroom.

In order to effectively turn around schools, teachers and parents have buy-in and must be part of improving high-need schools. The bill maintains respect for bargaining rights of teachers while allowing new flexibility for determining longer school days, longer school years, and school models.

The bill creates a Commissioner's Network of Schools where individualized turnaround plans will address the urgent needs of the school. Teachers and parents will participate in establishing turnaround plans and will monitor their implementation. School Governance Councils will play a key role in identifying needs and developing a plan and monitoring that plan to improve schools.

In order to close the achievement gap, legislative leaders worked to create a holistic approach to treating the needs of children and families. Studies have shown that early interventions are a key to life-long learning success. The legislation includes a special focus on early learning, reading and health. The bill includes:

- Funding for 1,000 new early childhood slots.
- Authorization of 20 new or expanded school-based health centers.
- An effective K through 3 reading program.
- Requires 20 minutes of physical exercise each day for K through 5.
- Encouragement for innovative approaches to teaching English Language Learners.
- The establishment of 10 new family resource centers.

To help school districts raise the educational bar, the state is making a financial investment by providing critical funding for school districts all across Connecticut. It provides critical funding for high-need school districts conditional on adopting improvement plans, and a general increase in Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding with a special focus on low-performing districts. Additionally, the bill increases per-pupil funding for charter schools.

Furthermore, ensuring that high-quality teaching is happening in the classroom is a critical part of ensuring student success. For the first time, all teachers and administrators will be evaluated annually. The bill establishes thorough and fair accountability measures that identify high-performing teachers and provide professional development supports for teachers in need of improvement.

This evaluation system will be piloted, evaluated, and validated to ensure effective statewide implementation.

AAC Educational Reform; SB 458, PA-116

Senate & House passed and signed by governor

Senate passed

House passed

Vetoed by governor



- Senate & House passed and signed by governor
- Senate passed
- House passed
- Vetoed by governor

Testing New Technology

Connecticut's colleges and universities are hot beds of so-called "test bed" technology, where professors and students conduct cutting-edge research and often develop products that could make their way into commercial, military and other markets. Until this year, state law had prohibited colleges from testing in-house anything other than energy technology. Now, with this new bill, everything from highway lighting to medical software can be tested in-house and more easily commercialized.

- AA Expanding Test Bed Authority at the Constituent Units of the State System of Higher Education*; SB 80, PA 12-97

College Readiness

The legislature approved a bold, new initiative this year to re-make the way Connecticut's state college students receive remedial classroom support, saving them time and money and increasing college graduation rates. Beginning in the fall of 2014, state colleges and universities must offer certain students remedial support embedded within entry-level college credit courses. This will help address a problem where only 7 to 8 percent of state university and community-technical college students who took a remedial college class between 2004 and 2008 graduated in three years.

- AAC College Readiness and Competition*; SB 40, PA 12-40

Storm Preparedness & Response

Storm Response & Power Outages

Last year's twin storms—a hurricane and an unprecedented October snowstorm—left hundreds of thousands of people without power for days on end. We must be better prepared for future emergencies, and we will be. Legislation passed this year sets performance standards for the utility companies, including staffing levels, tree trimming requirements and targets for restoration of service. Penalties are imposed if those standards are not met. We also made major investments in critical infrastructure, including the establishment of microgrids to provide backup power at key locations like police stations, hospitals and gas stations.

- AA Enhancing Emergency Preparedness and Response*; SB 23, PA 12-148

GIS Data Sharing

For residents plunged into darkness in the wake of a severe storm, time is of the essence; this bill will speed up the process of getting help to those who needed it. The bill requires electric utilities to share critical geographic information systems (GIS) data about locations of utility poles and transformers so that municipal first responders can more quickly and efficiently target priority areas. It will help municipalities improve emergency storm response by requiring utilities to share GIS mapping data.

- AA Implementing Certain Provisions Concerning Government Administration*; SB 501; PA 12-2



Senate & House passed and signed by governor

S Senate passed

H House passed

V Vetoed by governor

Consumer Protections

Relief at the Pump, Fighting Oil Profiteering

Our bill strengthens protections against price gouging, cracks down on oil profiteering, places a circuit breaker on the gross receipts tax and requires that savings are passed along to consumers. The legislation ensures that if wholesale gas prices rise further this summer, prices at the pump will not go even higher as a result of the gross receipts tax. The legislation:

- Declares a 30-day period of petroleum market scrutiny by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Department of Consumer Protection in anticipation of further wholesale price spikes.
- Amends the petroleum profiteering statute to provide for investigations of price gouging whenever the wholesale price rises by 15 percent or more within 90 days.
- Grants the Department of Consumer Protection authority to impose Unfair Trade Practice fines on large gasoline wholesalers and distributors who are in violation of profiteering laws.
- Puts a permanent circuit breaker on the gross receipts tax (GRT) on gasoline so that it only applies to the first \$3.00 per gallon wholesale.
- Prohibits oil wholesalers and distributors (those who pay the gross receipts tax) from passing on anything purporting to be based on the tax for the portion of any sales price over \$3.00 per gallon.
- Institutes similar profiteering protections in regards to home heating oil.

AA Concerning a Cap on the Petroleum Products Gross Earnings Tax and Penalties for Abnormal Price Increases in Certain Petroleum Products; SB 457, PA 12-4

Guarding Social Security Numbers

Social Security numbers can be a passport to a new life for identity thieves. Unsuspecting victims are often stuck with a tarnished credit report and a bill for someone else's lavish spending. This legislation cracks down on the unnecessary collection of Social Security numbers and protects consumers from falling prey to identity theft. Generally, the bill prohibits requests for or collection of Social Security numbers, except where required by state or federal law, financial institutions, health insurance companies and credit agencies.

S *AA Prohibiting the Unnecessary Collection of Social Security Numbers*; SB 315

Price Gouging

Record-breaking snowfall last fall and in January 2011 wreaked havoc on the state, causing downed trees and power lines, widespread utility outages and roof collapses. A destructive tropical storm in late summer crippled the state with even more prolonged power outages. This bill extends protections from price-gouging to weather-related services and emergency lodging during or after a severe storm. Services covered by the bill include snow removal, flood abatement services, lodging and post-storm clean-up or repair services. The new legislation would ensure that no one can sell or offer to sell goods or services for an "unconscionably excessive" price.

S *AA Prohibiting Price Gouging During Severe Weather Events*; SB 60

Automatic Subscription Renewals

In these tough times when household budgets are tight, consumers should not be surprised by renewal costs buried in the fine print of subscription contracts for magazines or online services. This bill requires businesses to provide explicit notification that a customer may cancel a subscription before their account is charged at the end of a trial period or introductory offer. The law would apply uniformly to contracts regardless of length of contract.

S *AAC Notification of the Expiration of Trial Offers, Introductory Rates & Automatic Contract Renewals*; SB 316



- Senate & House passed and signed by governor
- S** Senate passed
- H** House passed
- V** Vetoed by governor

Heating Fuel Contracts

Home heating fuel contracts can be confusing and, in some cases, have hidden fees. This bill provides improved disclosure and increased options for prospective and current residential heating oil and propane customers. It requires a written contract for most residential heating fuel sales and for renting or leasing a heating fuel tank. The new law only applies to fuel sales where the fuel is the primary source of heat or hot water for the residence.

- AAC Residential Heating Oil and Propane Contracts*; SB 207, PA 12-76

One Free Item

Whether it's a watermelon or a bunch of broccoli, if a piece of fruit or vegetable rings up at the wrong price, the consumer gets it for free, thanks to this pro-consumer bill. Under existing law, consumers are entitled to receive an item for free, up to a \$20 value, if an electronic bar code scanner charges a price that is higher than the posted price. This bill expands the "one free item" law to cover retail foods without bar codes, including ones that must be weighed at purchase, such as fruits and vegetables.

- AA Expanding the "One Free Item" Retail Sales Law*; SB 71, PA 12-15

Expanding Access to Mortgage Assistance

This bill adds up to \$60 million in bonding funds for the Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program, which provides short-term loans to homeowners experiencing financial hardships to help them pay their mortgages. It also makes it easier for applicants to qualify for the program through a variety of provisions. Additionally, the bill makes information on foreclosure mediation widely available.

- S** *AA Implementing the Recommendations of the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority Task Force*; SB 360

Criminal Justice Reform

Cracking Down on Racial Profiling

Racial profiling is morally wrong. In Connecticut, it is also illegal. Sadly, not everyone has gotten the message. Although existing law requires documentation of all traffic stops to detect patterns of racial profiling by police, only 27 of 92 Connecticut police departments are currently in compliance. That is not acceptable. This year, we instructed the Office of Policy & Management to create a new standardized traffic stop form, and ordered training in its use for all police officers. Analysis of traffic stop data will now be performed by a better-staffed agency, and police departments that continue to violate the law may face a reduction in state funds.

- AAC Traffic Stop Information*; SB 364, PA-12-74

Abolishing the Death Penalty

Execution is an archaic and deeply flawed form of punishment, long abandoned in most industrialized democracies. It is arbitrarily applied and issued more often to the poor and ethnic minorities. Most of all, it is an irreversible punishment, and we have seen over 140 death row inmates exonerated in the United States since the 1970's. This year, Connecticut became the seventeenth state in the nation to abolish the death penalty. The eleven men currently on Connecticut's death row will remain there.

- AA Revising the Penalty for Capital Felonies*; SB 280, PA 12-5

Protecting the Right to Videotape Police

In a free society, police activity should be as transparent as possible. That is why existing law already protects the right of citizens to videotape or photograph police activity—so long as it does not interfere with an investigation or a judicial proceeding. Unfortunately, a small number of police officers recently overstepped their bounds to prevent lawful recordings. In response, we passed legislation this year that will make police officers who do so personally liable for damages.

- S** *AAC the Recording of Police Activity By the Public*; SB 245



Senate & House passed and signed by governor

Senate passed

House passed

Vetoed by governor

Medicinal Marijuana, Tightly Regulated

Patients who suffer from diseases like cancer, HIV/AIDS and Parkinson's can benefit greatly from marijuana treatment. This year, we established a tightly regulated and controlled system for distribution of medical marijuana for genuine patients; many have called it the best such system yet adopted in the country. Patients will not be allowed to grow their own marijuana. Instead, they must purchase it from a licensed pharmacist who receives his or her stock from a limited number of state-sanctioned producers.

AAC the Palliative Use of Marijuana; HB 5389, PA 12-55

Protecting Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Public roads are not just for cars and trucks. They are for everyone, including vulnerable users like pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians, road workers and others. In the past, there was sometimes no penalty for a motorist who hit and injured such a vulnerable user. Now there will be a fine of at least \$1,000, and possible additional penalties depending on the circumstance.

AAC the Penalty for Causing Harm to a Vulnerable User of a Public Way; SB 111

"Move Over" for Emergency Vehicles

Whenever you pass a vehicle with flashing lights on the side of the road, move over a lane and give them some space if you can. If there is more than one lane on your side of the road, the law now requires that you do so. Police officers, fire fighters, EMTs and tow truck drivers put themselves in a dangerous position every time they stop to help someone. We should all be mindful to keep them safe and give them some space.

AAC the "Move Over" Law; HB 5094, PA 12-19

Peace of Mind for Injured Patients

After a personal injury, especially if a lawsuit is involved, many things seem troubling and uncertain. We passed a bill this year to ensure injured patients quickly get some information they can rely on. After a patient's attorney provides a "letter of protection" promising that the patient will pay their medical bills—either through a settlement or directly—doctors and physical therapists will be required to say right away if they'll provide treatment and how much a diagnosis will cost.

AAC Letters of Protection; SB 99, PA 12-14

Tracking Violent Perpetrators

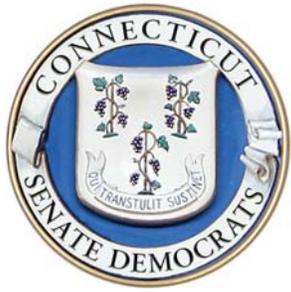
In order to protect victims of family violence, the legislature passed a bill that authorizes the state's Judicial Branch to resume the GPS pilot program in Bridgeport, Danielson and Hartford and also expand it to additional districts. The system alerts the police and victims when a perpetrator is within a certain distance.

AA Implementing Provisions of the State Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2012; HB 6001, PA 12-1

Sexual Assault Forensic Exams

Connecticut's Office of Victim Services runs an on-call Sexual Assault Forensic Exam program in which specially trained nurses are available to provide timely, compassionate, and patient-centered services to victims of sexual assault. The cost of these exams is free to both the victim and the health care facility in which the exam took place. This bill extends these no-charge provisions to any medical forensic assessment interviews performed.

AA Implementing Provisions of the State Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2012; HB 6001, PA 12-1



Senate & House passed and signed by governor

S Senate passed

H House passed

V Vetoed by governor

Liquor Law Reform

Sunday Sales

No longer do people in Connecticut have to drive across the border to purchase alcohol on Sundays and summer holidays. This long-awaited pro-consumer bill represents the most dramatic reform of Connecticut's liquor statutes since Prohibition. The new law:

- Allows for the sale of alcohol on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., which enables stores in Connecticut to open earlier than in Massachusetts.
- Increases the number of stores a package store owner can own from two to three.
- Maintains minimum pricing rules, but allows package store owners to choose one item a month to sell at a 10 percent discount.
- Establishes a 15-member task force to study other liquor reform proposals, such as a medallion system for package store owners and allowing quantity discounts.
- Allows package stores to offer fresh fruit used in the preparation of mixed drinks and to sell cheese and crackers and olives.

AAC Competitive Alcohol Liquor Pricing and Hours of Operation for Permittees; HB 5021, PA 12-17

Caring for Our Veterans

A Second Chance for Veterans

Military service is hard, especially for those who experience the stresses of a combat zone. For some, transitioning back into civilian life can prove even more difficult. In making this adjustment, veterans occasionally run afoul of the law. A measure approved this year will afford these veterans a second chance to participate in pretrial diversionary programs rather than go to prison if they commit a non-violent offense. The bill will also broaden veterans' eligibility for the state's diversionary program for people with psychiatric disabilities and the pretrial drug education program.

AAC Services for Veterans in Pretrial Diversionary Programs; SB 114, PA 12-42

Punishing Desecration of War Memorials

Over the course of our nation's history, millions of citizens have taken up arms in the defense of American democracy and civil liberties. As a people, we erect monuments to these soldiers and their sacrifices. When someone desecrates a war memorial, they disrespect our veterans and all they fought for. To deter a recent rash of this kind of vandalism, we imposed strict new penalties this year, including fines of up to \$5,000.

AAC Desecration of War or Veterans' Memorials; SB 198, PA 12-38



Expanding & Protecting the Rights of Voters

Fighting Back in the Wake of *Citizens United*

When the U.S. Supreme Court opened the floodgates to unlimited campaign contributions from corporations in the 2010 *Citizens United* case, Connecticut responded swiftly by creating legislation to set disclosure rules for independent expenditures. The bill strengthens those disclosure rules and helps ensure transparency and accountability in our elections. It also:

- States that if corporate and organizational entities participate in campaign communications and advertising, they must be very clear about who is paying for the ad, including billboard and online advertising. That includes disclosure of all unrestricted individual donors who give \$1,000 or more.
- Protects shareholders by requiring corporations to obtain authorization from boards of directors before making political expenditures of \$4,000 or more. The corporation and other entities must disclose the nature of these expenditures to shareholders, members or donors.
- Allows military personnel serving overseas to send in their absentee ballot via fax or e-mail, thereby streamlining and speeding up the process for members of the Armed Forces.

S H V *AAC Changes to the Public Financing Act and Other Election Laws*; HB 5556, PA 12-117

Voter Registration

In Connecticut, where only one in three eligible voters is registered to vote, this bill will boost voter participation and increase access to democracy for all. This legislation allows Election Day voter registration and creates a secure online voter registration system for eligible voters. With this law, Connecticut joins 11 other states that allow online voter registration and 10 that have Election Day registration laws. The top four states for voter turnout in 2004 and 2008—Minnesota, Wisconsin, Maine and New Hampshire—all allow for Election Day registration, further evidence that these reforms will help more people cast ballots in the future. Research shows that online voter registration not only makes it easier for people to vote in elections, it can save taxpayers money. In Maricopa County in Arizona, the cost to process a registration by paper is 83 cents, but the cost to process a registration online is just three cents.

✓ *AAC Voting Rights*; HB 5024, PA 12-56

Early Voting and No-Excuse Absentee Ballots

This historic resolution sets into motion the process of amending the state Constitution to remove restrictions on absentee voting, thus making it easier for all citizens to vote. The resolution is an early step in a long process that would eliminate barriers to absentee ballot voting, thus paving the way for consideration of progressive reforms such as early voting and no-excuse absentee ballot voting. The House and Senate must pass the resolution again next year before it can go on the ballot as a question to voters in Connecticut. The earliest it could go on the ballot is 2014.

✓ *Resolution Proposing An Amendment to the State Constitution to Grant Increased Authority to the General Assembly Regarding Election Administration*; HJ 2, PA 12-1

Absentee Ballots for the Permanently Disabled

Citizens with a permanent disability shouldn't have to overcome additional obstacles just to exercise their right to vote. The bill will remove barriers that make it more difficult for permanently disabled people to participate in the democratic process. Under the bill, citizens who have permanent absentee ballot status due to a permanent disability will automatically receive an absentee ballot in the mail, rather than a ballot application, for each election, primary or referendum. The bill also requires the electors to return a notice annually so the registrar of voters can verify their status.

✓ *AAC Permanent Absentee Ballot Status for the Permanently Disabled*; SB 214, PA 12-57

✓ Senate & House passed and signed by governor

S Senate passed

H House passed

V Vetoed by governor



Senate & House passed and signed by governor

S Senate passed

H House passed

V Vetoed by governor

Primary Polling Places

The cost of keeping numerous polling places open for a primary election that is not hotly contested can be very expensive for municipalities. This bill authorizes towns to reduce the number of polling places for a primary and the number of moderators, provided there is at least one moderator per polling place. This move can save municipalities a significant amount of money. The bill also contains a provision that allows a candidate to object to the change in location of a polling place. If a candidate objects at least 30 days before the primary, the polling place remains the same as for the election.

S H V *AAC Primary Polling Places*; SB 218, PA 12-73

Putting State Regulations Online

For anyone who has ever tried unsuccessfully to find a state regulation online, those days will soon be over. This bill requires state agencies to post regulations online, rather than publish them in the Connecticut Law Journal. The legislation will make it easier for people to look up state regulations, policy manuals and guidance documents, all of which will be available on the Secretary of the State's website and the website of the regulating agency. Finally, the bill creates a task force to develop a plan for posting regulations online

AA Transitioning the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies to an Online Format; SB 27, PA 12-92

Environment

Coastal Management Act

This comprehensive coastal management bill arose from concerns raised after last year's Tropical Storm Irene pummeled our coast, wreaking havoc across the state in the form of severe flooding and damage to homes and businesses. This bill will preserve and protect our shoreline in the face of growing weather threats, while at the same time respecting the rights of property owners.

- The bill creates a framework to address concerns from rising sea levels in Long Island Sound, increased coastal flooding and severe erosion.
- It specifies that municipal planning efforts should seek to minimize public spending on "armoring," or building of sea walls, to protect new development.
- The legislation allows for "structural solutions" like sea walls as a last resort and only to protect infrastructural facilities, cemeteries or burial grounds and existing inhabited structures, such as houses.

AAC the Coastal Management Act and Shoreline Flood and Erosion Control Structures; SB 376, PA 12-101

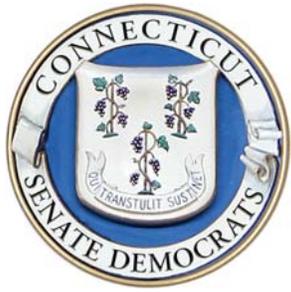
Sewage Spills

Too often, families arrive at the beach or the lake only to find a posted sign warning of unclean water. This bill lets people check the status of bodies of water before they head out for the day. Under this legislation, the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection must post on its website notification of sewage spills that contaminate rivers and other bodies of water, including Long Island Sound.

According to the legislation:

- DEEP has until July 1, 2013 to post a map showing the locations where sewer overflows are likely to occur after a major storm.
- DEEP has until July 1, 2014 to post online notification of sewage spills that occurred but were not anticipated, and of state waters that have chronic and persistent sewage contamination that poses a public health threat.
- The commissioner of DEEP must consult with the public health commissioner, sewage treatment plant or collection system operator, and state and local environmental and health agencies when developing a sewage spill notice.

AAC the Public's Right to Know of a Sewage Spill; SB 88, PA 12-11



Senate & House passed and signed by governor

Senate passed

House passed

Vetoed by governor

Mercury Thermostat Recycling Program

The bill requires mercury thermostat manufacturers to create a collection and recycling program for mercury thermostats by April 1, 2013. Manufacturers can do this individually or collaboratively. The bill requires manufacturers to provide collection sites with containers and information about proper mercury thermostat management, and allows them to charge such sites a one-time administrative fee.

AA Requiring the Establishment of Manufacturer Mercury Thermostat Collection and Recycling Programs; SB 350, PA 12-54

Campground Fees

For families who make it a summer tradition to pack up and head for the beachside campgrounds at Hammonasset and Rocky Neck state parks, this bill will help maximize that experience. The bill would allow families to camp for an extended period in two shoreline state parks if they leave the campground for five days after every three weeks and if the sites are vacant on a first come, first served basis. The bill would also allow for five percent of the available campsites to be leased continuously for the entire summer without limitations. The only parks affected are Hammonasset State Park and Rocky Neck State Park, the state's only shoreline parks with camping.

AAC Campground Reservations at Certain State Parks; SB 85, PA 12-98

Pet Lemon Law

When a family discovers that a newly adopted puppy or kitten is very sick and needs costly treatment, it can be heartbreaking. But it can be even more heartbreaking to seek reimbursement for those expensive medical bills and have to turn the animal back over to the pet shop. This bill makes changes to the so-called "Pet Lemon Law," so that a person can seek reimbursement for the cost of getting care for a sick cat or dog adopted from a pet shop. However, unlike the current law, the revised law would not require the pet owner to return the cat or dog to the pet store in exchange for reimbursement. Pet owners can be reimbursed for up to \$500 in veterinary costs related to an animal's illness or congenital defect, upon presentation of the veterinarian's certificate when the new law goes into effect.

AAC Pet Shops and Consumer Reimbursement for Certain Veterinary Expenses; HB 5409, PA 12-105

Animal Control Officer Training

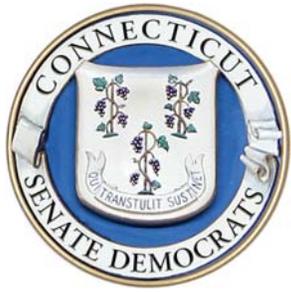
Sometimes rescued animals don't receive the care they need at the pound, because the animal control officer does not have proper training. This bill arises from the fact that municipal animal control officers have no required training or standards. The bill will require new animal control officers who start on or after July 1, 2012, to complete at least 80 hours of initial training. It requires all animal control officers to complete at least six hours of continuing education every year. The bill also creates a voucher system so that animal control officers can get cats and dogs vaccinated and sterilized by a veterinarian before they are adopted. Current law requires people who adopt an unsprayed or unneutered dog or cat to pay \$45 for a voucher to get the animal sterilized by a veterinarian. The new bill simply extends that voucher offer to animal control officers.

AAC the Payment Procedure for the Sterilization and Vaccination of Certain Dogs and Cats and Providing for Animal Control Officer Training; HB 5446, PA 12-108

Mattress Stewardship Program

Connecticut currently disposes of more than 350,000 mattresses at a municipal cost of more than \$1.2 million. The bill establishes a mattress stewardship program for managing discarded mattresses. The legislation would require mattress manufacturers to form a council and to establish a program for disposal and, when possible, recycling of mattresses. The program must be approved by the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

AA Establishing a Mattress Stewardship Program; SB 89



Senate & House passed and signed by governor

S Senate passed

H House passed

V Vetoed by governor

Worker & Family Protections

Family & Medical Leave

This legislation provides Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) benefits to the approximately 25,000 paraprofessionals at work in Connecticut schools assisting special needs students and teachers. Under the FMLA, employees who work at least 1250 hours per year are eligible for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave every two years to address a personal or family medical need, ensuring his or her position will be held for the duration. The legislation provides FMLA benefits for paraprofessionals whose full-time work amounts to only 950 hours per year because they aren't credited for school vacations, holidays, or snow days.

AAC Family and Medical Leave Benefits for Certain Municipal Employees; SB 150, PA 12-43

Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund

Provisions of this bill allow the state's Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund to carry a larger balance beginning in 2013. Unemployment benefits are paid exclusively from this fund so it can be quickly depleted during recessionary periods. This could cause employers—the ones who bankroll the fund in the first place—to incur additional costs.

AAC An Increase in the Maximum Allowable Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund Balance; SB 258, PA 12-46

Extending Rights to Caregivers

This legislation ensures the rights of and provides an opportunity for child care providers and personal care assistants to organize and enter into collective bargaining agreements with the state. These workers, most of them women, do some of the most demanding work imaginable day after day, and yet have so far been denied the right to collective bargaining—a right ordinarily extended to workers nationwide. This legislation addresses that inequity and provides options for these caregivers and a voice in shaping not only their future, but the future of home health care services in our state.

An Act Creating a Process for Family Child Care Providers and Personal Care Attendants to Collectively Bargain with the State; HB 5312, PA 12-33

DCF and Foster Families

In an effort to maintain contact with a child who has been placed with a foster family, and in order to promote the child's physical, educational, moral and emotional development, Connecticut now requires the state Department of Children and Families (DCF) to visit every foster home at least once every 60 days.

AAC Children and the Department of Children and Families; SB 294, PA 12-58

Maintaining Sibling Relationships While In Foster Care

Though it tries to keep brothers and sisters together in foster care, the state Department of Families and Children cannot always do so. In order to maintain the last family relationship that many siblings have, the legislature passed a bill this spring requiring siblings in DCF care to see each other at least once a week if they live within 50 miles of each other.

AAC Sibling Visitation for Children in the Care and Custody of the Commissioner of Children and Families; SB 156, PA 12-71



Senate & House passed and signed by governor

Senate passed

House passed

Vetoed by governor

A Focus on Seniors

Alzheimer Respite Care Program

In Connecticut there are more than 70,000 Alzheimer's patients cared for informally by some 170,000 caregivers, usually from among their family members. It is estimated they provide uncompensated care valued at more than \$2.3 billion. This bill increases the number of those unpaid caregivers who would be eligible to participate in the state's Alzheimer Respite Care Program.

Expanding the pool of eligible caregivers rewards more of those who save the state untold costs by caring for loved ones at home, and provides the caregiver a temporary reprieve they need occasionally to reduce stress and stay healthy enough to continue providing care for a loved one.

AAC Increasing Eligibility for the Alzheimer Respite Care Program; SB 143

'Aging in Place'

We established a 15-member task force to report to the General Assembly by January 1, 2013. This task force will map out a strategy to help shift our culture toward widespread home care, where most seniors undeniably prefer to be, and then ensure the home care available is safe and affordable. It's been said 65 percent of Connecticut's Medicaid expenses are for long-term care for only about half the state's elderly Medicaid recipients, while 35 percent is spent on home and community-based services for the other half. That makes it quite clear that if Connecticut wants to stretch every dollar it spends to care for the elderly, it will invest in lower-cost care and services delivered to where the elderly live, while they are 'aging in place.'

An Act Establishing a Task Force to Study 'Aging in Place'; SB 138, PA 12-6

Financial Stability of Nursing Homes and Residential Communities

This initiative was a priority of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman because it empowers nursing home residents, potential residents and their families with information about the facilities' placement into receivership or application for bankruptcy. There is already an abundance of uncertainty surrounding a move into a managed residential community—the fiscal health of the institution should not compound a family's discomfort.

This legislation provides transparency so Connecticut families can make informed choices about whether to transition into managed care. Individuals should have access to all relevant information about the financial wherewithal of the company they plan to do business with, especially when making an important decision that may entail spending down accumulated assets or selling a cherished family home.

AAC Notification of Financial Stability of Nursing Home Facilities and Managed Residential Communities to Patients and Residents; SB 139, PA 12-6



Senate & House passed and signed by governor

S Senate passed

H House passed

V Vetoed by governor

Insurance Reforms

Insurance Coverage for Birth-to-Three

The Birth-to-Three program helps families meet the developmental and health-related needs of their young children who have delays or disabilities. First, it maintains consistent state funding to maximize matching federal funds and second, it allows the state to count all Birth-to-Three insurance revenue toward state funding of the program, which in turn helps the state avoid federal financial penalty.

Each year the state receives approximately \$4 million from the federal government to help support Birth-to-Three initiatives. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), through which the funding is received, requires annual 'maintenance of effort' assurance in order to receive this federal funding. Going forward, adding insurance revenue to the definition of 'state and local funds' will contribute to Connecticut's successful 'maintenance of effort.'

AAC Insurance Coverage for the Birth-to-Three Program; SB 205, PA 12-44

Health Care for Uninsured Children

We established a special task force to study the possibilities of and prospects for additional programs—state, private or hybrid—to provide health care to uninsured children in Connecticut. The task force is charged with an examination of programs in other states that provide health care or health insurance coverage for uninsured children to explore whether or not those programs might work in Connecticut.

The task force will be comprised of 13 members and administered by the staff of the legislature's Public Health Committee. The task force must submit a report about its findings as well as any and all recommendations to the Public Health Committee and Insurance and Real Estate Committee by January 1, 2013. Those committees would then be expected to codify recommendations into legislation to be considered in the 2013 Regular Session.

S *AAC A Task Force to Study Health Care for Uninsured Children*; SB 408

Deductibles and Guidelines for Colonoscopies

This legislation was prompted by numerous consumer complaints regarding denied coverage and, as a result, unexpected out-of-pocket expenses for colonoscopies. It seems many policies provide no co-pay or deductible if nothing is found during a screening, but some charges are allowed if a polyp is found and removed during the suddenly upgraded procedure.

This bill bars insurers from charging a deductible for procedures a physician initially undertakes as a colorectal cancer screening colonoscopy. The American Cancer Society testified in support of this bill, saying patients should be allowed to benefit from cancer screenings without thought or regard for health insurance coverage. Its representative also said the Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires colorectal cancer screening exams be covered with no cost to the patient with only a few exceptions.

AAC Deductibles and Guidelines for Colonoscopies; SB 98, PA 12-190

Screening for Newborn Infants

Babies with Critical Congenital Heart Disease are at significant risk for death or disability if their condition isn't diagnosed soon after birth. Now, beginning January 1, 2013, Connecticut will require all health care institutions caring for newborn infants to administer a simple, painless test that can detect some congenital heart defects.

AAC Critical Congenital Heart Disease Screening for Newborn Infants; SB 56, PA 12-13



- Senate & House passed and signed by governor
- Senate passed
- House passed
- Vetoed by governor

Breastfeeding Women and Jury Duty

Women who breastfeed their newborn babies are engaged in a vitally important routine that pays untold health benefits. So it's important that, at least for their first year of life, their daily ritual not be disturbed. The legislature passed a bill requiring the Judicial Branch to inform lactating mothers (by way of a website notification) that they can apply for a 10-month delay in jury duty, just like any other state resident. Judicial officials will also be briefed about the need to provide private lactation rooms for breastfeeding moms.

- AAC Jury Duty for Breastfeeding Mothers*; SB 194, PA 12-51

Telemedicine Services

Telemedicine is an emerging, interactive means by which medical diagnosis, care, treatment and monitoring can take place using audio, video and/or data communication transmission. Connecticut's Healthcare Advocate is a proponent of this technology, which she said can yield significant cost savings yet effective care for homebound, rural and other patients who find it difficult to visit a doctor in a traditional setting.

This bill compels the state Insurance Commissioner to consult with the Commissioner of Public Health and study telemedicine services provided in Connecticut and elsewhere to gauge the benefits of and obstacles to state-wide implementation of such services. Their study will also explore the extent to which these services are covered by health insurance policies or health benefit plans.

- AAC A study of Telemedicine Services*; SB 13

Other Important Legislation

Fighting Fraudulent Veterans "Charities"

Our military veterans make great sacrifices to defend our freedoms. In recognition of their service, numerous charitable organizations collect donations and offer assistance to our military veterans. Sadly, in recent years we have noticed a disturbing trend—fake veterans' charities have formed to scam donors out of their money. We took action to criminalize this despicable behavior this year. We also directed Department of Veterans Affairs to put together a list of good, reliable veterans' charities to help give donors peace of mind.

- AAC Fundraising By Veterans' Organizations*; HB 5298, PA 12-195

Investing in Renewable Energy for Businesses

The state has made a strong commitment in recent years to investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency. The legislature passed a bill strengthening that commitment by establishing a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program for commercial property. This program will help to reduce energy costs for businesses and demand for energy for the entire state.

- AA Implementing Certain Provisions Concerning Government Administration*; SB 501; PA 12-2

Fairness in Medical Malpractice Law

A few years ago, the legislature adopted medical malpractice tort reform in an effort to reduce the number of frivolous lawsuits filed against doctors and other medical professionals. Part of this law required a medical expert's supporting testimony, known as a "certificate of merit," for a malpractice suit to move forward. Time has shown that requiring these certificates to come from a medical expert with the exact same expertise as the individual being sued has had a chilling effect on many legitimate lawsuits. A bill this year would have allowed courts to use their judgment to accept certificates from a wider array of medical professionals with the necessary expertise to form a good faith belief.

- AAC Certificates of Merit*; SB 243



- Senate & House passed and signed by governor
- Senate passed
- House passed
- Vetoed by governor

Ensuring Accurate Eyewitness IDs

Most people who watch police dramas on television will be familiar with the concept of a police lineup. Possible suspects of a crime (or photos of individuals) are shown to a witness, who is then asked to identify the suspect. Recent research has shown that when a witness is shown individuals or photos sequentially, rather than all at once, their identifications are much more accurate. We passed a law this year to make this standard procedure in police stations all across Connecticut. We hope it will help to prevent future mistaken identifications—one of the most common elements in wrongful convictions.

- AAC Eyewitness Identification Procedures*; HB 5501, PA 12-111

Revitalizing Urban Neighborhoods

Home ownership is not just the American Dream, it is also the glue that binds a great community together. When people own their own home, or live in the same building they also rent to tenants, they become committed to that place and to their neighborhood like never before. To help revitalize struggling urban neighborhoods, we created a pilot program this year that will provide financing directly to individuals in urban neighborhoods for assistance acquiring property or making renovations to residential buildings. It will place an emphasis on 1-4 family homes that are currently for sale, vacant, deteriorated, or in foreclosure.

- AA Implementing Provisions of the State Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2012*; HB 6001, PA 12-1