

The Connecticut General Assembly

House Democrats



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NEW BRITAIN LAWMAKERS LAUD BIPARTISAN BUDGET

Smalley Academy receives \$42 million in funding

New Britain lawmakers lauded a bipartisan budget to close a projected \$3.5 billion deficit over the next two years that places Connecticut in a position of fiscal stability and predictability. Senator Terry Gerratana, State Representatives Bobby Sanchez and Rick Lopes voted for a budget that invests in our economy and protects local property taxpayers while rejecting damaging cuts to higher education and ending scholarship programs.

Lengthy negotiations between Democratic and Republican legislative leaders led to this budget agreement which includes elements proposed from all caucuses, avoids drastic cuts under the governor's executive order, and mitigates municipal aid reductions that would have otherwise had a devastating effect on cities and towns.

Included in this budget is **\$42,023,700** for the Smalley Academy school construction project that the New Britain delegation strongly advocated for throughout this year.

"I am pleased this budget agreement includes critical construction funding to Smalley Academy," Rep. Sanchez said. "Our delegation prides itself in working hard in Hartford to advance projects and priorities important to our constituents. It is important that we recognize the challenges we faced during this budget crisis and how we were able to limit cuts to towns while holding Alliance Districts harmless. I thank each of my colleagues for their hard work and commitment."

"The Legislature took a significant step Thursday toward addressing the state's fiscal challenges by passing a budget that invests in our economy, our schools and our communities. This bipartisan spending plan secures \$42 million in funding for the renovation of Smalley Academy. This money will allow the academy to construct a modern educational facility that fosters higher learning and creates an environment that challenges students to further their studies," said Rep. Lopes.

"Addressing inequities in education funding has always been and continues to be a priority for me. I'm glad we were able to include in this bipartisan budget, a new formula that will shift funding to towns like New Britain. Securing \$42 million in funding Smalley Academy is really something to be proud of. It

wasn't easy, but Democrats and Republicans were able to come together and do what's right for this state," **Sen. Gerratana** said.

There are numerous important long-term structural changes that provide more predictability going forward, and will help reduce our long-standing debt. By implementing spending and bonding caps and placing limits on how much the state can borrow annually, Connecticut can begin to address its fiscal challenges. Not only does this bipartisan budget plan prevent sales and income taxes from increasing, but it creates a new state education funding formula that is based on need.

This bipartisan budget also:

- Restores funding for scholarships for low- and middle-income students;
- Maintains the property tax credit of \$200 for seniors and families with dependents;
- Continues investments in job creation programs such as the Small Business Express, Manufacturing Assistance, Innovation Places and Brownfield Remediation;
- Protects our community hospitals by maximizing federal funds.

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