

HELPFUL RESOURCES

JOB RESOURCES

▶ WHERE TO TURN WHEN UNEMPLOYED

The United Way of Connecticut has produced a document titled "Where to Turn in Connecticut When You Become Unemployed." It contains information regarding unemployment insurance, medical benefits, legal assistance and help with job searches and money management. Contact my office at 1-800-842-1420 to receive this helpful publication.



▶ CT JOB CENTRAL

An online job bank where individuals can search for jobs as well as upload their resume and access various employment-related information. 1-866-268-6206 or www.jobcentral.org/ct

FOR SENIORS

▶ CHOICES PROGRAM

The CHOICES Program provides information to persons age 60 and older. Currently, CHOICES is assisting seniors who need help enrolling in Medicare Part D. 1-800-994-9422

ENERGY ASSISTANCE & CONSERVATION

▶ FURNACE UPGRADES

The Energy Conservation Loan Program provides low-or no-interest loans for energy-efficient upgrades including furnaces and boilers, thermal windows and doors and insulation. 860-233-5165 ext. 2019 or 2023; www.chif.org

RESOURCES FOR FORECLOSURE RELIEF

▶ STATE FORECLOSURE MEDIATION PROGRAM

The Connecticut Judicial Branch provides foreclosure mediation in order to help homeowners and lenders reach a mutually agreeable resolution that aims to avoid home foreclosure. For more information, visit the Judicial Branch's Foreclosure Mediation Program Web site. www.jud.ct.gov/foreclosure



Dear Neighbor:

These are unprecedented times: families are struggling, yet gridlock in Washington ensures that Congress gets nothing done. It's a different story in Connecticut; we put partisan differences aside and passed an historic Jobs Bill. The legislation will help create thousands of jobs by reducing red tape, cutting taxes for small businesses and investing in training and education.

Together, we're working to strengthen Connecticut's economy, balance the budget, and show Washington that cooperation doesn't have to be a bad word.

This newsletter details some of the initiatives we've taken to help our economy and improve your quality of life. Please don't hesitate to contact my office with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Eric Coleman
State Senator



Fighting for Jobs & the Economy

State Senator

Eric D. Coleman

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Hartford,
Bloomfield
& Windsor

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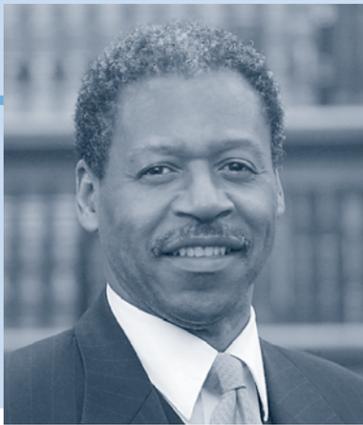
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It was an honor and my great pleasure to spend some time with the Reverend Jesse Jackson, Sr. when he visited Hartford in April to meet with members of the legislative Black and Puerto Rican Caucus.

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WINTER 2011



STATE SENATOR **Eric D. Coleman**

Serving Bloomfield, Hartford & Windsor

FOR OUR STATE & OUR COMMUNITY

LEGISLATIVE SUCCESS

Cutting Your Electric Bill

When was the last time you had a monthly bill reduced? Well, this year the state was able to eliminate the surcharge on CL&P electric bills that will save the average ratepayer as much as \$5 every month.

Cracking Down on Online Bullying

Bullying has become a national concern, leading in the worst cases to bullied students committing suicide. Connecticut already has a strong anti-bullying law, but we reinforced it this year with two key provisions: we've added electronic "cyberbullying" to the list of prohibited activities, and we've expanded the number of mandatory school reporters and the responsibilities of school districts to include bullying incidents that occur off school grounds. Bullying has expanded into the electronic world of social media, and Connecticut is keeping pace in protecting its younger citizens.

Equal Education for All

Recognizing that every student has a right to an equal education, the legislature passed a new law that focuses on school readiness—particularly in underachieving districts—by calling for new math and reading programs specific to students in Pre-K through 4th grade. The law also permits under-performing districts to expand the length of each school day and to increase the overall number of school days as desired.



Learning From Two Extreme Storms

Connecticut was hit hard with two extreme storms nine weeks apart. In both instances hundreds of thousands of households lost power, most for several days, and many for more than a week. The large number of lengthy outages across the state, primarily in CL&P coverage areas, has led to many questions about this utility's ability to prepare for and manage these drastic situations. CL&P is now under heavy scrutiny and action will be taken by the legislature to address their failure. In a series of post-storm hearings, we listened to suggestions from the public and local officials based on their experiences. We crafted their ideas into recommendations that have now been shared with the governor's Two Storm Panel.

GROWING JOBS

Jobs are the number one issue facing Connecticut today. We took action in the legislature this year to put more people back to work and get our economy growing again. Unlike the partisan gridlock in Washington, both parties came together in Hartford to pass a Jobs Bill of common sense improvements. We focused on small businesses, **cut the business entity tax in half** and **streamlined state regulations**. Other highlights of the bill include:



On the Bloomfield Town Green after the legislative session talking about supporting small businesses and growing jobs.

- ▶ **Helping small businesses with hiring**—We established a monthly hiring tax credit that increases when businesses hire unemployed, disabled or veteran workers. We also made it easier for businesses to hire new workers for on-the-job training.
- ▶ **Investing in start-ups**—At a time when many banks aren't lending, we invested in new start-up companies by building business incubators and expanding the angel investor tax credit.
- ▶ **Building a workforce of the future**—We will recruit students for vo-tech, agri-science and tech education by promoting their benefits with middle school parents and local boards of education. We'll also establish manufacturing technology programs at three community colleges.
- ▶ **Investing in infrastructure**—Paved the way for economic development zones at Connecticut's general aviation airports, allocated funds for shovel-ready bridge projects, and passed major reforms to lower energy costs and increase energy efficiency.

In separate legislation, we rebuilt the UConn Health Center, attracting bioscience leader Jackson Laboratory to build a \$1.1 billion research facility nearby. This will create 900 construction positions and up to 6,000 long-term jobs.

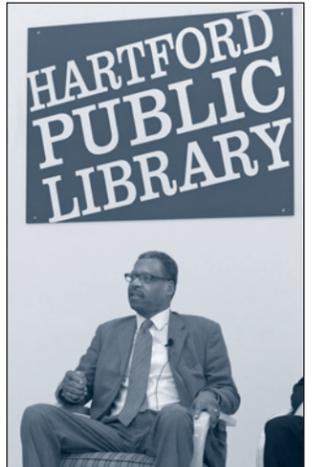
Reducing Chronic Unemployment

I am also pleased to say the Jobs Bill includes a program that targets chronic unemployment in Connecticut's urban centers. The "STEP-Up" program will help qualified urban small businesses to hire individuals living at or below 250 percent of the poverty level. It will provide them with on-the-job training, paying a portion of these new employee's salaries over the course of six months.

Making Cuts While Protecting Municipal Aid

Connecticut's two-year budget includes more than \$1 billion in spending cuts and \$1.6 billion in labor concessions from state employees. It doesn't rely on borrowing or fiscal gimmicks to fund operating expenses, it fully funds the state's pension obligations, and it remains under the state spending cap. **At the same time, the budget protects state levels of municipal aid, which helps towns and cities avoid raising local property taxes.**

As a result, I've ensured that **Bloomfield, Hartford and Windsor** receive their fair share of state funding for education, roads and much more.



Loans for Local Businesses



Small businesses are the greatest job creators in our economy, and when they seek to expand, they usually require credit to do so. Sadly, many banks these days are not lending to small businesses in the aftermath of the financial crisis. To provide these companies with another source of credit, I worked to allocate \$1 million for a North Hartford Community Revolving Loan Program. When small businesses have the opportunity to grow, so will our local economy.

MDC Clean Water Project

The water and sewer system that serves Hartford, Windsor and other area towns was first developed in the 1850's. This outdated infrastructure does not meet 21st century needs, and sometimes results in basement backups and sewage backflow into streets and waterways during major storms. To correct these problems, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) is now managing a \$1 billion renovation of the sewer system to be completed in 2020. I'm pleased that the MDC was able to acquire low-interest state loans for the project this year and that the MDC has committed to goals for hiring local residents to work on the project.

Fairer Taxes for Afghanistan Veterans

Maybe you have a family member or a friend who is serving or has served in the armed forces in Afghanistan. We passed a law that now requires cities and towns to waive the interest on property taxes owed by soldiers serving in Afghanistan. Armed forces members serving in other parts of the Middle East are also eligible for this waiver on property tax interest.

