



## Why I voted against the State Budget

During the 2011 session of the General Assembly, legislators were confronted with yet another huge budget problem – how to close a projected deficit of \$3.2 billion in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, or almost \$950 per citizen.

Governor Malloy and legislative leaders presented a budget plan that ostensibly called for shared sacrifice in the form of tax increases, spending cuts and concessions from state employees. They argued that the fairest way to close the budget gap was to ask everyone to share the pain equally.

Unfortunately it didn't workout that way. In the end, the legislature followed its familiar path of spending more and taxing more. Consequently, taxpayers ended up taking it on the chin.

Many of you contacted me, asking that we reign in spending and downsize government, before resorting to new taxes. I tried to do just that. I worked with some of my colleagues to develop an alternative budget that identified significantly more savings without creating undue hardship on people dependent on safety net programs. Our budget eliminated some of the taxes we most opposed and fully restored the property tax credit. We presented our alternative budget to legislative leadership, but it fell on deaf ears.

The budget that was adopted did not reduce total actual spending at all. In fact, the \$40 billion state budget for the next two years actually increases spending by 2.14 percent in the first year and 2.32 percent in the second year, for a total increase of \$1 billion. This at a time when the state is literally broke.

What the budget that was adopted did include however, was the largest tax increase in the history of the state. They include the corporate tax, insurance premium tax, cigarette and tobacco products tax, the diesel tax and motor vehicle fees. Also the real estate conveyance tax, the hotel tax, the car rental tax and others including the biggest revenue producer of them all, the state personal income tax, payable on earnings retroactive back to January 1, 2011. You're going to pay even after you're gone, due to the 50 percent increase in the cremation fee.

The Governor and legislative leaders spared no effort to turn over every pebble to balance the budget. If it moves, tax it; even if it doesn't, tax it! When it came to "shared sacrifice," taxpayers took the brunt of it.

The bottom line is that this budget relies too heavily on new taxes so as to maintain every existing government institution. I believe my constituents want a smaller and more affordable state government. That's why I voted no on Governor Malloy's budget.



State Representative | Majority Whip

# Steven Mikutel

Proudly Serving Griswold, Lisbon, Plainfield and Voluntown | 45<sup>th</sup> District

[www.housedems.ct.gov/Mikutel](http://www.housedems.ct.gov/Mikutel)

Legislative Office Building  
Room 2303  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Capitol: 800.842.1902  
Home: 860.376.4615  
[www.housedems.ct.gov/Mikutel](http://www.housedems.ct.gov/Mikutel)  
E-Mail: [Steve.Mikutel@cga.ct.gov](mailto:Steve.Mikutel@cga.ct.gov)



STATE REPRESENTATIVE of the CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## Capitol Report 2011

Dear Neighbors,

The state budget crisis dominated the 2011 legislative session and made it one of the most challenging ever. I voted against the budget. My no vote was based on the belief that during tough fiscal times, everyone should be asked to sacrifice equally. That didn't happen. Taxpayers were asked to bear the brunt of things and not enough effort was made to reduce the size and cost of government.

I focused my efforts on developing a fiscally responsible budget, creating jobs and protecting you and your family from violent criminals.

This newsletter highlights some of the issues I fought for that are important to my constituents.

Thank you for the privilege of representing you at the State Capitol.

Best Wishes,



State Representative | Majority Whip

# Steven Mikutel

Proudly Serving Griswold, Lisbon, Plainfield and Voluntown | 45<sup>th</sup> District

# Steven Mikutel

Proudly Serving Griswold, Lisbon, Plainfield and Voluntown | 45<sup>th</sup> District



Rep. Mikutel questions utility executives at a public hearing held to discuss their response to Storm Irene

## Storm Irene

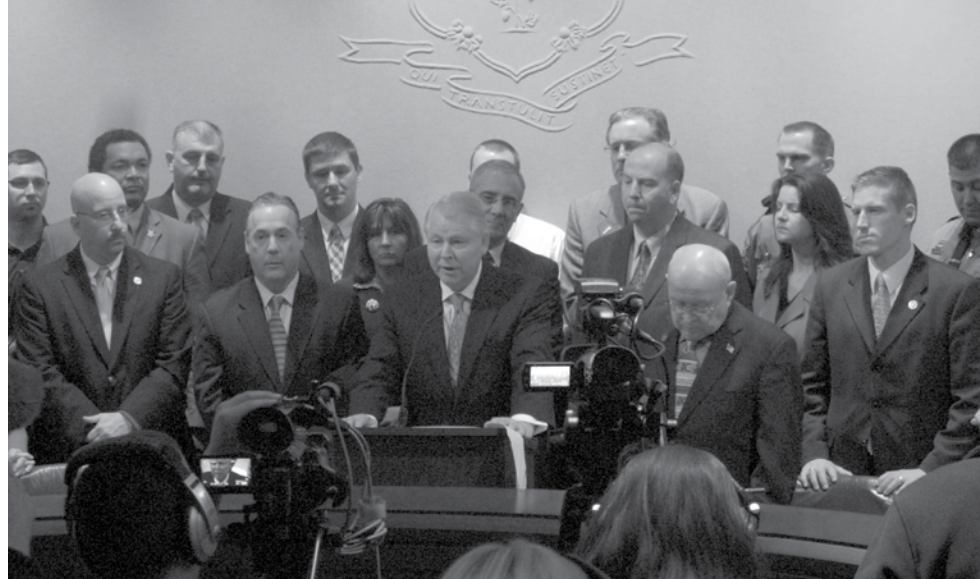
### What Did We Learn?

Recently, I participated in the legislative hearings on Connecticut's readiness and response to Tropical Storm Irene.

Utility executives, municipal elected officials, public safety officials and members of the public testified at the hearings.

Our goal was to determine why it took so long to restore power to Connecticut residents and to learn how we can be better prepared for future storms. I asked tough questions of the utility executives and I told them that my constituents deserved a stronger response.

Many of you contacted me to say how dissatisfied you were with CL&P. I encourage you to continue sharing your thoughts and suggestions with me. Your input will help me to develop action steps to make sure we protect our citizens and have utilities restore service as quickly as possible in the future.



Rep. Mikutel holds a news conference on capital punishment

## Crime and Punishment

### Seeking Justice for Murder Victims' Families

Instead of trying to fix Connecticut's broken death penalty law, some legislators sought to abolish it. I agree with Dr. Petit that the death penalty is justice for murderers. By intentionally, unlawfully taking the life of another, a murderer breaks a sacrosanct law of society and forfeits his own right to live.

I stood with Dr. Petit and led the fight to defeat the death penalty repeal effort. I also worked with my fellow legislators, police and fire officials and families of murder victims to create a workable death penalty that would streamline the appeals process. Unfortunately our proposal was not supported by legislative leadership.

It is unfortunate that our legislature prolongs the suffering of victims families by allowing convicted murderers, tried by a jury of their peers and found guilty, nearly endless and often baseless appeals, even when it is clear beyond a shadow of a doubt that they are guilty.

(Dr. William Petit's wife, Jennifer, and daughters Hayley and Michaela were brutally murdered in a 2007 Cheshire home invasion.)

## DNA Testing For a Serious Felony

I co-sponsored legislation that expands state law to require DNA samples be collected from convicted felons arrested for one of 39 felonies including rape, murder and others, before they are released from custody.

## Paid Sick Leave

The legislature enacted a law requiring the provision of paid sick leave to certain service workers. With certain exceptions, the law requires employers with 50 or more people in Connecticut to provide the service workers with paid sick leave at a rate of one hour per 40 hours worked. It applies to service workers who are paid by the hour and work in an occupation with one of 68 different job titles, such as retail clerks, home health aides, and cooks. This landmark bill will help prevent the spread of sickness at restaurants, daycare centers and within the workplace.

## Griswold Research Center to Expand

The State Bond Commission recently approved \$500,000 to fund the design and construction of a facility for mosquito, bird and plant research at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station's Griswold Research Center.

This grant will help the Griswold Center to improve agricultural productivity and environmental quality, protect plants and enhance human health and well being through research.

## Rep. Mikutel Secures \$125,000 Grant for Improvements to Slater Library

The State Bonding Commission, at my request, approved \$125,000 to fund improvements to Slater Library in Jewett City. Slater Library has been serving the people of our area for well over one hundred years. It is an important place of learning for people of all ages. This grant will help ensure that Slater Library will continue to disseminate knowledge and help people to achieve their full potential for generations to come.

## Putting People Back to Work

Creating jobs and a strong economy should be every legislator's foremost responsibility. Here are some positive steps that the legislature took.

- » Building a world class bioscience research center at the UConn Health Center. This project is expected to generate 2000 new construction jobs and 16,400 new permanent high paying jobs over the next 20 years.
- » Creation of the Connecticut Airport Authority to run Bradley Airport as an economic engine.
- » Encouraging large companies to add jobs or move to our state by authorizing financial incentives and regulatory relief.

## Getting Tough on School Bullying

In response to growing concerns over increasing acts of school bullying, we passed legislation that strengthens school bullying laws and requires all school employees to complete annual training programs dealing with the problem.

The bill makes the school principal responsible to investigate and address bullying and electronic cyber-bullying whether it occurs in or out-of-school.

## New Laws Affecting Veterans

- » Allow veteran status to be on a driver's license or identity card.
- » Provide disabled wartime veterans with free parking, admission, and boat access parking to state recreational areas.
- » Expand the waiver of property tax interest for certain armed forces members in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- » Waive the \$20 fee for one certified copy of a veteran's death certificate when requested by family.

