

## Promoting the Success of Small, Minority-Owned Businesses

Since the Great Recession, Connecticut began offering programs that provide funding and other assistance to small businesses. This year I championed a new law to ensure that small, minority-owned businesses receive funding through programs to maintain their growth and success in our underserved communities. Specifically, this law establishes new loan funds for eligible small, minority-owned businesses. The Department of Economic and Community Development will also be required to support the growth of minority-owned businesses.

## A Financially Secure Retirement

Everyone deserves a financially secure retirement, yet far too many Connecticut residents are approaching retirement without adequate savings. Many middle-income Connecticut workers do not have employer-sponsored retirement plans and are most in need of income beyond Social Security.



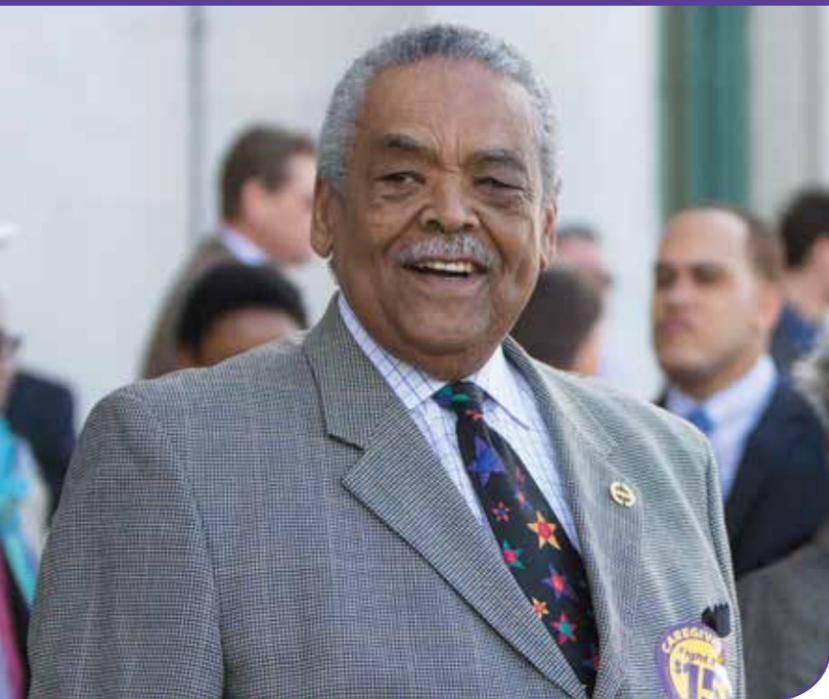
This year, I led passage of a law that creates a program in which employees would make voluntary contributions to a professionally managed retirement fund. All covered workers will be provided the chance to enroll in a retirement savings program. Employers would not bear any fiduciary responsibility and would not be required to pay administrative fees. The program is designed to be self-sustaining and low-risk so that retirees can have peace of mind and enjoy their golden years.

YOUR STATE SENATOR

Representing Bridgeport & Stratford

# ED GOMES

## FIGHTING FOR OUR COMMUNITY



Legislative Office Building, Room 3800, Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Capitol: **860-240-0509** or **1-800-842-1420**

Web: [www.SenatorGomes.cga.ct.gov](http://www.SenatorGomes.cga.ct.gov)

Facebook YouTube Flickr

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
HARTFORD CT  
PERMIT NO. 3937

# Fighting for Our Community

## EXPANDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

I am always working to make our justice system more fair, equitable and just. This year, Connecticut “banned the box” and removed the criminal history question from job applications which will give more people access to employment.

I also helped lead the effort to continue reforming the system for both juveniles and adults. Courts can no longer lock up youth before trial unless they committed a new crime or are a risk to public safety. This reform is expected to cut the number of incarcerated juveniles in half. In addition, youth will now receive more pre-trial programs such as substance abuse treatment and anger management.

There will now be more oversight of family support judges that establish and enforce child and spousal support orders. The time between pre-trial appearances for juveniles will be cut in half to seven days. We also increased funding for legal services for the poor and created a task force to study unmet legal needs and the right to an attorney in civil cases.



## Placement & Training for Today's Job Openings

Too many families in Connecticut need jobs in today's economy. I championed legislation and other government initiatives that are connecting people with training and employers that need new workers today.

- ▶ Trains more software developers, programmers and other applicants for in demand tech jobs through apprenticeship programs
- ▶ Invests in night classes at vo-tech schools for high school students and adults looking to change careers or learn new job skills in areas like plumbing, electrical, tech support, and other skilled trades
- ▶ Coordinates community colleges and local employers to match direct job needs in manufacturing

These initiatives will help connect Connecticut residents with good-paying middle-class jobs in today's economy.



At an apprenticeship fair I hosted with the building trades at the Bridgeport Public Library where Bridgeporters had the opportunity to meet potential employers and learn about apprenticeship opportunities.

## Protecting Core Services

Despite a budget deficit, I worked hard to consolidate state government in a smart way in order to protect core services. We protected funding for seniors and people with disabilities,



continued a strong level of local and higher education funding, maintained a commitment of investment in our hospitals, and dedicated state funding to every town in the state to hold down property taxes.

Town	Funding Increase	Total Funding This Year
Bridgeport	\$6.9 million (3.3%)	\$213 million
Stratford	\$629,000 (2.3%)	\$27.7 million

## Cutting Bridgeport's Car Taxes



The most frequent concern that families, seniors and small-business owners express to me is about property and car taxes. I am helping lead the charge to provide Bridgeport and other municipalities with the resources needed to limit these crippling taxes. As we move forward, the state will dedicate a portion of its sales tax revenue to cities and towns to help alleviate pressure on the property tax. Car taxes will also now be capped at 37 mills, which means a savings of 30 percent on your car tax bill given Bridgeport's current mill rate of 54.

## Supporting Veteran-Owned Small Businesses

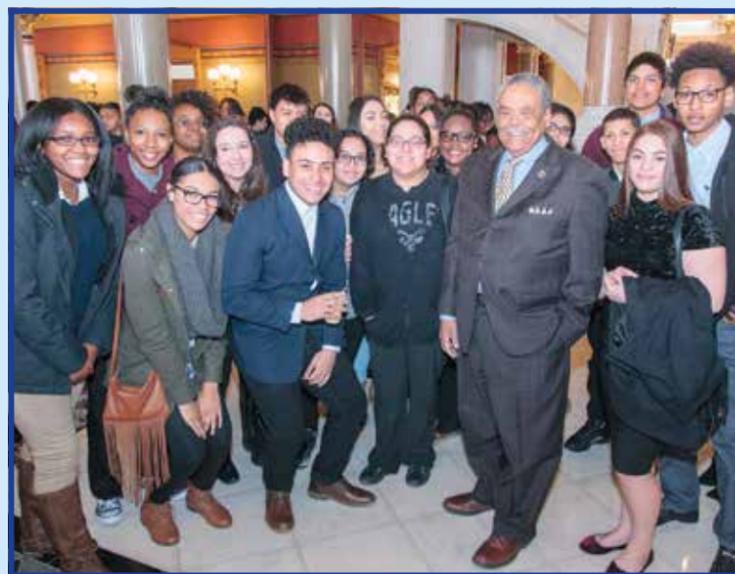


As policymakers, we must improve the lives of our veterans and ensure they earn a good living and contribute to our economy. Under a new law that I championed this year, veteran-owned small businesses will now receive additional preferences that will make it easier for veterans to start and grow businesses. This new policy is a continuation of my multi-year focus on improving the lives of our veterans and supporting them in every way possible.

***"The Chamber is grateful to Senate leadership for its support of this initiative, which is vital to our more than 40,000 veteran-owned businesses"***

Andrew S. DiSilvestro Jr., Executive VP  
CT Veterans Chamber of Commerce

## Recruiting Minority Teachers



Forty-one percent of Connecticut high school students are people of color, but only 7 percent of our teachers are, and only two percent of school administrators. This disparity has been a concern of mine and my constituents for some time—so much so that they helped me lobby for passage of a bill that will increase minority teacher recruitment and advancement efforts in Connecticut. I am happy to say that this bill passed on a unanimous and bipartisan basis this year.