Supporting Family Caregivers

Nearly 500,000 Connecticut residents act as caregivers, and many of them feel unprepared to provide the technical care needed to keep their loved ones healthy. The CARE Act, a bipartisan bill that will **help to ensure that caregivers are given follow-up care instructions** when a patient is discharged from the hospital, will also reduce costly hospital readmissions.

The CARE Act requires hospitals to:

- Provide each patient with the opportunity to designate a caregiver during the patient's admission to the hospital;
- Make reasonable attempts to notify the designated caregiver if the patient is to be discharged back to his or her home; and
- Provide the caregiver with instructions on how to perform medication management, wound care, injections or other medical tasks for the patient when the patient returns home.

Providing a Bill of Rights for Seniors in Continuing Care

Rather than moving directly from their homes to an assisted living facility or nursing home, many seniors are choosing to move to continuing-care retirement communities. Individuals choosing this option often invest their life savings in these communities with the understanding that the facility will be a wise steward of their funds. The legislature unanimously approved legislation **creating a bill of rights for residents of continuing-care retirement communities.** The legislation also allows residents to form their own council within each of these communities to establish a more effective communication system between themselves and the facility in which they live.

From your State Senator
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Legislative Update *from* Danté Bartolomeo

STANDING UP FOR STUDENTS

Keeping MxCC's Meriden Center Open

When the closings of Middlesex Community College's Meriden Center and Precision Manufacturing Institute were announced, I fought to secure the bipartisan passage of a bill to keep these schools open and prevent the Board of Regents from closing any higher education campus or manufacturing program without legislative approval.

I am proud to announce that all the hard work of Meriden's MxCC students and your legislative delegation has paid off. The Board of Regents has announced that the Meriden branch and the manufacturing program will remain open.

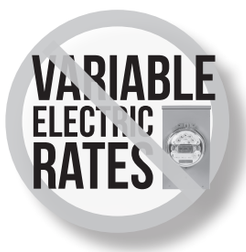
Senator Bartolomeo speaks with MxCC Students to learn more about the vital carreer advancement training programs offered at Middlesex Community College's Meriden Branch.

Supporting Veterans on Campus

We passed and the governor signed a law requiring a study to examine ways to **make Connecticut's OASIS (Operation Academic Support for Incoming Service Members) centers for veterans more effective.** There are about 6,000 veterans enrolled in Connecticut colleges and universities; veterans use the OASIS centers to meet, study, relax and talk and to gather information on federal veterans' benefits, the GI Bill, tuition waivers, disability benefits and more.

PROTECTING CONSUMERS

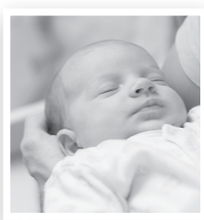
Transparency and Fairness for Electricity Pricing



Many consumers have reported that they were enticed into signing a variable-rate contract with a low "teaser" rate, only to see their bills increase significantly without warning. Electric customers deserve stable, predictable rates, whether obtained through standard offer service or from competitive offers in the private supplier marketplace.

Senate Bill 573 will **ban variable-rate residential electric contracts and ensure fixed-rate contracts** and provide consumers with stability and security.

FAMILY HEALTH CARE



Safe Sleep Practices for Infants

Every year, more than a dozen Connecticut children die needlessly due to unsafe sleep practices. With unanimous approval, the Senate passed a bill that will **educate new parents on the latest safe sleep practices** before they take their child home from the hospital.

The bill brings Connecticut in line with recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics by advising parents on safe sleep practices, including: always place babies on their backs for sleep; use a firm sleep surface covered by a fitted sheet; have the baby share the parent's room but not the parent's bed; and keep soft objects, including pillows and loose bedding, out of a baby's sleep area. These simple recommendations can help parents with their newborn and possibly save a child's life.

EDUCATION

Easing the Burden of Testing on High School Students

Many 11th-grade students are overburdened with the numerous standardized tests placed on them. In addition to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) test, many juniors also take the SAT, ACT, Advanced Placement Exams and class finals all within a window of just over a month.

The General Assembly passed a bipartisan measure to **eliminate the requirement that 11th-grade students take the SBAC test and require instead that they take a nationally recognized test** such as the SAT at no cost to the students and their families.

By providing a free college readiness exam for all of Connecticut's high school students, the state is not only saving families money, but also making college more accessible to all of our students.

Safe and Supportive Schools

I led passage of a bipartisan bill that **prohibits physically restraining students in grades K-12 as a disciplinary tool,** out of convenience, or as a substitute for a less-restrictive alternative. The legislation also prohibits school employees from secluding a child in a small, windowless space or for indefinite periods of time. Moving forward, restraint and seclusion can only be used in an emergency situation to prevent imminent injury to the student or others, and parents must be notified within 24 hours if their child has been physically restrained and/or secluded.