

## 2016 general election candidates for one of CT's seats in the US Senate

| <i>candidate</i>   | <i>party</i> | <i>website</i>  |
|--------------------|--------------|---|
| Richard Blumenthal | D, WF        | <a href="http://richardblumenthal.com">http://richardblumenthal.com</a>     |
| Dan Carter         | R            | <a href="http://www.carterforsenate.com">http://www.carterforsenate.com</a> |
| Jeff Russell       | Green        | <a href="http://jeff-russell.ruck.us">http://jeff-russell.ruck.us</a>       |
| Richard Lion       | Lib          | <a href="http://www.richardlion.com">http://www.richardlion.com</a>         |

**Richard Blumenthal** (Democratic, Working Families)

Website: <http://richardblumenthal.com>

Contact: [campaign@richardblumenthal.com](mailto:campaign@richardblumenthal.com)

*How fast should the US move from coal, nuclear, oil and natural gas to renewables; and what can/should Congress do to speed up the conversion?*

It is essential that Congress take steps to change the course of the country's dependence on fossil fuels as our nation's energy security and climate change challenges grow. Any federal energy policy must reflect the nation's position by promoting and encouraging investment in and deployment of renewable energy. As we continue to transition to these new energy sources, we must ensure that our traditional sources of energy are used in as clean and efficient a manner as possible.

I support efforts to end tax subsidies for oil companies and redirect that money to support the development of clean, renewable sources of energy. I also believe the federal government should provide adequate support and incentives to innovators who are working to create new jobs and more affordable, clean energy, especially for projects that would not necessarily be able to attract private investment without government assistance.

*What would you do to move federal law to improve disclosure of the actual names of campaign finance donors?*

There has never been a greater need for campaign finance reform. The Supreme Court's decision in the now-infamous case of Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission, strikes at the core of democratic principles, opening the floodgates for unlimited "dark money" in political campaigns that can drown out the voices of millions of ordinary Americans. It allows the wealthy and powerful to have a disproportionate voice in the most fundamental aspect of our democracy--a free and fair election that counts everyone's vote equally.

I support a constitutional amendment to overturn this decision by clarifying that reasonable regulations on campaign finance are not a violation of the right to free speech.

I'm also a cosponsor of the Fair Elections Now Act, to give Congressional candidates a voluntary alternative to the current system by providing matching financial support in exchange for agreeing to limit spending.

*What federal laws would you favor to reduce gun violence?*

In the Senate I fought to expand background checks and close the gun show loophole, ban assault weapons and high capacity magazines, provide tough penalties for straw purchases and get guns out of the hands of domestic abusers. We must also keep anyone on the terrorist watch list from being able to buy a gun.

In addition, I believe our teachers should receive mental health first aid training and resources to recognize signs and symptoms for mental illness.

After the shooting in Orlando, I said that so long as Congress fails to act, it will continue to be complicit in ongoing deaths from guns - whether in mass shootings that make the headlines or in the far more prevalent incidents of gang violence, domestic violence, suicides, accidents, and more.

**Dan Carter** (Republican)

Website: <http://www.carterforsenate.com>

Contact: [Info@CarterforSenate.com](mailto:Info@CarterforSenate.com)

*Response:* Our campaign has decided to not answer any survey from any organization this election cycle. As you can imagine we receive dozens of surveys each week which would take up a lot of the candidate's time. If we were to answer just some of these, it would raise questions on why some were more important than others from those we did not respond to.

**Jeff Russell** (Green)

Website: <http://jeff-russell.ruck.us>

No response received

**Richard Lion** (Libertarian)

Website: <http://www.richardlion.com/>

Contact: [Richard420Lion@gmail.com](mailto:Richard420Lion@gmail.com)

*1. How fast should the US move from coal, nuclear, oil and natural gas to renewables; and what can/should Congress do to speed up the conversion?*

We should move as fast as possible to clean energy such as solar and wind. The free market will provide the fastest and best path to that end. People were hunting whales for oil and were pushing them near extinction. When Oil was discovered in Pennsylvania, it saved the whale. The free market found a way to provide us with oil cheaper than whale oil. Sun light and wind will always be free and will win out in the free market. The free market has never made a nuclear power plant. Every nuclear power plant on earth was funded in whole or in part by government. The free market doesn't make nuclear power plants because they are a bad investment. If elected, I will never support funding for a nuclear power plant.

*2. What would you do to move federal law to improve disclosure of the actual names of campaign finance donors?*

This is my 9th time running for public office, I have never accepted even one penny in campaign contributions or public funding. I ask voters to not vote for someone who you can't identify the donors, or if the donors not to your liking.

*3. What federal laws would you favor to reduce gun violence?*

I support the second amendment of the constitution because people have an unalienable right to defend themselves. I see gun rights as a women's rights issue. Of all the adults that are raped, nearly all of them are female. Women have a right to defend themselves from an attacker. A cell phone to call for help will often not be enough. It can take too long just to make a call. You may not even have a signal, and may not be able to make a call. A gun may only take about a second to draw. Most attackers will run away as soon as they see the gun, then you can call the police. If the attacker doesn't run, you shoot him, then call the police. That will prevent him from attacking others, so you will save lives. I support gun safety training to prevent gun accidents.

## 2016 general election candidates for CT's seats in the US House of Representatives

### District 1

| <i>candidate</i> | <i>party</i> | <i>website</i>  |
|------------------|--------------|---|
| John Larson      | D, WF        | <a href="http://larsonforcongress.org">http://larsonforcongress.org</a>       |
| Matthew Corey    | R            | <a href="http://www.coreyforcongress.org">http://www.coreyforcongress.org</a> |
| Mike DeRosa      | Green        | <a href="http://www.mikederosa.org">http://www.mikederosa.org</a>             |

#### **John Larson** (Democratic, Working Families)

Website: <http://larsonforcongress.org>

Contact: <http://larsonforcongress.org/contact/>

Campaign HQ: Larson for Congress, 265 Ellington Road, East Hartford, CT 06108

Mail: Larson for Congress, PO Box 261172, Hartford, CT 06126

No response received.

#### **Matthew Corey** (Republican)

Website: <http://www.coreyforcongress.org>

Contact: [matthew@coreyforcongress.org](mailto:matthew@coreyforcongress.org)

Mail: Corey For Congress, P.O. Box 173, Manchester, CT 06045

No response received.

#### **Mike DeRosa** (Green)

Website: <http://www.mikederosa.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/voteMikeDeRosa>

No response received.

### District 2

| <i>candidate</i> | <i>party</i> | <i>website</i>  |
|------------------|--------------|---|
| Joe Courtney     | D, WF        | <a href="http://www.joecourtney.com">http://www.joecourtney.com</a>           |
| Daria Novak      | R            | <a href="http://novakforcongress.org">http://novakforcongress.org</a>         |
| Jonathan Peltó   | Green        | <a href="https://peltoforcongress.com">https://peltoforcongress.com</a>       |
| Daniel Reale     | Lib          | <a href="http://danrealeforcongress.com/">http://danrealeforcongress.com/</a> |

#### **Joe Courtney** (Democratic, Working Families)

Website <http://www.joecourtney.com>

Contact: [Info@JoeCourtney.com](mailto:Info@JoeCourtney.com)

Mail: Courtney for Congress, 161 Water Street, Norwich, CT 06360

No response received.

#### **Daria Novak** (Republican)

Website: <http://novakforcongress.org>

Contact: [info@darianovak.com](mailto:info@darianovak.com)

Mail: Daria Novak for Congress, PO Box 1007, Madison, CT 06443

No response received.

**Jonathan Peltó** (Green)

Website: <https://peltoforcongress.com>

No response received.

**Daniel Reale** (Libertarian)

Website: <http://danrealeforcongress.com>

Contact: [hq@danrealeforcongress.com](mailto:hq@danrealeforcongress.com)

Response pending.

District 3

| <i>candidate</i>      | <i>party</i> | <i>website</i>  |
|-----------------------|--------------|---|
| Rosa DeLauro          | D, WF        | <a href="http://www.rosadelauro.com">http://www.rosadelauro.com</a>           |
| Angel Luis Cadena Jr. | R            | <a href="http://www.angelforcongress.com">http://www.angelforcongress.com</a> |

**Rosa DeLauro** (Democratic, Working Families)

Website: <http://www.rosadelauro.com>

Contact: [Rosa@RosaDeLauro.com](mailto:Rosa@RosaDeLauro.com)

Mail: 129 Church Street, Suite 818, New Haven, CT 06510

No response received.

**Angel Luis Cadena Jr.** (Republican)

Website: <http://www.angelforcongress.com>

Contact: [Angel@angelforcongress.com](mailto:Angel@angelforcongress.com)

Responses:

*1. How fast should the US move from coal, nuclear, oil and natural gas to renewables; and what can/should Congress do to speed up the conversion?*

The conversion from one source of energy to another should be determined by need, competition and the market. One way to speed up the conversion while promoting competition would be to allow patents, that pertain to energy, to expire and be transferred to the person or entity that brings to market the most efficient, safe and cost effective use of energy.

*2. What would you do to move federal law to improve disclosure of the actual names of campaign finance donors?*

Only allow donations made by credit or debit card with a real-time display of donor names immediately available on a website which would have to be available on every candidates website.

*3. What federal laws would you favor to reduce gun violence?*

Our form of Liberty only survives when it is available to be practiced by each and every one of us. We need to repeal all laws infringing on our individual rights in order to protect ourselves and our way of life. Then put into place an increasing form of discipline, for politicians that attack the Constitution, up to and including removal and banishment from office under Article 2 Section 4 of the Constitution. Provide free firearms training for all willing and able Americans that wish to be armed. Remove all arbitrary borders, which illogically void the Constitution, by allowing armed Americans to carry everywhere their physical body is allowed to be.

District 4

| <i>candidate</i> | <i>party</i> | <i>website</i>  |
|------------------|--------------|---|
| Jim Himes        | D            | <a href="http://www.himesforcongress.com">http://www.himesforcongress.com</a>   |
| John Shaban      | R, I         | <a href="http://www.shabanforcongress.com">http://www.shabanforcongress.com</a> |

**Jim Himes** (Democratic)

Website: <http://www.himesforcongress.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/himesforcongress/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/jahimes>

Email: [info@himesforcongress.com](mailto:info@himesforcongress.com)

Responses:

*1. How fast should the US move from coal, nuclear, oil and natural gas to renewables; and what can/should Congress do to speed up the conversion?*

The conversion from fossil fuels to green energy and renewables should be carried out as swiftly as possible, taking care to ensure that it does not put an undue burden on Americans struggling to make ends meet. I am proud that the last coal-fired power plant in Connecticut, the Bridgeport Harbor Station, is being transitioned to natural gas and Dominion Bridgeport Fuel Cell provides 14.9 megawatts of electricity. Natural gas is a good transitional step, but remains a finite fossil fuel; wind, solar, hydro, and geothermal energy should be the long-term goals.

Congress can facilitate this transition by providing incentives for companies to invest in green technologies, helping consumers transition to this kind of energy and ending our subsidies for oil companies. Then we can move to cleaner, greener fuels that protecting the environment and improve health in our communities.

*2. What would you do to move federal law to improve disclosure of the actual names of campaign finance donors?*

One of the most important issues that we face is the disproportionately large influence of money in politics. After the disastrous Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United*, the floodgates opened and we now have virtually no accountability. I support a Constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United* and also am in favor of the Supreme Court overturning its previous decision.

I cosponsored the DISCLOSE Act, which would strengthen the reporting requirements for outside groups that wanted to donate money to political campaigns.

*3. What federal laws would you favor to reduce gun violence?*

Gun violence affects the lives of every American through the loss of loved ones, the terror we feel after mass shootings and the damage to our communities from the scourge of daily violence. No one knows this sense of loss and pain more than we do in Connecticut.

I support laws that would institute universal background checks for all gun purchasers; ban assault weapons that are designed only for combat; limit the size of magazines so that killers can't wipe out entire rooms without reloading; and allow research into the health effects of gun violence by the CDC and NIH. We should also invest more in mental health services and local initiatives to reduce violence.

I respect the Second Amendment, and understand there are responsible gun owners in Connecticut, but we cannot sit silently as gun violence against our families and communities goes unchecked.

**John Shaban** (Republican, Independent)

Website: <http://www.shabanforcongress.com>

Contact: <http://www.shabanforcongress.com/contact>

Mail: Shaban For Congress, P.O. Box 654. Fairfield, CT 06824-0654

*1: How fast should the US move from coal, nuclear, and natural gas to renewable sources of energy; and what can/should Congress do to speed up the conversion?*

The United States should make all efforts to move quickly and efficiently to renewable sources of energy. I am an environmental lawyer and head republican on the Connecticut General Assembly's Environment Committee, so this issue has been at the center of my public service. Indeed, the transition to renewable energy is a proverbial "silver bullet" that can spark the next economic boom in this country and throughout the world. Not only can Congress fund research, it must pass long-term production tax credits to give investors and inventors needed confidence to develop and bring to market clean and affordable renewable energy.

*2: What would you do to move federal law to improve disclosure of the actual names of campaign finance donors?*

Whether to donate and/or identify oneself as a donor has been protected in many circumstances as a form of free speech under our United States Constitution. Our options are limited. Still, I would support measures to make campaign finance simpler, sounder and more transparent. Indeed, our current federal representatives are the recipients of millions of dollars of PAC and special interest funds + the source of which is largely hidden from public view. Federal law should track some of Connecticut's campaign/public financing laws concerning donors (which sadly are being undermined as of late) to promote transparency while avoiding many of the constitutional issues.

*3: What federal laws would you favor to reduce gun violence?*

I am the only candidate with both a track record and standing to speak to this issue. In 2013 I helped craft and supported Connecticut's bipartisan gun, mental health in school security bill, and have since proposed legislation to fund and amplify our efforts to stop the illegal interstate shipment of weapons into our cities + i.e., the primary ingredient of gun violence in our nation. I will make it a legislative priority to stop illegal gun trafficking across state lines. The federal government has failed on this front, as have our federal representatives. We need leadership and action -- not more excuses, pithy press stunts and histrionics.

District 5

| <i>candidate</i> | <i>party</i> | <i>website</i>  |
|------------------|--------------|---|
| Elizabeth Esty   | D, WF        | <a href="http://elizabethesty.com">http://elizabethesty.com</a> |
| Clay Cope        | R            | <a href="http://www.claycope.com">http://www.claycope.com</a>   |

**Elizabeth Esty** (Democratic, Working Families)

Website: <http://elizabethesty.com>

Contact: [Elizabeth@ElizabethEsty.com](mailto:Elizabeth@ElizabethEsty.com)

Mail: Friends of Elizabeth Esty, PO Box 61, Cheshire, CT 06410

No response received.

**Clay Cope** (Republican)

Website: <http://www.claycope.com>

Contact: <http://www.claycope.com/#!/contact/c1kcz>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/copeforcongress/>

Response: Our campaign is not participating in surveys or responding to questionnaires — regardless of the source.

## **2016 general election candidates for CT's Legislature**

For State Senate - 2<sup>nd</sup> District

**Eric Coleman** (Democratic, Working Families)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am seeking re-election to the state senate because I thoroughly enjoy public service. I appreciate being close to the issues of the day and the opportunity to have input toward the resolution of those issues. I believe that my background and experience enable me to contribute ideas and proposals to address problems that challenge the towns I represent as well as the State of Connecticut. I derive a tremendous amount of gratification on those occasions when I am able to assist a constituent resolve a problem or advance a project, program or service.

*2. What are your 3 top legislative priorities?*

1) Criminal Justice Reform is a priority because a criminal conviction should not serve as a lifetime barrier to opportunity. A second chance should be afforded to those who may have been involved in non-violent offenses, particularly to those whose mental health or youth and immaturity may have resulted in conviction.

2) Economic Development to grow jobs in Connecticut must be pursued. Merely giving massive amounts of money to major corporations with promises of hiring a certain number of people will fail as a strategy unless it also includes financial and technical support for small businesses and investment in distressed communities.

3) Police accountability and trust between police and communities is essential. Support for police and concern for victims of excessive force are not mutually exclusive. Officers should not be murdered and people who are profiled or stopped for minor infractions should not end up dead. Better training and rapport

*3. Do you believe that there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I am actually proud of the efforts that Connecticut has made in support of simplifying the voter process. At the same time, there is room for improvement. I applaud the Secretary of State's initiative to provide for automatic registration with applications for new or renewed motor vehicle operator's licenses. Same day registration and voting and the restoration of voting rights for convicted felons have been positive developments, however, the state should continue facilitating electoral process participation by implementing early voting (week long voting, including Sunday voting) and no excuse absentee ballot voting.

**Theresa Tillett** (Republican)

No response received

For State Senator – 4<sup>th</sup> District

**Steve Cassano** (Democratic, Working Families)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CassanoForSenate/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/cassano4senate>

Email: [cassano4senate@gmail.com](mailto:cassano4senate@gmail.com)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I have had the honor to serve as an elected official since 1977. No matter how much you accomplish, the list of needs to be addressed continues to grow, not shrink. There are serious challenges facing the next legislature and I want to continue to work to improve the quality of life for all of our residents. Budget cuts decimated progress for our neediest people and the first priority would be to restore funding for medical, housing, transportation and care for those citizens. I enjoy the challenges and have continued to work on a bi-partisan basis to solve these problems.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

1. Restore the program cuts that have seriously and negatively impacted our most needy citizens.
2. Eliminate taxes on Social Security. It's a double tax. We have paid into the system and the federal government has been able to use those funds for years. It is unfair to tax what is supposed to be our retirement cushion for the future.
3. Work with all parties to make Connecticut a better place to live, work, do business and raise a family.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Yes. We are one of the few states that allow one day to vote. We should extend voting opportunities to at least five days including one Saturday. It would dramatically increase the opportunity to vote!

**Lorraine Marchetti** (Republican, Independent Party)

Website: [www.Lorraine4CT.com](http://www.Lorraine4CT.com)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

For the past 20 years I've served as an elected official and as a member of numerous civic organizations. I have enjoyed working with colleagues who come from all political persuasions. Together, we have accomplished a great deal and helped better our communities. I believe we have no choice but to challenge Connecticut's current leadership to redirect our state's future. Our current senator has voted to raise taxes and has supported reckless spending. He, the Governor and their fellow Democrats, created this mess and are incapable of recognizing or fixing our state's problems of big government, high taxes and continued borrowing. Our friends, our children and businesses are leaving the state, seeking lower taxes, stronger economies and a better quality of life. I am running to stop the hemorrhaging and win back the employment, innovation and educational opportunities we deserve! I am running Because We Deserve Better.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My top three legislative priorities are fixing the state's budget problems, revitalizing our state's economy, and addressing education funding.

I will work to create a realistic state budget based on short term and long term goals that funds the core services necessary for a thriving community. I am determined to be your advocate in the CT State Senate and get our fiscal situation under control.

Our state's economy must be revitalized by reducing the tax and regulatory burden on businesses, so they can invest in our state and create jobs.

We must address the partially funded and unfunded state education mandates, and rework the education cost sharing formula to provide funding to towns that meets the educational needs of the population they serve.

We must send leaders to Hartford who are willing to make sacrifices, address tough issues, and work together for the best interests of all constituents.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Not sure what is meant by “barriers” to voting. When elected, I will make sure to address this topic and acquire the necessary information that will help me make an informed decision on this issue.

For State Senate - 5<sup>th</sup> district

**Beth Bye** (Democratic)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for reelection because I continue to believe in the power of public policy to have a positive impact on people's lives. As a female leader and educator by profession, my skills of compromise, being able to bring stakeholders to the table, and taking on big challenges on behalf of my constituents have made me an effective legislator. My experiences so far have given me the skills to effect positive change and to help constituents with challenges they face. The 5th District is made up of four communities that value education, the environment, economic development, social services, and our quality of life. I work hard to represent these priorities in the State Senate.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

Workforce -- Connecticut is a hub for bioscience and manufacturing because we have high-quality workers; we must continue our investments in early childhood, public schools, and higher education to ensure we maintain this advantage. We also need to foster the kind of environment that attracts and keeps young people.

Environment -- I was instrumental in passing the first-in-the-nation ban on BPA in children's products, helped protect funding for state parks, pushed bills to make it safer to bike to work and around town, supported the Farmington Rail Trail and Trout Brook Trail, and worked to protect our public drinking water resources.

State Aid -- As in many states, revenues have lately come in below projections, requiring spending cuts of well over \$1 billion. Still, I have fought to maintain state aid to towns, and local property tax increases were mitigated, partly because of maintained or increased state funding.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

As for voting, our democracy depends on citizen participation. We need to make it easy to register and easy to vote. The motor voter law that just went into effect has been fantastic for increasing voter registration in 2016.

**Mark Merritt** (Republican, Independent)

No response received

For State Senate – 6<sup>th</sup> District

**Terry Gerratana** (Democratic, Working Families)

*1: Why am I running?*

It is important to me to ensure that I continue to be a strong voice for the people of the 6<sup>th</sup> district. As state senator improving my constituents' quality of life has been my top priority. Whether it has been supporting small businesses, protecting the needs of working families, or ensuring seniors retain vital protections, I am dedicated to the progress of our community. I will work to further limit and treat opioid misuse, continuing the work I have undertaken in past years.

The next two years will be extraordinary for CT. We have many opportunities to rejuvenate and redesign our educational system. We are also facing fiscal challenges that mean changing the way our state meets its constitutional mission and responsibilities. When going to the polls on November 8<sup>th</sup> I urge voters to choose me to meet these challenges in our state and keep it strong and secure.

*2: What are your top 3 Legislative priorities?*

1. We have a mandate to address the inequities and inequality in our education system in the next legislative session. I will work to ensure our poorest communities have an educational system that will ensure these Connecticut public education students have equal and exceptional opportunities.

2. I will work to achieve a long overdue overhaul of our tax system. Changing our tax system from a regressive to progressive system makes sense for our hard working families, reducing the tax burden disparities in our state. The current system has overburdens our municipalities and our citizens and it's time for structural change.

3. I will continue my work to write legislation that will prevent opioid related deaths in our state. We need increased access to behavioral healthcare that will give more individuals with opioid use disorder access to proper care and treatment.

*3: Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

Connecticut has improved access to voting with election day registration and on-line registration. Also, individuals can now automatically be registered to vote when doing business at our DMV. I supported legislation that would keep voters enfranchised by limiting party purges of the voter roles this past session. While we have a permanent absentee ballot option for people with disabilities I believe that people should have the right to vote absentee for any reason. I also support early voting. I support both options to remove these barriers to voting in our state. While this question failed when put before Connecticut voters in 2014, I would support another effort to do so.

**Charles Paonessa** (Republican)

No response received

**Sharon R. Beloin-Saavedra** (petitioning)

No response received

For State Senate - 12<sup>th</sup> District

**Ted Kennedy, Jr.** (Democratic, Working Families)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/tedkennedyjr/>

Twitter: @TedKennedyJr

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

Since the global recession, Connecticut has faced significant economic setbacks. Slow job growth and a structural shift in our economy have created a state budget crisis as well as financial uncertainties for many of our district's families and businesses. As a bone cancer survivor and amputee, I've faced difficult challenges before. What I've learned is to accept change, create new ways to adapt and implement these new strategies successfully. I know that with both hard work and teamwork – and tapping into the best ideas from both parties – we can revitalize Connecticut's fiscal health, create a more positive business climate, address critical social service needs and protect our beautiful natural resources.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

1. Get Connecticut's fiscal house in order;
2. Eliminate wasteful spending in our health care system; and
3. Improve our economic competitiveness: modernize our transportation system, keep Connecticut's young, educated workers in the state, develop more targeted vocation and technical training opportunities, and find actionable ways that government and business can work together.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut?*

Unfortunately, people with disabilities still face numerous barriers in participating in the political process and in exercising their right to vote. As a person with a disability and active board member of the American Association of People with Disabilities, I have been working for over 20 years in a bipartisan way to ensure that poll workers are properly trained to accommodate people with disabilities and polling locations are ADA compliant. We also need to improve accessible voting technology and to ensure the right of people with disabilities to cast a ballot in secret.

**Bruce Wilson, Jr.** (Republican, Independent)  
No response received

For State Senate – 13<sup>th</sup> District

**Danté Bartolomeo** (Democratic, Working Families)

Facebook: [fb.com/DanteStateSenate](https://www.facebook.com/DanteStateSenate)

Website: [www.DanteForStateSenate.com](http://www.DanteForStateSenate.com)

Twitter: @danteforsenate

Email: [danteforstatesenate@yahoo.com](mailto:danteforstatesenate@yahoo.com)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for office because I care about my community and I care about the future of our children. I find it incredibly rewarding to help the constituents of my district with their individual issues of concern. Connecticut has a lot of tough choices to make in the coming session, and I have a history and reputation for successfully achieving bipartisan legislative support for policies which help children, families, veterans, and seniors of our state. I know what it takes to get things done in the Senate, and I have been successful in bringing funding back to the district. In addition, I will continue to be a formidable advocate for our higher education system as a resource for the education and training needed to staff the highly educated and skilled workforce necessary to fill the jobs of today and tomorrow.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

I believe economic development depends upon investing in institutions of higher education to produce a highly skilled work force to fill today's high-tech jobs. Given that approximately ninety

percent of our state university and community college students reside in CT post-graduation, these students are critical to our future workforce.

I will continue to facilitate implementation of a policy that I passed unanimously in 2013, The Children's Behavioral Health Plan. It creates a system to foster the wellness of all of Connecticut's children through prevention, early identification and early intervention with a "no wrong door" for assistance.

While I believe student performance and teacher accountability must be held to a high standard, I also believe in less reliance on standardized tests to judge student and teacher performance. In my experience with special education students, standardized tests have limited value and alternative testing methods should be given more weight.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Yes. I would support instituting early voting and no-excuse absentee voting

**Len Suzio** (Republican, Independent)

*Why am I running for office?*

I know that Connecticut families cannot afford another backbreaking tax hike. I also know that Governor Malloy is scheming to force another tax hike on us, after the election. I will fight Malloy's tax increases like I successfully fought and capped the gas tax increase in 2012. I also will introduce a program to create thousands of good-paying jobs in Connecticut.

*Top 3 legislative priorities*

The state is facing a major financial crisis with billions of dollars in deficits forecast for next year. Connecticut families are reeling from burdensome taxes, and business growth is stymied by excessive regulation and unstable state finances.

Taxes: Since 2011 the legislature passed the two biggest tax hikes in Connecticut history. I am unequivocally opposed to any more tax increases. We must balance the budget by controlling wasteful spending. Connecticut families cannot afford another tax increase. My opponent broke her 2014 campaign promise not to vote for a tax increase when she voted for the second biggest tax increase in Connecticut history in 2015.

Jobs and economy: Connecticut is the only state not to have recovered the jobs lost in the Great Recession. The anti-business climate created by current state senators that passed one anti-business law after another culminated in the decision of General Electric, and hundreds of smaller companies

*Are there voting barriers in Connecticut?*

No

For State Senate - 16<sup>th</sup> District

**Ryan P. Rogers** (Democratic, Working Families)

No response received.

**Joe Markley** (Republican, Independent)

Website: [joemarkley.com](http://joemarkley.com)

*Why are you running for this office?*

Connecticut is headed in the wrong direction, and I want to help change that. With the highest total taxes and greatest public debt per capita, we are first in what we ought to be last in—and with the slowest economic growth of any state over the past twenty-five year, last where we'd want to be first. Our failure is the result of bad public policy, above all the repeated and enormous tax increases which have driven out businesses and our most productive citizens. I will push to break our state's addiction to big government and end the cycle of spending, taxing, and borrowing.

*What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My legislative priorities are to stop any further tax increases, which will force us to bring spending under control; to defend personal liberty and halt the assault on freedom and privacy by big government; and to restore decision-making to the local level, giving our communities authority and flexibility to deal with their own problems.

*Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

The most significant barriers to voting are intentional and, I believe, desirable. Those ineligible include residents under eighteen years old, non-citizens, and criminals convicted of certain serious offenses. For the rest of us, I think registering and voting has been made remarkably convenient. Further changes in voting laws designed to remove perceived barriers must be weighed against the fundamental need to protect the integrity of the process. The last several legislative sessions have seen significant changes in voting laws; I believe those who administer elections locally should be given time to absorb and evaluate these changes before more are introduced.

For State Senate – 17<sup>th</sup> District

**Joe Crisco** (Democratic, Working Families)

*1. Why are you running for office?*

I am running for office to make life better for the people in the 17th Senate district.

During my time in the Senate, we have done some great work making job training a priority with the Step Up program along with investing in our regional universities and community colleges and with the agreements to add 18,000 jobs between Pratt & Whitney, Sikorsky, and Electric Boat we are able to provide high paying, high quality jobs to our skilled workforce. This ripples throughout the entire state by further enabling subcontractors to grow and prosper.

I plan to continue working to fund research in our hospitals around the state. This past session we were able to provide grants to UConn Health Center, Griffin Hospital and Yale New Haven to further cancer research, diabetes studies, and their work to better understand and treat multiple sclerosis.

*2. What are your top three legislative priorities?*

Education Funding:

I am continuously advocating for school funding in the district while continuing to protect investments in higher education throughout the State of Connecticut as a whole. With programs at our Community Colleges and Regional Universities to I am working towards successful fluidity in our school to jobs pipeline.

Job development/training:

By working to expand job training services like STEP-Up, protecting funding for community colleges and technical schools, and advocating for entrepreneurship and boosting skilled labor, I plan to continue pushing for lasting Connecticut jobs.

Funding for social services:

I will fight to reinstitute funds to social services and the bio medical fund in the state of Connecticut that rewards grant funding to research proposals specifically for breast cancer and multiple sclerosis.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

The Secretary of the State has done a great job developing and implementing the new motor voter program in Connecticut allowing 14,693 people to register to vote since it began. Connecticut has done a great job over the years reducing the barriers to voting. With programs such as Election Day Registration and the new Motor Voter program from the Secretary of the State, Connecticut is consistently doing a great job reducing the barriers to participating in the electoral process, and we will continue to do so.

**George Logan** (Republican, Independent)

No response received.

State Senate - 18<sup>th</sup> District

**Heather Somers** (Republican, Independent)

Website: [www.somers2016.com](http://www.somers2016.com)

Facebook: Heather Somers @heatherbondsomers

Twitter: @heatherssomers

*1) Why are you running for this office?*

I believe we are running out of time to change direction and save our state. Gov. Malloy and his insider allies have passed crippling tax increases, driving away jobs and stifling wages for hardworking Connecticut families. These Hartford insiders have protected the priorities of special interests while throttling critical, common sense priorities for southeastern Connecticut — like our tourism districts.

I believe eastern Connecticut needs a strong, local voice in Hartford fighting for our interests and that if we want different results from Hartford, we simply must send a different type of person to Hartford: a Hartford outsider who isn't there for a political career, who hasn't been part of the problem, but who has the grit to fight for our community, the local experience to know what our region needs to thrive, and the business sense to take on the big government, job-crushing agenda of the status quo.

*2) What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

Here is a revised answer:

Rolling back the job-crushing tax burden on struggling families, workers and retirees:

I believe the first step towards restoring prosperity in Connecticut is lifting the heavy burden of crushing taxes off of our families, workers and retirees.

Fixing our business climate:

Small businesses and the workers they employ have suffered far too much under six years of one-party rule and the agenda of Gov. Malloy. Getting Connecticut's fiscal house in order, upending the priorities of insiders in Hartford to make our state friendly to business and stopping the out-of-control tax increases pushed by Gov. Malloy and his allies will lift all boats, most importantly for our small businesses and the jobs they create and support.

Tackling the epidemic of heroin addiction:

I will fight for common sense solutions to the crisis of heroin and opioid addiction in eastern Connecticut.

*3) Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I believe all citizens should be able to vote in a clear, accessible and transparent way and be confident in the integrity of the elections they participate in.

**Tim Bowles** (Democratic, Working Families)

No response received.

For State Senator - 21<sup>st</sup> District

**Kevin Kelly** (Republican)

Website: [www.kellyforstatesenate.com](http://www.kellyforstatesenate.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/KevinKellyforCT](https://www.facebook.com/KevinKellyforCT)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

To make a positive contribution toward the betterment of our community. As a State Senator I've spearheaded initiatives to cut taxes, create jobs and improve life for everyone. We've accomplished a lot, but we still have more to do to make Connecticut the great state we all know it can be. I'm ready to take on that challenge. With your vote, I will continue to fight for our community, our values and our families and send a common sense message to Hartford: smaller government, lower taxes and a focus on families is key to fixing Connecticut's problems.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

1. Create jobs. Improve Connecticut's business environment by supporting smart investment in good paying middle-class jobs (i.e. Sikorsky bill this week) as well as addressing long term issues to make our state more competitive, by reducing the size and scope of government and requiring government to live within its means, just like you.

2. Aging In Place. As ranking member on the Aging Committee I will continue to advance issues to improve the quality of life for seniors as they age in place, including repeal of the income tax on Social Security income.

3. Healthcare. As ranking member on the Insurance Committee I will continue to advance initiatives which are aimed at increasing access to quality and affordable healthcare. My extensive Medicaid experience brings valuable insight to the legislature, particularly now, during the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the issues surrounding the sustainability of the Connecticut Exchange.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

The Connecticut General Assembly has passed into law several initiatives aimed at reducing barriers to voting in recent years. However, turnout remains lower than desired. To improve voter turnout more focus needs to be placed on the value of civics to educate the public on the importance of voting and that civic engagement requires more than just voting, but also participation to improve our community.

*4. Should Connecticut institute high-speed (e.g., E-ZPass) tolls on major highways to help pay for road and rail improvements? If so, where?*

No. I believe Connecticut has a spending problem, not a revenue problem. Further, Connecticut already has a "special transportation fund" which is suppose to fund road and rail improvements. Unfortunately, the Governor and his majority raid that fund every year. What makes anyone think that toll money will be spent any differently by the Governor and his majority? Taxpayers already make a substantial tax sacrifice for transportation. The legislature must set the right priorities with those tax dollars to improve our transportation system and not continue to go back to the taxpayers asking them to sacrifice even more.

**Prez Palmer** (Democratic)

No response received.

For State Senate - 24<sup>th</sup> District

**Kenneth Gucker** (Democratic, Working Families)

Website: [www.Gucker2016.com](http://www.Gucker2016.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/KennethGuckerCT](http://www.facebook.com/KennethGuckerCT)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I have been active throughout my teen and adult years in human rights, land use, environmental, conservation, and historic preservation issues. I've worked alongside neighbors and led efforts to protect the integrity of neighborhoods and improve our quality of life. As a trained Eagle Scout and community volunteer, I am committed to helping others and live by that motto. I will bring honest representation and produce real results affecting people's lives. I am running for the office of State Senator for the 24th District to be the voice and represent the values of the people I hope to serve. Unfortunately, I have heard from too many that they believe their voice and their interests are not being adequately represented. I want to do the job expected for and by the people.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

Creating jobs and lowering taxes, properly and fairly funding our schools, and investing in our infrastructure are my top legislative priorities. Also, I believe that the health and well being of women and children is paramount. Equal pay and supporting women's rights strengthen our society. And, we must ensure our children have a great start with the education and support that leads them to be productive and contributing members of society.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

While it is important to maintain the integrity of the voting process, I believe it is critical to put forth all efforts to make voting and registering to vote more accommodating. We need to focus on increasing voter participation beyond current levels. Voting is a sacred right of American citizenship. Providing more time for people to vote, such as weekend voting or the creation of an Election Day holiday, should be considered. One day voting for fourteen hours does not necessarily fit the lifestyle of some working families today. The DMV Motor/Voter program should be expanded. Perhaps AAA services, as an example, can include this function. Language issues for people newer to our communities need to be addressed through more and better training for Election Day poll workers doing same day registration and assisting with voting.

**Michael McLachlan** (Republican, Independent)

No response received.

State Senate – 25<sup>th</sup> District

**Bob Duff** (Democratic)

[www.facebook.com/senatorduff](http://www.facebook.com/senatorduff)

[www.twitter.com/senatorduff](http://www.twitter.com/senatorduff)

[www.instagram.com/senatorduff](http://www.instagram.com/senatorduff)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

From an early age my parents encouraged me to speak up when I saw injustice and step in to make a difference. When I did, beginning somewhere around the age of eight, I was encouraged by a number of elected officials to pursue a future in public service.

Throughout my school years and into college I was elected to leadership positions by my peers. I began to appreciate the complexities of formulating public policy and the joy of representing the students who elected me.

I have an affinity for connecting people and today I enjoy my career as a Realtor. And while I've never considered politics as a career, I've always sensed that public service is a 'natural' for me, in much the same way we all have unique natural talents.

Most importantly, I enjoy encouraging others to active awareness of the political process and how to make government work.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

The ability to be self-sufficient is the bedrock of any society. So the job market continues to be my #1 priority. I'm excited to report that the incentive programs we've rolled out over the past few years continue to produce multiple small victories, chiseling away at our unemployment rate and providing encouragement for the future.

Self-sufficiency begins with a quality education. Every child deserves an equal opportunity to learn and succeed. We now have a court mandate to make that happen. Let's be fair and strategic in our approach, with funding based on need, not zip code.

A well-integrated transportation system is essential to job creation and economic growth. Previous administrations failed to maintain that system and plan for the future needs of commuters and businesses. That's all changing now and we're taking the first of many steps toward a system that will serve us well into the 21st century.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

The General Assembly long ago established provisions to ensure that everyone eligible to vote in any election in Connecticut may be free to exercise that right. These same provisions ensure the integrity of our voting system as well.

That's not to say issues don't arise from time to time. In the few instances where they occur, it's most often a case of poll workers not fully implementing the law as explained by the Secretary of State's office. That should be an easy fix.

There is a 'barrier' that the Legislature cannot address by law and that's voter apathy. We talk about the disenfranchised as a people who are unable to vote. There's a larger block of disenfranchised who simply don't want to vote because candidates put so much effort into bashing their opponents. Nothing constructive comes out of negative campaigning and that's proven by low voter turnout on Election Day.

**Gregory Ehlers** (Republican, Independent)

No response received.

State Senate – 26<sup>th</sup> District

**Carolanne Curry** (Democratic)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I'm running for this office in order to provide a clear alternative to the kind of representation the 26th Senate District has had since 2008, when the incumbent was first elected to the State Senate seat.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My top legislative priorities will focus on:

1. affordable housing reform,
2. implementation of the education landmark court decision by Judge Thomas Moukawsher
3. reduction or elimination of the two hundred fifty dollar business entity tax

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I would support voting by mail for any voter so choosing rather than require voters to have one specific day to vote.

**Toni Boucher** (Republican)

No response received.

State Senate – 27<sup>th</sup> District

**Cora Santaguida** (Green)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

What I appreciate most about the Green Party, is that it is, by principle, consistent. I feel confident voting Green across the board. We are committed to grassroots democracy, social justice, non-violence and ecological wisdom. Not only do I support Green Presidential Candidate, Dr. Jill Stein, but I find that many points of her platform can be modified and applied to local and state level campaigns. Election 2016 has brought a great deal of attention to third party politics and "lesser of two evils" We need to vote our values, not our fears.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

I am against Common Core. High Stakes Testing does not measure performance, it measures poverty.

Funding for schools should come from Hartford, relying on property taxes creates an unfair balance in quality of education.

I support the living wage of \$15/hr. Support unions and defend worker's rights. Enhance and support local economy. Support local businesses, cooperatives; money spent here, should stay here. We need to stop appealing to out-of- towners. I am in favor of using products and services from Connecticut-based companies, and only seek out-of-state when absolutely necessary. During the 2008 financial collapse, North Dakota stayed in the black because they had a state public bank. I am in favor of moving forward with bringing this to CT. Encourage use of credit unions as opposed to banks.

I would like to increase the number of "Low Market Rate" units in new and existing housing developments.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

At the polls, voters need to not only receive accurate consistent information about write-in candidates, the poll workers need to volunteer this information. I am in favor of making Election Day a holiday. Closing more workplaces will guarantee a better voter turnout. There should be a ban, or partial ban on lawn and yard signs during an election. I am in favor of changing the law, so that people on parole can vote.

**Carlo Leone** (Democratic)

No Response received.

**Gino Bottino** (Republican, Independent)

No Response received.

State Senator 28<sup>th</sup> District

For More Information on Candidate Positions:

| Candidates   | Party | Web Site          | Facebook      | Twitter        |
|--------------|-------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Philip Dwyer | D, WF | Phildwyer2016.com | phildwyer2016 | @phildwyer2016 |
| Tony Hwang   | R, I  | TonyHwang.org     | TonyHwangct   | @tonyhwang     |

**Philip Dwyer** (Democratic, Working Families)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I've dedicated my entire life to community service. As the former CEO of one of the largest YMCAs in Connecticut and as Chairman of the Fairfield Board of Education, I've made the tough decisions necessary to balance budgets, while preserving important services for those in need. My career has been committed to public service, with a focus on youth, families, and better schools. Education funding will be the central issue of next year's budget debate. My knowledge and experience, having served on two different Boards of Education, makes me uniquely qualified to help the legislature find an honest school funding formula. With a lifetime of advocacy for children, my voice will be listened to by Hartford politicians.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

1) I will make it easier to foster innovation in the state and make sure Connecticut has the best educated workers. I will work to turn the state's Universities into hubs of innovation and research, with universities and businesses working together, so Connecticut can continue to grow industries with good paying jobs in alternative energy, healthcare, bioscience, and technology.

2) I will fight to fully fund our public schools. I will work to keep class sizes from growing by working to restore the cuts to Connecticut's public schools and making sure education isn't on the chopping block in the future.

3) Every day, the legislature needs to ask itself what it can do to prevent gun violence. We have some of the most responsible gun violence prevention laws in the country, but we must do much more.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

Yes. The right to vote is the most fundamental exercise of control a citizen has over government, and any barrier to voting should be heavily scrutinized. Requiring a specific, enumerated reason to vote by absentee ballot is one such barrier. We should continue to pursue no-excuse early voting and no-excuse absentee voting, which is already allowed in the majority of states. We also need to make it easier for residents to register to vote; which the state has begun to address through the “Motor Voter Act.”

We must also fight against discriminatory voting laws, such as requiring photo identification in order to vote. These types of laws are shown to have a disproportionate effect on low-income families.

*4. What do you propose as specific, achievable strategies for balancing the state budget? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

As the former CEO of one of Connecticut’s largest YMCAs, I had to make the tough decisions allocating limited resources and asking more out of our staff. I will take a close look at what additional state programs can be by using results-based accountability metrics, and will cut programs that are no longer working.

But we can’t just cut our way out of the budget deficit. We must grow the tax base, by focusing on expanding tax credits for Connecticut-based small businesses so they can grow and succeed. And I will also work to incentivize businesses that hire and employ Connecticut workers so more people will live and work in Connecticut.

Finally, I will work to foster innovation in the state and make sure we have the best educated workers. We can incentivize partnerships between the state’s universities and businesses to continue to grow industries with good paying jobs, like bioscience.

*5. What achievable strategies do you advocate to address CT's underfunded liabilities, such as bonded indebtedness, and state employee and teacher pensions and post-employment benefits? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

We absolutely need to reduce debt, because the state needs to have the resources to provide services to our most needy. Connecticut has one of the largest per capita debt ratios of any state in the country. We simply cannot be spending more than we make. Republicans have been saying this for years, but have been ineffective. My voice will be one that the majority will listen to.

A pension is a promise to employees—we ask for loyalty and a lifetime of work, and in return, we promise them that they will not retire in poverty. This is a promise we need to keep. As Chair of the Fairfield Board of Education, I know first-hand how hard our teachers work. They have earned and deserve their pensions.

*6. Some businesses claim state tax codes and regulations are a bigger headache for business owners than state tax rates. Do you agree? What specifics would you propose to tackle the issue near term in ways that aid business and spur job growth?*

When I was leading the YMCA, the business owners we partnered with would tell me about their struggles with state government. State departments don’t work together, and business leaders are not at the table when regulations are being negotiated.

Many regulations are necessary, many are important. Regulations on the purchase and sale of firearms, for example, are critical to preventing gun violence. But there are some regulations that are burdensome and unfair to small businesses.

When new regulations are proposed, business and industry representatives should have a seat at the table. There should be an ongoing dialogue between industry and government, so future regulations will make sense to businesses.

**Tony Hwang** (Republican, Independent)

Website: [www.Hwang4Senate.com](http://www.Hwang4Senate.com)

Facebook: Tony Hwang

Twitter: @TonyHwang

Email: Tony@Hwang4Senate.com

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for re-election to continue the commitment to community that has been my top priority for the past 10 years in public service.

While I'm proud of what we've accomplished, I believe we can do more to make a meaningful impact in our community.

I believe in the greatness of our state and our country, and am grateful to represent you in Hartford. Together, we can create a more prosperous Connecticut. By controlling spending and reducing our high tax burden, we can create a friendly business environment that fosters job growth and economic vitality. And by reducing the size and scope of our state government, we can allocate resources to address critical challenges such as improving transportation infrastructure.

We must have a predictable, sustainable, and transparent state government that puts the well-being, health and safety of citizens first. You can count on me to put people before politics.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

1. Taxes & spending

2. Jobs and the economy

3. Transportation

All 3 require immediate action and, fortunately, addressing one, in essence, addresses the others.

We must end excessive borrowing & decrease spending in smart, responsible ways, to send a strong message that we can create a predictable, sustainable and transparent government. Simultaneously, by making the necessary investments to improve our transportation infrastructure via roads, rails and waterways, we create a sustainable economic ecosystem that will help create jobs and grow our businesses.

We can achieve the above improvements by: privatizing certain state social services; moving to a defined contribution pension plan for state employees; eliminate excessive and burdensome bureaucracy and taxes that hurt businesses.

Most importantly, you have my commitment that I will address these issues in a predictable and transparent process, an open mind and in a true and genuine bipartisan manner.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I support measures that protect ballot access while maintaining the integrity of our electoral process. Everyone deserves the right to participate in a free and fair election. We must respect the electoral process by taking every precaution to ensure that one person gets one vote, and that voting rights are protected against voter fraud.

I believe we should amend the state constitution to remove those restrictions that limit voting by absentee ballot to better reflect changing lifestyles. Additionally, I believe that we have an obligation to instill a sense of civic duty in our children through educational programs and community outreach.

Ultimately, it is incumbent upon elected officials to maintain strong relationships with their constituents. When elected officials remain committed to public service and actively engage their constituencies, the younger generation is more likely to appreciate their right to vote, and ability to contribute to society.

*4. What do you propose as specific, achievable strategies for balancing the state budget? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

My plan for a balanced budget includes common sense initiatives that reduce spending and create a leaner, more efficient government, consolidate redundancies and privatize where appropriate. For example, measures like cutting the number of legislative committees from 27 to 15 would significantly reduce administrative costs, but also encourage state government to function more effectively.

In many cases, the private sector does a better job delivering important services at more competitive costs. I propose privatizing duplicated dual delivery services. The state could reallocate the savings and provide additional funding to programs offering services directly to our communities.

Finally, we must respect the state Constitutional Spending Cap and fulfill the promise made to taxpayers two decades ago when we introduced the Personal Income Tax. By enacting the required definitions identified by the CT Attorney General, the state can uphold its end of the bargain and be accountable to taxpayers.

*5. What achievable strategies do you advocate to address CT's underfunded liabilities, such as bonded indebtedness, and state employee and teacher pensions and post-employment benefits? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

To address Connecticut's underfunded liabilities, we must reform state employee pension programs to restore balance to the system. This can be achieved through a variety of measures that both increase employee contributions and decrease the state's financial burden that exacerbates the deficit.

Non-hazardous employees would contribute 4% of their salary to their pension benefits. Today, those on the bottom tier contribute only 2%, and top tier employees don't contribute at all. This adjustment, coupled with modest increases to health insurance premiums and copays, suspension of longevity bonuses and other incremental reforms, would help to close the gap significantly.

We must also prioritize better oversight and more stringent accountability. By spiking overtime in the last three years of employment, some state employees make more in retirement than they did as an employee. I would work to impose common sense restrictions aimed at preventing this and other forms of waste and abuse.

*6. Some businesses claim state tax codes and regulations are a bigger headache for business owners than state tax rates. Do you agree? What specifics would you propose to tackle the issue near term in ways that aid business and spur job growth?*

Connecticut businesses of all sizes agree: predictability, sustainability and transparency in state government are critical to their success.

To insulate business from unfair or cost-prohibitive mandates, I recommend that newly proposed regulations undergo an evaluation process where a standardized set of criteria is used to determine whether the laws are necessary and justifiable. This due diligence would ensure lawmakers have the ability to make well-informed decisions that take economic impacts into consideration in addition to public health and safety.

We need to cultivate a cooperative, as opposed to punitive, relationship between businesses and government. In cases where businesses have been found to be in violation of state regulations, but then take remedial action to comply, their fines should be adjusted accordingly. I would also review occupational licensing laws to remove any potential barriers or red tape – such as exorbitant fees or exclusive educational requirements - which disproportionately impact low-income populations.

State Senate - 31<sup>st</sup> District

**Mike Nicastro** (Democratic)

Facebook: MikeNicastroforStateSenate  
Email: VoteNicastro.com

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I'm running for the state senate because Connecticut residents can be confident in our future only when their elected officials start with a positive attitude but don't hesitate to tell it like it is. We have serious challenges but I am confident that those challenges can be overcome with focus and sense of innovation. The 31st District deserves a state senator who is fiercely focused on the issues in the district and has the ability and wherewithal to strongly represent the district on the senate floor. I possess those skills as well as a wide array of business and life experience which will allow me to make a difference at the state and district level.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My first term focus will be strengthening the state's economy and enhancing an environment which creates jobs while building a sustainable competitive advantage through:

- Fiscal management- Developing a fiscally sound budget is not a "set it and forget it" effort.
- Innovation – Reinvigorating a sense of innovation in our economy and in how we govern.
- Entrepreneurship & Succession Planning – Celebrating and encouraging innovation to inspire the entrepreneurs in our midst while at the same time addressing the close to 47% of small businesses that are owned by residents who are 55 years of age or older - a small business "Silver Tsunami."
- Higher Education – Supporting the state's higher education assets in its colleges and universities and the opportunity they give to our future generations.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I believe that most barriers to voting have been relieved, especially with the adoption of the "motor-voter" law. That said, there are still cities and towns where the process on election day still experiences operational challenges. We need to continue to invest in newer voting technologies which alleviate polling location operational issues while protecting the integrity of each vote and the election process.

**Henri Martin** (Republican, Independent)

No response received.

State Senate - 33<sup>rd</sup> District

**Norm Needleman** (Democratic)

Website: [www.norm.vote](http://www.norm.vote)

Facebook: normneedleman2016

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for State Senate because Hartford needs an overhaul in how it budgets, funds education, and provides services. I have run a local manufacturing business in our district for 37 years, employing over 150 people locally and have served as First Selectman of Essex for five years. I believe I have the business and small town background to bring change and common sense to Hartford. More importantly, beyond my own qualifications I am running for my children and grandchildren. I want to leave them the Connecticut that I love and has given me so much.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

As a state senator, I will bring my business experience, small town government perspective and proven problem-solving skills to bear on the mess in Hartford. My first priority is to balance the budget by streamlining services and improving efficiency. We have to stop driving people and companies out of the state through tax increases. My next priority is jobs. I have a proven track record in this area, let me show what I can do in Hartford to provide small business incentives and reduce regulatory burdens. My third priority is education, which the courts have recently found is in a state of disarray in our state. I want to focus on improving not only our traditional schools, but also vocational education, including skills retraining for residents who have lost their jobs.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Connecticut has made some progress in this area especially in comparison to the actions of other states that have made it more difficult to vote. That being said I believe there is more work to be done. For example, we need to re-examine vote by mail to ensure everyone has the opportunity to vote. Whether we need legislative action or another referendum we should eliminate this barrier to voting. We need to always be striving to make our government more democratic and open.

**Art Linares** (Republican, Independent)

No response received.

**Colin Bennett** (Green)

No response received.

State Senate - 35<sup>th</sup> District

**Arlene Avery** (Democratic, Working Families)

Facebook: Arlene Avery for State Senate

Website: ArleneAvery.com

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I'm running for State Senate to ensure that the best interests of our thirteen-town, mostly rural, district are strongly represented. I was raised on the Avery Farm in Stafford, Connecticut. My family has been farming our land since the 1730s. From farming I have learned the importance of working cooperatively and being resourceful. I believe that these qualities will serve us well in the Legislature.

As a woman, I believe it's important for women to participate in the political process. Currently, women make up only 22 percent of the Connecticut State Senate and there is only one woman of color. If elected I will become the first Asian-American woman to serve in the Connecticut State Senate. I hope to help bring the diversity of Connecticut to the State Senate.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My top three legislative priorities are as follows:

- 1) I will prioritize and foster legislation that will help our families and communities thrive including finding viable solutions for homeowners with failing basement foundations, paid family medical leave and a \$15 an hour minimum wage. These changes are necessary to improve and protect the quality of life of all families and workers in our communities.
- 2) I will prioritize and support legislation to make our tax structure more progressive in order to make our wealthiest citizens pay their fair share of the cost of a great society.

3) I will prioritize and pass legislation to improve our students' educational opportunities and lessen the cost of higher education. Education should be the key to success, not a barrier to success because of high costs.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Yes, I do believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut. In my district we have Rockville, an urban village with high poverty and a very transient population. Many eligible voters don't even register – their focus is on surviving economically, not voting. Many of these voters are also people of color and face additional barriers to voting.

My district also includes rural towns like Woodstock. These towns are large in size but small in population. To get to the polling place is difficult for those without transportation. In past years there were efforts to open absentee voting to all voters but those ballot measures have gone unpassed. I would work to open absentee voting to all voters.

**Tony Guglielmo** (Republican)

No response received.

State Senate – 36<sup>th</sup> District

**John Blankley** (Democratic)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JohnBlankley2016/>

Twitter: @blankley2016

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for State Senate because I see so much potential in Connecticut's future. We are at a crossroads, and now is not the time to dwell on what's wrong in our state. Rather, it's time to seize the opportunities we have so we can move forward with a plan to fix our budget, modernize our transportation infrastructure and grow our economy.

I have worked at the executive and board levels of large, multinational corporations where I managed budgets even larger than our state's. I also started a small business here in Connecticut which, for the past 16 years has flourished and created several in-state jobs.

No one else in Hartford has my background, and at this pivotal time we need leadership with the experience and a plan to move progress forward.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

The budget is my top priority. We can maintain quality services and provide for our neediest residents if we spend smarter. I will advocate for a plan that will restructure the current state pension system, as well as an Infrastructure Bank to modernize our transportation system to draw and keep businesses in Connecticut, growing our tax base.

We must also grow our economy. In 2000, I founded Flagship Networks, a small technology company in Connecticut. Accessing the state's business incentives was a burdensome process which, as State Senator, I will work to streamline, while also creating new legislation that will target growth businesses.

Finally, we must continue to introduce common-sense gun laws. Overturning our current "open carry" policy, would be the logical next step in making Connecticut a leader on gun safety. We have work to do and this will be a top priority for me in Hartford.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I applaud our Secretary of State's leadership in making voting accessible. Efforts such as automatic voter registration at the DMV, online registration, and Election Day Registration are all steps in the right direction toward improving voter engagement.

There is still work to be done. Connecticut should join the majority of states that allow early, in person voting. No one should be turned away due to health issues, familial or professional obligations. We must also be diligent in rejecting efforts to disenfranchise voters, such as requiring photo ID at the polls or consolidating polling places.

**Scott Frantz** (Republican)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running again to serve the 36th District because I care deeply about the State of Connecticut and its citizens. I am very concerned that future generations of Connecticut residents will not have the same opportunities that my generation has had due to poor fiscal management and harmful legislation leading to uncompetitive tax rates, a poor business environment and subpar job creation. I am passionate about fixing these problems and feel I have the right background to help do so.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

If reelected, I would continue to focus on the important issue of restoring our state's fiscal health. In everything from overall fiscal management to unfunded long-term liabilities per capita, Connecticut ranks worst or second worst. In order to stay solvent, we must balance budgets without additional borrowing or accounting tricks. My second priority would be the repairing and maintaining our precarious transportation infrastructure. Our rail and highway systems are being stretched beyond capacity and are aging rapidly. Although there have been some improvements, Metro North's track and catenary systems are showing their age. We need to generate billions of dollars in funding imminently to address this problem. My third priority would be to continue to address the steadily deteriorating business environment in the state. We have fallen rapidly from being one of the most desirable states in the country to near the bottom of the rankings.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I do not believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut but there are far too many people eligible to vote who choose not to vote. I would encourage everyone who can vote to make sure they do!

*4. The state of CT is appealing the recent court ruling on CCJEF which will impact the state's school funding formula. Gov. Malloy asked the General Assembly to find solutions instead of relying on the court's future decision. What possible legislative solutions would you propose?*

I would propose returning to the original formula, which despite some flaws, was much fairer and objective. In this highly politicized environment, the ECS grant amounts have been directly related to party politics. That is patently unfair to all students. I believe that party politics has no place in education.

*5. State traffic congestion is a continuing issue. What solutions do you support?*

Most important, we need to stop the unbridled raiding of the Special Transportation Fund year after year, which limits substantially the resources we desperately need to improve our entire transportation system. Second, I would support expanding public transportation, especially rail, to alleviate congestion on our highways. The potential for additional capacity on Metro North exists, and we should take full advantage of it. We need to significantly expand parking facilities that serve

the railroads, especially in cities like Stamford. Third, I would support innovative thinking regarding traffic patterns, highway entrances and exits and roadway configuration. Like fluid dynamics, highways can handle only so much traffic as traditional designs allow.

*6. Do you support increasing disclosure for campaign contributors? Why or why not?*

We are fortunate that Connecticut has one of the cleanest and strongest election disclosure laws in the nation. Disclosure is as comprehensive as it can practically be in our local and state elections. Additionally, the vast majority of candidates accept the Citizen's Election Program grants and agree to not raise funds in more than \$100 increments, which has significantly reduced potential conflicts of interest. However, if Federal account funds are being spent on state elections, that needs to be disclosed as does normally required information on donors to the Federal account to assure there are no conflicts.

**Edward Heflin** (Green)

No response received.

For State Representative 1<sup>st</sup> District

**Matthew Ritter** (Democratic)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

The 2017 Legislative Session may be the most important session ever for the City of Hartford. The budget deficits for the City have become unsustainable and it will take State leadership to help our City emerge from its financial problems. I am eager to work with my legislative colleagues, the Mayor, and members of the Hartford City Council and Board of Education to create a better path forward to ensure that Hartford remains a strong and vibrant place to live and work.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

1. Fixing the way we fund our public school systems in Connecticut. I will also prioritize how we fund special education costs in our State.
2. Continuing efforts to ensure that working families can earn enough money to support themselves and their children. For example, indexing our State's minimum wage and looking at our State's family leave policies.
3. Ensuring that the State's Health Exchange remains financially solvent with multiple insurers to ensure competitive pricing and products.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Yes. We should have no excuse absentee ballot voting.

**Ken Lerman** (Republican)

No response received.

For State Representative - 8<sup>th</sup> District

**Tom Currier** (Democratic, Working Families)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

Residents of the 8<sup>th</sup> district need a legislator who will fight to ensure safety in Connecticut. I am disappointed that my opponent voted no on the bill HB 5054 which would require domestic abusers

to turn in their guns and ammunition. Although this bill passed overwhelmingly, my opponent voted against it. This is unacceptable to me.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

a. We need to evaluate the tax structure and increase taxes on those who live in Connecticut and earn over \$250,000 per year. I do not believe that laying off state employees is the way to solve Connecticut budget problems.

b. I will work to strengthen the middle class while supporting unions. This could be accomplished by creating jobs and repairing our roads and bridges. This also employs a great number of workers.

c. We need to make efforts to ensure that young people who graduate from our state colleges and universities are able to get good jobs and stay in Connecticut. This could be accomplished by creating jobs that are technical in nature and address our ever-changing economy.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut and if so what would you do to eliminate them?*

The secretary of the state's office has done a remarkable job to make it easier for Connecticut residents to vote. I feel that we have a lot of services that are helpful. I like the online registration, election day registration, and also feel that the absentee ballot deadlines are appropriate for most people. In order to accommodate voters busy schedules, I would like to allow voters to cast their votes on line from Saturday to Tuesday.

**Tim Ackert** (Republican)

No response received

For State Representative – 15<sup>th</sup> District

**David Baram** (Democratic, Working Families; unopposed)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

Public service has always been a passion of mine. I can think of no greater reward than to serve one's community and state, helping to improve the quality of life for our residents. As an incumbent legislator I have had the privilege to work for the people of Bloomfield and Windsor, sponsoring and advocating laws to protect our environment, promote jobs, grow our economy, protect consumers, enhance educational quality, and promote justice. I have been honored to serve as co-chair of General Law, overseeing our consumer protection laws. I thank my constituents for their trust and confidence and promise to continue to work for the common good of our state and towns.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

As Co- Chair of the General Law Committee, a legislative priority is to conduct the business of my Committee, drafting consumer protection bills, passing Committee legislation, and debating these bills on the House floor. My second priority is Jobs and the Economy. We must find a way to grow our state economy and create jobs, so that we can put people back to work and pay for services. That will require investments in small businesses, incentives for graduates to remain in CT, and lowering property taxes. My third priority is Education. In light of the recent Superior Court judgment, we must find an equitable way to fund education so that all children regardless of race, economic status, or residency, can obtain an excellent education. We must protect children needing special education, and strengthen vocational schools and our community college system.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

Voting in CT should be made more accessible so that we can create as many opportunities as possible for people to vote. In today's society, with people working several jobs and longer hours, an increased senior population, and young families with children, we need to recognize that traditional voting protocols are no longer sufficient and need expansion. Therefore I support reforms that include the following: early voting, same day registration, no excuse absentee ballots, increased voter registration opportunities, and automatic voter registration with driver license registration/renewals. Voting is the hallmark of a democratic society and we must do everything possible to facilitate voting in our contemporary society.

For State Representative - 16<sup>th</sup> District

**Lydia Tedone** (Republican, Independent)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I decided to run for State Representative because as a resident of Simsbury and as a resident of Connecticut, I am deeply concerned with the direction our state is heading in. State borrowing and spending is out of control, we are making harmful cuts to vital state services in an attempt to balance our budget, and I fear that tax increases are on the horizon. Citizens and businesses are leaving this state at an alarming rate and something must be done to reverse this trend. I have served the town of Simsbury for nearly two decades and decided it was time for me to answer the call and serve my town on the state level.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My three priorities are simple:

1. Correct the tax policies that are harming our economy
2. Fix the unfair burden placed on our municipalities as a result of unfunded mandates, especially those dealing with education
3. Instilling common sense practices into our budgeting process and getting our state out of debt.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I believe that as a state, Connecticut does a wonderful job of ensuring that everyone has a chance to exercise their right to vote. With Election Day registration, automatic voting registration through state agencies, and allowing voter registration online our state has put the pieces in place to maximize voter registration possibilities. I believe, however, that with all these avenues to voting, at this point our state needs to focus on outreach efforts to get newly registered voters out on Election Day and active in the democratic process. The state should work with nonprofit organizations that advocate for voter participation and find out what can be done to allow for more effective voter outreach.

**Robert H. Kalechman** (unaffiliated)

*Why are you running for this office?*

I am running to become the State Representative of Simsbury District 16 Connecticut State House at Hartford to stop the corruption in both Simsbury, and Connecticut Fifth (5) Congressional district Many may say there is no corruption to which I will point out just a few of many Lets start with Johnny Rowland and his corruption he has had two bites of the apple one as Governor of Connecticut the other most recent Lisa Wilson Foley which he is servicing 30 month in Federal Prison yet the State of Connecticut and it leaders still did not get the idea and the next corruption came in the and from the office of the Connecticut State House Speaker office and staff with the

arrest of Speaker Donovan and the present Congress woman Esty is under scrutiny for taking campaign donation's from companies that her husband regulated as CONNECTICUT Commissioner of D.E.P. As

*What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

- A. I will support legislation protecting Municipal employees and police in the work place
- B, I support the Amendment II of our U.S. Constitution
- C. Equal pay for Women

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

No.

**John Hampton** (Democratic)

No response received

For State Representative – 19<sup>th</sup> district

**Derek Slap** (Democratic, Working Families)

*Why are you running for this office?*

I want all our children to be able to attend excellent public schools, find jobs in Connecticut after graduation, afford to raise a family and eventually retire here.

Connecticut faces challenges but it also has tremendous potential. We have the tools needed to build a robust economy that works for everyone. Now more than ever we need folks in state government who know how to get things done and who really believe in Connecticut's future.

My father was a minister, my mother a nurse. They taught me the value of giving back to the community. I've spent 20 years working in journalism and public service. I'm currently a manager at the UConn Foundation, where our top priority is increasing scholarships so students can attend our great flagship university.

I've never run for office before but I'm grateful so many people are already supporting me - teachers, environmentalists, and business leaders.

*What are your top three legislative priorities?*

First, we must retain and grow high-quality jobs. We do this by capitalizing on Connecticut's strengths. Overhaul our transportation infrastructure – including high speed rail - to connect our educated workforce with opportunities within Connecticut and with the nearby economic engines of Boston and New York. Invest in higher education so students are prepared for the jobs of tomorrow and can find them here. Reduce red tape wherever possible so entrepreneurialism can thrive.

Second, we must protect our public schools. Empowering our teachers and supporting our students is critical for not only the economy, but for our quality of life. We also need fairer funding for our local schools and universal pre-k to close the achievement gap.

Third, Connecticut needs a balanced, affordable and sustainable budget that doesn't drive up property taxes or shred the social safety net. A more efficient government and a vibrant economy will get us there.

*Do you believe there are barriers to voting in CT and if so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

We must continue to eliminate barriers to voting so more people have a voice.

Anyone who wants to vote by absentee ballot – for any reason – should be permitted to. We could also implement early voting, as many states already do, and consider voting by mail. For too long

the specter of voter fraud is used by some politicians as a scare tactic to pass laws that make it more difficult to vote.

Candidates themselves also play a role. Over the past three months I've met with thousands of families in every neighborhood in the district. I've had great conversations about what's at stake, how we can work together and find common-sense solutions to our challenges. I really listened to people's concerns and refused to pander. I believe folks are much more likely to vote when candidates run this type of positive and engaging campaign – and then follow through once elected.

**Chris Barnes** (Republican)

No response received.

For State Representative -20<sup>th</sup> District

**Joe Verrengia** (Democrat; unopposed)

*1 - Why are you running for this office?*

I have dedicated my entire professional life to public service, having served 25 years with the West Hartford Police Department and 6 years on the West Hartford Town Council prior to becoming a State Representative in 2011. My top priority has always been to listen to my constituents and being their voice to make West Hartford and Connecticut a better place to live, work, and raise a family. I have been honored to serve and look forward to continuing to represent my constituents as their state representative.

*2 - What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

- 1.) Jobs –The millennial generation is beginning to transform our economy, and Connecticut needs to move quickly to make sure we are competing in that marketplace. I support a plan allowing students to deduct student loan interest from their state income taxes and giving first-time homebuyers a tax break for the first three years that they own a home.
- 2.) Budget – I support broad based reforms to lower property taxes and bring predictability to Connecticut's finances. We need to move away from our heavy reliance on our already broken property tax system.
- 3.) Public Safety – In the wake of the recent controversial police related shootings, I introduced a bill to create an independent task force to review how police officers are trained. The task force will look to ensure that the state of Connecticut is adhering to nationally recognized standards.

*3 - Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Connecticut does a better job than most states at minimizing voting barriers. I was proud to support same-day voter registration in Connecticut and believe that this law can go one step further by allowing for same day voter registration at their polling location. I am also open to introducing and supporting any bill that seeks to eliminate any voter disenfranchisement in the state of Connecticut.

For State Representative - 21<sup>st</sup> District (Farmington and Unionville)

**Mike Demicco** (Democratic, Working Families)

*1) Why are you running for this office?*

I would like to continue as State Representative for the 21st District (Farmington and Unionville) because I believe I have provided my constituents with honest, conscientious, and fair

representation in the General Assembly for the past four years. I have listened to the concerns of my neighbors, and have acted on those concerns.

In the important areas of constituent service and legislative initiatives, I have worked hard to improve people's daily lives. I have protected state aid for my town, secured grants for numerous municipal improvement projects, helped to lower water and electricity bills, improved the state's ambulance responder system, and expanded services for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

*2) What are your top three legislative priorities?*

My top four legislative priorities are:

- enhancing the business climate and creating jobs
- investing in higher education and workforce development
- improving our transportation infrastructure
- making our tax policy more equitable

Each of these initiatives would make Connecticut more economically competitive, and enhance our already enviable quality of life.

During my tenure, we have made strides in each of these areas, although more needs to be done.

We have invested in good-paying, high tech bioscience and manufacturing industries; made capital available to businesses seeking to remain and expand their operations in Connecticut; encouraged co-operation between schools and the business community; invested in transportation for the 21st century; and examined our tax policy for fairness and equity.

*3) Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I would support legislation to reduce restrictions on voting and voter registration, which will increase voter participation and strengthen our democracy.

Many other states have devised ways to increase voter registration and allow for early voting, voting from home, convenience absentee ballots, etc., without opening the door to voter fraud and abuse. Connecticut needs to do the same.

**Chris Forster** (Republican, Independent)

No response received

For State Representative - 22<sup>nd</sup> District

**Dr. William A. Petit, Jr.** (Republican, Independent)

Website: [www.petit4ct.com](http://www.petit4ct.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Petit4CT/](https://www.facebook.com/Petit4CT/)

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/docpetit\\_art](https://twitter.com/docpetit_art)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running because I am tired of watching Connecticut being led down the wrong path through decades of one-party rule in the legislature. We cannot change Hartford unless we change who we send to Hartford, and I am running to be a part of that much-needed change. We need people in the legislature who are going to seriously discuss ways we can begin to change the Hartford culture of over-spending, over-estimating revenues in writing budgets, and then "solving" our budget crises with more fees and taxes. I love Connecticut and want to help our state get back on a sustainable fiscal path so that when my young son grows up, he can afford to stay in Connecticut and will not struggle to find a job, like so many young people these days.

2. *What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

a) My main priority is restoring fiscal health with honest budgeting which includes not spending more than we take in, adopting budgets based off achievable and not inflated revenue estimates, and instituting a firm bonding cap.

b) We need to protect core services for the most vulnerable in society including the elderly, the disabled, and the mentally ill. Taking care of groups like this should be a priority of government, but recent Democrat budgets have cut these services. We must place people before politics, and support budgets that take care of the most vulnerable in our communities.

c) I will advocate for legislation to have a stronger emphasis on victims' rights. In recent years, the legislature has passed many bills focused on "second chances" for incarcerated individuals, but I do not think the same amount of attention has been paid to advocating on behalf of victims.

3. *Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I think we are fortunate to live in a state where there are not many major barriers to voting. One can now register in person, on-line, at the DMV, at events, etc. The biggest threat I see to voting in Connecticut is the apathy among voters that their vote doesn't count. We need to do more to excite people, especially the younger generation, about voting and show them that without their votes, nothing will change.

**Elizabeth "Betty" Boukus** (Democratic)

No response received.

For State Representative - 30th District (Berlin and Southington)

**Joe Aresimowicz** (Democratic, Working Families)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/joe.aresimowicz](https://www.facebook.com/joe.aresimowicz)

1. *Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for office because I truly love representing Berlin and Southington and believe there is a bright future ahead for our state if we can work together, rid ourselves of partisan politics, and sit down at the table to discuss real solutions. We need to support middle-class families by investing in the economy, ensuring everyone has access to retirement security, and their children are able to attend quality schools from pre-k to college without being burdened with debt.

2. *What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

Times are tough for working families. I am determined to continue to work across party lines to invest in our economy with job training programs, support our vocational technical schools and community colleges to educate students about industries with rapid job growth like manufacturing and make sure a college education is affordable for our children.

3. *Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

We need to make voting accessible including expanding opportunities for registration of potential voters, exploring early voting, and continuing efforts to have automatic voter registration. By adopting procedures to minimize voter inconvenience, we can have a system open to all and an increase in voting participation in Connecticut.

**Christopher Morelli** (Republican)

No response received.

For State Representative - 32<sup>nd</sup> District

**Christie M. Carpino** (Republican, Independent)

Website: [www.carpino2016.com](http://www.carpino2016.com)

Facebook: /christie.carpino

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

Connecticut is an amazing place and I'm running for reelection to make it better place to live for all families. As a public servant, I am beholden to no one other than the people I represent and I take great pride in voting for the best interests of my district-every time.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

1. Job Creation/Creating a Robust Economy

Connecticut must remain affordable both families and businesses for us all to prosper. We must focus on creating a climate that is conducive to creating jobs and reduce nonessential spending.

2. Public Health & Safety

One of government's fundamental responsibilities is to protect its citizens. I will continue to support our first responders, fight for tougher criminal penalties and focus on keeping our communities safe and healthy.

3. Quality of Life

Our kids deserve a first rate education. Our seniors deserve to be able to be safe in their retirement. And, we deserve access to a great outdoors. Connecticut is an amazing place and quality of life matters to all of us.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

No. I don't believe there are barriers to voting in my district. However, it is often difficult for local candidates to get their message out to voters.

**Myron Johnson** (Democratic)

No response received.

For State Representative – 36th District

**Bob Siegrist** (Republican, Independent)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I love the lower Connecticut River Valley!

I grew up in this area and graduated from Haddam Killingworth High School and obtained my Bachelor of Arts degree from Quinnipiac University. My own career includes the satisfaction of completing a hard day's work in addition to working a part time job.

Many of us know family members and friends who have experienced job loss or moved out of state for economic reasons. For those who remain, we question the future of our small towns. This trend must change! Those you elect to represent you need to think differently and take a fresh approach to solving the issues confronting our district.

I will focus on what truly impacts your day-to-day lives. The budget, the economy, job growth, and taxes. Each of these influence your quality of life, are critical to reviving the State, and are necessary to creating opportunities in our communities.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

#### **PRIORITIZING THE BUDGET**

Our budget process is broken. Each year the legislative session is extended to develop a budget. From day one, I will advocate for a budget that works for our small towns. Your legislator owes you that. We are faced with a \$2.5 billion deficit and we should solve this immediately.

#### **GROW THE ECONOMY**

Connecticut's economy continues its downward spiral. Economic analysts rank Connecticut as one of the least business friendly states. I will address government spending and reduce the tax burden, improve people's lives, and return economic growth to Connecticut.

#### **REDUCE PENSION LIABILITIES**

Connecticut does not have a revenue problem; it has a spending problem. We need to restructure future pension and health care programs while moving new state employees to a 401(k) like program. We can return fiscal health of the state and reduce the future tax burden on you, your children, and your grandchildren.

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*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

If anyone does not have an adequate opportunity to vote, that is a problem. We need to work together to streamline the voting process while maintaining the integrity of the voting process.

**Philip Miller** (Democratic)

No response received.

For State Representative - 38<sup>th</sup> District

**Sharon Palmer** (Democratic, Working Families)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SharonPalmer2016/>

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am Sharon Palmer running to be your State Representative. My roots in the community run deep. I have lived here over 40 years. I am a retired Waterford public school teacher, served 10 terms as a Waterford RTM Representative, and in a bipartisan capacity as RTM Moderator and on the Senior Citizens' Commission. I recently retired as CT Commissioner of Labor.

I believe our community has not benefited from strong advocacy on issues of importance to our district.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

I pledge to work tirelessly to build a better future for CT., create more local job opportunities, enhance smart economic development, promote fiscal responsibly utilizing more collaboration, resolve education funding issues, intensify mental health and addiction services and advocate for a dignified retirement for seniors. I would love to talk with you about improving the lives of working families. Please call me at 860.235.4333.

**Kathleen McCarty** (Republican, Independent)

No response received.

**Lauren Shaw** (Green)

No response received.

For State Representative - 39<sup>th</sup> District

**Ronna Stuller** (Green Party)

Campaign website: [www.nlgreens.org/ronnaforrep.html](http://www.nlgreens.org/ronnaforrep.html)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RonnaforRep39](http://www.facebook.com/RonnaforRep39)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

(a) To bring a fresh perspective to the important issues faced by the legislature, including fiscal priorities, infrastructure needs, social and educational justice, and environmental realities.

(b) To represent all New Londoners and advocate for our city and Connecticut's other distressed municipalities, whose health is essential for sustaining a vibrant quality of life and economic resiliency in our state.

(c) To increase awareness of Green Party values – grassroots democracy, nonviolence, ecological wisdom, social justice, community-based economics, decentralization, responsibility and future focus – and broaden the political arena beyond the Republican and Democratic Party duopoly.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

(a) To support Connecticut's PUBLIC schools by reducing the funding gap between our state's wealthy and poor districts, increasing state financing of special education costs, stopping the proliferation of charter schools, and discontinuing the use of standardized testing to evaluate students, teachers and districts.

(b) To reconsider our current drug policy and base new legislation on science and harm reduction: to support public health and address our current opioid crisis, end racial disparities in our justice system and reduce incarceration overall, to legalize and regulate medicinal, recreational and industrial cannabis.

(c) To restore the financial health of Connecticut by creating a public bank, allowing municipalities more flexibility in administering property taxes, making our income tax more progressive, and carefully examining spending priorities.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

There are 3 areas in which there are barriers to voting in Connecticut:

(a) Registration and voting – By implementing DMV registration, Connecticut has reduced some barriers; however, I would support further changes, including making Election Day a holiday and allowing more liberal use of absentee ballots.

(b) Becoming informed about candidates – In some races, minor party candidates may be excluded from debates even if they are on the ballot; I would support a requirement to invite all candidates to every debate and forum. I would also support changes to CEP to make it more equitable.

(c) The ballot – Our paper ballot, which emulates the old lever machines, can be confusing and encourages party line voting; I would like to see an improved design that lists candidates for each office in random order independent of party affiliation; Washington DC has an excellent ballot design that could be adapted here.

**Chris Soto** (Democratic)

No response received.

**Andrew Lockwood** (petitioning)

No response received.

For State Representative - 40<sup>th</sup> District

**John Scott** (Republican, Independent)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/johnscottstaterep/>

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

In me, the voters of this district have the most qualified candidate for the job of State Representative. I remain an active entrepreneur, so I understand the needs of running a business, creating jobs, making payroll, and running a fiscally sound organization. All skills this State desperately need. At the same time, I now have experience in Hartford, and therefore I've learned valuable lessons about collaboration and cooperation to get legislation moved forward. Finally, I remain a firmly-positioned minority party representative and while in office I have an alternative voice to the budgets, fiscal nightmares, and short-sited corporate welfare of Malloy and the Democratic Party. We just can't have two more years of one-party rule, or the State will suffer further decay.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

**Jobs/Economy** – The state is still missing a lot of jobs lost in the last downturn in our economy. Newly created jobs have not been of the same caliber of the ones that have been lost. The regulatory and taxation environment in Connecticut has caused higher paying, office and manufacturing jobs to leave and they have not been replaced.

**Outward Migration Problem** – The Yankee Institute reports that in a two year period over 27,000 people left Connecticut taking with them \$3.8 billion in taxable income. This loss trickles downward in multiple losses in revenue to the state through lost sales taxes and fees. This issue is multifaceted but really comes down to cost of living.

**State Budget** – This will certainly be our largest problem going forward. Projected shortfalls for the next biennium are approaching \$4 billion as revenue continues to decline.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

In eastern Connecticut I have not seen any barriers to voting. That said there have been issues in communities in other parts of the state where there has been an election day mishap resulting in disenfranchised voters. I think that better training for registrars is necessary as well as a thorough review of registration processes so that people are associated with the correct party and are registered to vote as requested.

**Christine Conley** (Democratic, Working Families)

No response received.

For State Representative - 46<sup>th</sup> District (Norwich)

**Bonnie Hong** (petitioning)

Website: [www.bonniehong.net](http://www.bonniehong.net)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/bonnieusso>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bonnie.hong.395>

*1. Why are you running?*

As State Representative for the 46th Assembly seat, I will bring a strong voice to Hartford. Yearly reductions of State payments and grants to our municipal budget has caused cuts in essential services and education. The State's Financial Crisis cannot be sustained on the backs of working middleclass and low income wage earning. By raising the minimum wage to \$15.00/ hour we raise the revenue in the Budget. By enacting Sustinet, the public option Healthcare Insurance we reduce the short and long term debt obligations the State has to current and retired State Employees, as well as reducing the Budget of every Municipality. By having the State re-direct it resources to investing in Green jobs, we strengthen the State Economy, create new good paying jobs, and fight the effects of Climate Change. By ensuring that we have fair taxation and no Corporate Welfare, we will increase the State revenues.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

d) Fair Taxation for all. No more Tax reduction and State Bond give-away deals for profitable Corporations. e) Ethics and politics can co-exist, and should. I will introduce the AMERICAN ANTICORRUPTION ACT in the State Legislature. f) I believe we need an Occupancy Tax (Hotel/Motel/B&B) to support our municipal Budgets. This could mean at least \$500,000, to the City of Norwich.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in CT? If so what would you do to eliminate them?*

Connecticut has opened up voting to a greater extent than most other States, by allowing same day voter registration. However, in 2014 Connecticut voters rejected an amendment to the state's constitution giving the General Assembly power to consider allowing early and expanded absentee voting. I believe this would have helped increase voter participation in all elections. With more people voting we experience higher levels of Community participation and a stronger voice in Hartford for policies that directly working families. This issue should be revisited and more public education should be provided before it is placed on the ballot. But I think that the biggest obstacle to getting voters engaged is the frustrated of having our voices being ignored and elected officials pursuing their own agendas and those of vested special interests. To have our VOTE and VOICE heard, registered voters need to have a Public Ballot Initiative or Referendum.

**Emmett Riley** (Democratic, Working Families)

No response received.

**Rob Dempsey** (Republican, Independent)

No response received.

For State Representative – 53<sup>rd</sup> District

**Susan Eastwood** (Democratic, Working Families)

Web: [www.Eastwood2016.com](http://www.Eastwood2016.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Susan-Eastwood-for-State-Representative-1150696094961367/>

*Why are you running for this office?*

I'm running because everyone in our community should have access to great opportunities - the opportunity for an excellent public education; equable economic opportunity, access to quality and

affordable healthcare; to a clean and a sustainable environment; and an affordable retirement. I will fight hard for quality education, good jobs and health care for all Connecticut citizens. I would like to focus on several issues which will benefit Connecticut workers and their families: supporting quality education without placing an unduly high burden on towns and property owners; new job creation; a clean and healthy environment and economic security. The work I have done in the areas of environmental health, work place safety, domestic violence, education, support of open space and working farms all make me a candidate who will be a strong advocate for the people of the district.

*What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

1. Education - I would support increased state funding for education and full-funding of mandates such as special education. I would work to increase resources for early childhood education, for additional support services in schools and to improve our fine state college system. Increasing state funding for education will help to take the burden off towns to fund their schools primarily through property taxes.
2. Jobs - I am particularly interested in promoting green and emerging technology jobs as this will move Connecticut to the forefront of a modern economy. Supporting agriculture will help to strengthen the economy of rural Connecticut with new jobs and small agriculture-related businesses.
3. Economic Security – We must pass pay equity laws and Paid Family Medical Leave to ensure economic security for all Connecticut citizens. I have actively supported both of these as a Commissioner on the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Low voter turnout in Connecticut, especially in the cities, indicates that voting is not easy to do for many citizens. The demands of family and work often make it difficult to get to the polls and long lines and confusing rules can discourage potential voters.

Online, same day and automatic voter registration will help to get people on the roles. Better education on registration and how to vote by absentee ballot could also help voter participation. Providing better transportation options to the polls could also help with turnout. At the polls, we must ensure that translators are available for non-English speakers and sufficient ballots and equipment are on hand to help keep the process moving smoothly.

Looking ahead, we should fund voter education and work to make voting easier and more accessible. Why not allow a longer period of time for voting, or simply remove restrictions on absentee voting?

**Sam Belsito** (Republican, Independent)

No Response received.

For State Representative - 61<sup>st</sup> District (Suffield, East Granby, Windsor)

**Tami Zawistowski** (Republican, Independent)

Website: [www.tamizforthe61st.com](http://www.tamizforthe61st.com)

Facebook: /RepZawistowski

Twitter: @tamizawistowski

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I'm a Connecticut native and very proud of our fine state. But our economy has been in the doldrums for so long that it has truly hurt people. I own a small business in which I buy and sell

used and rare books - buying locally and selling internationally. Over the past several years, more and more people from which I purchased books were selling them because they were moving out of state – sometimes for affordability and sometimes because their children had already moved away – or sometimes because they needed the money. It’s for these people, and others like them, that I became involved in politics. I want to make things better in Connecticut, to unlock its potential to again become an economic powerhouse with great jobs and a lower cost of living.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

First, we need to address our state’s population loss as well as the aging of our population. To counter this, we need to make our state more attractive for younger people to remain here, which includes affordability. If our population continues to shrink, the smaller base will be responsible for higher taxes and a greater debt burden, continuing the downward spiral. Second, a better business climate, which must include predictability. Even our smallest businesses plan long-term. The state needs to think long-term as well, with much more accurate revenue projections so that we don’t have the type of sudden tax increases that drive our employers away. Third, excessive debt is a damper on our economy and uses funds that could be better used to support things like education and infrastructure. The first step to solving this problem is to stop piling on new debt for non-essential projects and uses.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Connecticut voters have ready access to both voter registration and voting facilities. Recently implemented automatic voter registration through the Department of Motor Vehicles has had a few glitches but has resulted in a large number of new voter registrations. Recently enacted legislation now allows for same-day voter registration, which also increases ease of access. There have been some reported problems with voting in our larger cities, but other than occasionally long lines, things have run very smoothly at the polls in my district. I just wish more people would actually exercise their right to vote.

**Michael Malloy** (Democratic)

No response received.

For State Representative - 67<sup>th</sup> District

**Mary Lundgren** (Democratic, Working Families)

web page: [www.lundgren4staterep.com](http://www.lundgren4staterep.com)

*1: Why I am Running for Office*

I am running for office to move Connecticut’s economy in a positive direction that is more equitable, sustainable and will improve the quality of life for all residents, especially middle and lower income families. I believe that the educational and health care needs of Connecticut residents is a vital component of this goal. In order to attract and keep jobs in Connecticut, we need a workforce that is prepared to step up to fill vocational and technology jobs of the future. Lowering the cost of higher education, more vocational / technical schools, and better, less expensive health care premiums will move Connecticut in this direction.

The drug addiction epidemic is destroying the lives and families of many Connecticut residents. Cities and Towns need more resources to solve this problem.

I am committed to finding and implementing solutions for this problem that crosses all socio-economic barriers.

*2: Three Top legislative Priorities:*

1: Lower Costs of Higher Education and Establish More Vocational / Technical Schools: In-state tuition is still out of reach for many Connecticut students and families.

Incentive plans to reduce income tax for graduating seniors out of accredited colleges or technical/vocational schools would encourage graduates to stay and live in Connecticut.

Connecticut needs trained workers to fill manufacturing, bioscience, healthcare aerospace and engineering jobs that we currently have in the state.

2: Improve Health Care Access: Access to health care is still too expensive for many Connecticut residents on the exchange. The State needs to negotiate better rates and coverage.

Paid Family and Medical Leave is a path to healthier Connecticut residents.

3: Restore Funding for Safety Net Programs:

The legislature needs to restore Medicaid funding to parents based on new income thresholds.

Increase funding and support for Cities and Towns for substance abuse education, treatment and mental health counseling.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Yes, I do believe there are still barriers to voting in Connecticut. Lower income and levels of education are still a barrier for voting. Also, voters are still not able to register on voting day at their actual voting place.

Establishing neighborhood groups and encouraging more residents to participate in community affairs can empower and engage people in the voting process.

On Line voting needs to be implemented in Connecticut.

**William Buckbee** (Republican, Independent)

No response received.

**Cynthia L. Day** (Green)

No response received.

For State Representative – 76<sup>th</sup> District

**Myrna Watanabe** (Democratic)

Website: [www.Myrna2016.com](http://www.Myrna2016.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Myrna2016/](http://www.facebook.com/Myrna2016/)

Twitter: @myrnafor76

*Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for state representative because most of this district has been sorely neglected by our current representation at both the state Assembly and Senate levels. I have the background, knowledge and skills to represent and fight for our district and to intelligently deal with state issues. As a college biology teacher with 30+ years of experience, mostly at the community college level, I see recent high school graduates in my classroom, and am aware of many of the educational deficits they have from being in a weak public educational system, especially in the cities. As an investigative science reporter, I have the skills to research and understand public policy issues, particularly related to science, such as global warming and mitigation of it, the state organization of public health services, identification and treatment of epidemics, etc. I will represent our towns and serve the state's residents.

*What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

First, I would like to participate in the state's legally required reorganization of education and school funding. Our schools should not fail our children and educational funding should be fair. We can't have a failing school system for cities and stellar school systems in wealthier suburbs. All school systems in the state should be stellar. Second, and part of the first priority: I will support free community college for every person in the state who wants to attend. I see the struggles of my students: perhaps having two jobs, plus school and family responsibilities. Free community college for all would assist many of them. Third, I would like to see a one stop shop for small businesses, particularly those that are not in high tech fields, so that the state can aid them with tax breaks, grants, low-interest loans and lower licensing costs.

*Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what you do to eliminate them?*

Yes, there are. We need to legislatively tackle election reform. We need: 1) a no-excuses absentee ballot (or, as done in Oregon and other places, a mail-in ballot for everyone); 2) lacking a mail-in ballot, early voting at times and days convenient for voters (late night hours, weekends); 3) we need to have legislative authority to make sure that towns and cities do not arbitrarily close polling places, making it difficult for minorities and the elderly to vote; 4) we need to make sure registration is easy. Motor voter is a start, but every single state or community government interaction should trigger an automatic registration of those not already registered, such as those registering a deed to a house, those paying personal property taxes, with one's state tax returns, etc.

**John Piscopo** (Republican)

No response received.

For State Representative – 77<sup>th</sup> District

**Laura Bartok** (Democratic, Working Families)

Website: [www.LauraBartok.com](http://www.LauraBartok.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ElectLauraBartok](https://www.facebook.com/ElectLauraBartok)

Twitter: @Laura\_Bartok

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I'm running because I have a passion for ensuring that policy and laws are serving the people, rather than hurting them. I was born and raised in Bristol, so I want to give back. With my familiarity of the legislative process at the state capitol, I know how to get the job done on day one. My experience, my background in social work and policy as well as my dedication to service is what we need in our next State Representative.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My top three legislative priorities are ones I continually hear from voters while knocking on doors and meeting people across the district. They include fixing the lack of sufficient education funding for local schools, addressing our state's current budget situation while supporting innovative job creation efforts, and ensuring our service members in the military and veterans have the resources and support they deserve.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Yes, I do believe there are obstacles for voters in the Nutmeg State. One major problem is that, unlike more than thirty other states, early voting is not yet allowed. This issue was the single question on the ballot in 2014 statewide, but it did not pass. It is so important that people exercise their right to vote and this would simplify the process in one specific way. While that is just one particular example, it highlights the need to make the act of casting one's ballot as easy and simple as possible so more residents can let their voice be heard.

**Clara Christine Pavalock** (Republican, Independent)  
No response received.

For State Representative – 80<sup>th</sup> District

**Rob Sampson** (Republican, Independent; unopposed)

Website: <http://www.sampsonforct.com/>

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/sampsonforct](http://www.facebook.com/sampsonforct)

Twitter: rep80

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am concerned about the direction of our state government. I believe we should be spending and taxing less and making Connecticut more friendly to businesses and consumers. I would like our state to be at the top of the list of best places to live for everyone – from young working people who want to start a family, for retired seniors, and everyone between. I believe we need better priorities and better planning in our state budgeting process to accomplish the above without damaging our state's economy, hospitals, those in need, or further raising taxes. In short, less busways, less bronze statues, and more emphasis on what is critical to the future of our state and also an appropriate function of state government, like maintaining our existing transportation infrastructure and providing for public safety.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

- 1) Make Connecticut more friendly to live and work.
- 2) More responsible budgeting – less wasteful spending, less taxes
- 3) Protect civil liberties and defend constitutional protections on liberty

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I believe it is easier to vote now than ever in the history of our state and country so no I don't. I do however, have grave concerns about the integrity of elections and feel that we need to do everything possible to make sure that we have fair and honest elections. Same day voter registration and providing driver's licenses to illegal aliens are two recent policy adoptions in our state that should cause us concern.

For State Representative - 85<sup>th</sup> District (Wallingford)

**Serge Mihaly** (Republican, Independent)

*Why did I choose to run?*

Quite frankly I am fed up with the failure of our Democratic party dominated State government. Filled with career politicians they have led our State into an inexcusable financial crisis. Continually increasing taxes have driven families, neighbors and businesses out of state. My opponent, Mary

Mushinsky, has been in office for 36 years and has supported increasing taxes throughout her career including the Income tax which passed by only one vote in 1991. She also voted for Governor Malloy's past two \$1.5 billion tax increases. You would think that after all these years our state would be in excellent financial shape. It is anything but. This must end. If we are to fix Hartford we need to send new people there.

*What are my legislative priorities?*

My 3 priorities are to 1. oppose then reduce Connecticut's tax burden on people and businesses, 2. Reduce the size and scope of government so the 'need' for higher and higher taxes will end and 3. Help create and pass an intelligent Term Limit bill that will be added to our State's Charter.

*Do I believe there are barriers to voting?*

No.

**Mary Mushinsky** (Democratic, Working Families)

No response received.

For State Representative - 88<sup>th</sup> District

**Joshua Elliott** (Democratic, Working Families)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

Because I believe that the largest problem we have in CT is the way our economy works. Until we pay all of workers a livable wage, there will not be enough disposable income to induce new entrants to markets.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

\$15 Minimum Wage, Paid Family Medical Leave, Stripping large educational organization of their tax exempt status.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

It is great to see our system of automatic enrollment through the DMV becoming a driving force in ensuring the empowerment of our citizens. There is still the issue of low income earners being unable to take Tuesdays off to vote - I believe that we need a state-wide holiday for voting, or perhaps change our voting days to a Saturday or Sunday.

**Marjorie Bonadies** (Republican)

No response received.

For State Representative – 90<sup>th</sup> District

**Craig C. Fishbein, Esq.** (Republican, Independent)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running because I love my community and state. Connecticut is a great state, with much to offer. But that greatness is eroding away as the state government is addicted to spending and unwilling to enter rehab. Everyone is fleeing the insanity. College graduates are considering elsewhere first. I think that as a member of the Wallingford Town Council, I have brought to the table a different way of looking at government. I have strived for efficiencies, openness and

transparency. I have sought smaller government, lower taxes, and less interference in the day-to-day affairs of our law-abiding citizens. I have come prepared to meetings and asked a lot of questions in order to make a better local government I hope to bring these goals and principles to the legislature and, working together with my colleagues, help to right the sinking ship.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

Spending.

Taxes.

Reducing unnecessary regulations that are harmful to an otherwise prosperous business climate.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

No. Not applicable.

**Patrick Reynolds** (Democratic)

No response received.

For State Representative - 99<sup>th</sup> District

**James Albis** (Democratic, Working Families)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for office to make East Haven and the State of Connecticut a better place to live. East Haven is a very blue-collar, family-oriented community. My parents taught me the value of hard work and giving back to my community through public service, as they have been public servants their whole working lives. I want to make East Haven and Connecticut a better place by ensuring that every person who works full-time can earn a living wage to provide for their family, make sure seniors can live their retirement years with dignity, and expand opportunities for young graduates of our vo-tech schools, community colleges, and universities to be able to work and live in our state after graduating. We have so much potential in our state that is just waiting to be harnessed.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My top three legislative priorities are job creation, protecting our seniors, and working to solve problems in a bipartisan manner. We are all sick of the gridlock in Washington. I want to give East Haven residents a reason to be proud of the work that is going on in Hartford and show them, as I have for the past six years, that it is possible to accomplish big things when you work across party lines. We must expand on bipartisan initiatives that create jobs and improve the quality of life in Connecticut like the small business express program, connecting manufacturers with Connecticut students, or aging-in-place.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

The biggest barriers to voting in Connecticut are our outdated absentee ballot rules. We should follow the lead of other states, both blue and red, in expanding opportunities for early voting and no-excuse mail-in ballots. I have supported these initiatives in the past. Unfortunately, making these types of changes requires amending our state constitution, which is no easy task. I will continue to work to make easier access to voting, the cornerstone of our democracy and our rights as U.S. citizens, a reality for all Connecticut residents.

**“Big” Steve Tracey** (Republican, Independent)

No response received.

For State Representative - 100<sup>th</sup> District (Middletown)

**Matt Lesser** (Democratic, Working Families)

Twitter: @mattlesser

Facebook @mattlesserct

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I work every day to make Middletown a better place to live and work, growing our middle class and supporting our families. I want to continue my record of service as we face a rocky state budget over the next two years.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

I will work to tackle the rising cost of student debt, pass paid family and medical leave and invest in Middletown: its schools, senior center, Route 9 and the waterfront.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

I oppose barriers to voting. I support expanding automatic voter registration, enacting early voting and universal absences and a slew of other reforms to expand voter participation. I have been a champion of election reform on the GAE committee and will do everything in my power to protect the right to vote.

Rev. **Anthony R.J. Moran** (Republican)

Website: [www.moranforstaterep100th.weebly.com](http://www.moranforstaterep100th.weebly.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/moranforstaterep100th](http://www.facebook.com/moranforstaterep100th)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/amoranfor100th](http://www.twitter.com/amoranfor100th)

E-Mail: [amoranforstaterep100th@outlook.com](mailto:amoranforstaterep100th@outlook.com)

*1: Why did I choose to run?*

I chose to run because it is time for new and fresh ideas to be brought to the capitol. My opponent have been in office for 4 terms and I believe that he has stopped being his fiduciary responsibility as an elected official and now only votes party politics. I am sick and tired of people like this so I decided to run.

*2: What are my 3 top legislative priorities?*

The 3 top legislative priorities for me are:

- Criminal Justice Reform: Both our Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement System needs to be reformed to help stop discriminating the lower class.
- Gun Control/2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment: The state should not tell us what we can and can not do we are protected as U.S. Citizens the right to bear arms and congress (state or federal) can not infringe that right
- Cut Spending/Lower Taxes: Under the current legislative leadership we are spending too much on less needed projects that is wasting money. I also promise never to raise or vote to raise taxes if elected.

*3: What do I believe are voting barriers in Connecticut? What will I do to eliminate them?*

The main voting barrier in this state is Voter ID requirements. The way we can eliminate this is allow the DMV to create a program where not only the homeless can be eligible for free IDs but also open it up to Driver's License and also if you receive any form of public funding (SNAP, Section 8, SSI, etc.) And if you provide sufficient evidence you receive this assistance you can get a free ID or even a Driver's License,

For State Representative - 105<sup>th</sup> District (Middletown)

**Theresa Conroy** (Democratic, Working Families)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I understand that voters in Seymour, Derby and Beacon Falls are under incredible pressure to make ends meet. I am committed to making things better. I want to provide real solutions for the real problems facing families, seniors and young people. Real solutions do not come from politics as usual. They come from people who are invested in our community, coming together, sharing ideas and working together.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

Jobs, lowering taxes and the opioid epidemic. I will continue to pursue policies that cut red tape for businesses and provide manufacturing skills for our next generation of workers. I am also backing proposals to exempt Social Security from the state income tax and provide tax relief for new college graduates who live and work in Connecticut. And finally, we face an historic public health crisis in Connecticut. Over 850 will die of drug overdoses this year. We have taken important steps to limit access to prescription opioids and increase access to lifesaving overdose reversal drugs, but more needs to be done.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

Everyone who is eligible to vote should be able to without jumping through hoops. Democracy works best when voters participate. I would like to expand access to early voting to open the doors of the voting booth to more people.

**Nicole Klarides-Ditra** (Republican, Independent)

No response received.

For State Representative - 110<sup>th</sup> District

**Emanuela Palmares** (Republican, Independent)

website: [www.emanuela2016.com](http://www.emanuela2016.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/voteemanuela](https://www.facebook.com/voteemanuela)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for office because the 110th needs a leader who has a ground-level understanding of its diversity and challenges, who is willing to foster a relationship with all of its residents and give them a voice in the legislature.

More than 45% of the 110th's population are Latino, almost 50% are women, and about 20% are children. The languages most spoken in our community are English, Portuguese and Spanish.

I am a single mother of a special needs child that needs services. I am a partner in a small business who feels the heavy burden of CT's tax policies. I am an immigrant who was undocumented, went

through a long process to become a citizen, and have devoted my career to bringing people together. I was raised in the 110th, I live in the 110th, and I am working very hard to have the honor to serve it.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

**SCHOOL FUNDING**

Connecticut needs school funding reform. Schools should be funded based on student need. Students at Morris Street, Park Avenue, Rogers Park and South Street schools deserve better.

**THE BUDGET**

Connecticut must prioritize its budget with a focus on education, health, and social services. Just as we manage our household budgets, Connecticut cannot spend more than it makes.

**BUSINESS AND JOB CREATION**

To create a sustainable economy, we need a business climate with incentives open to ALL companies willing to create jobs in our state, not programs open just to a select few.

Our state has one of the highest tax burdens in the nation. Our residents and business need tax relief. We need measures that support our small businesses, and bring back manufacturing to our area.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Yes. Election day should be a national holiday. People who are born in the US should be automatically registered and given an option to opt out when they turn 18 years of age. Naturalized American citizens should be the only ones required to go through the voter registration process. The one thing I would not do is to make the Department of Motor Vehicles in charge of the process. The right to vote is the bedrock of our democracy, America wins when more Americans vote.

**Bob Godfrey** (Democratic, Working Families)

No response received.

For State Representative - 112<sup>th</sup> District (Monroe, Newtown)

**JP Sredzinski** (Republican, Independent; unopposed)

Website ([www.jpforstaterep.com](http://www.jpforstaterep.com))

Facebook: State Representative JP Sredzinski

Twitter: @jpsredzinski

*Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for re-election to the office of State Representative to continue serving as Monroe and Newtown's voice at the State Capitol. The 112<sup>th</sup> District deserves a hard working legislator willing to fight for their needs in Hartford, something I have done since my first election in 2014. Ensuring adequate state funding along with advocating on laws and policies favorable to the residents and citizens of Monroe and Newtown are both important parts of the job.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

a. Affordability – Connecticut is a very expensive place to live, work and raise a family. From students right out of school to families raising children to retirees; our taxes, fees, utility costs and general cost of living is very high in Connecticut and it is something we ultimately must address through state fiscal policy.

- b. State Economy – Connecticut is notorious for being unfriendly toward business and this needs to change. In order to have a strong economy, we need stable, well-paying jobs. In order to attract those jobs, the State needs to establish business friendly policies that attract good companies.
- c. Quality of Life – This item catches many different issues such as education, infrastructure, environmental protection and more. Quality of life in Connecticut means to continue to work toward a better state to live in and raise a family.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

a. The main barrier to voting in Connecticut takes the form of voter mismanagement by some towns and cities that have made critical mistakes in recent years. We have seen instances of polling places running out of ballots, printing the wrong ballots, or having a lack of poll workers to make the process run smoothly. This is a significant barrier because it discourages some from voting and creates a natural mistrust that one person = one vote. Municipalities that struggle with administering elections need to be supplemented with direct assistance from the Secretary of State's office. Those municipalities that do not struggle should not be interfered with. However if problems exist, we as a society cannot sit idly by without intervening and making sure our elections are held as smoothly as possible.

For State Representative – 118<sup>th</sup> District (Milford)

**Kim Rose** (Democratic, Working Families, Independent)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I have had the honor of serving as Milford's State Representative for the past six years. I am recognized as being able to work across party lines and I have been endorsed by the Democrats, the Milford Independent Party and the Working Families Party. I am seeking re-election to continue putting Milford's interests first.

I became active in politics when a developer had proposed a large affordable housing project that would radically change a neighborhood. We organized the neighbors and defeated the project. After that fight I ran for and won a seat on the Planning and Zoning Board. It became clear to me that many of the issues we were fighting against were created in Hartford and when the opportunity presented itself to run for State Representative to bring the fight to Hartford, I ran and won the seat.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

Government should be there to help people not make it harder, we need bring common-sense solutions to Hartford. I get frustrated with folks in Hartford that lose sight of what is really important:

Investing in early childhood initiatives, they produce the best return on investment of any program we do. Helping kids get on the right path for the future helps us all but it seems when money is spent in the budget return on investment is forgotten.

We need to work towards making CT business friendly, reducing red tape and increasing our investments in maintaining and recruiting businesses here in CT.

I was happy to support a state budget last year that allowed Milford to actually lower our property taxes. I believe government can be more efficient, programs need to be streamlined and budgets need to be tightened and every program needs to be as efficient as possible.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

Every citizen of the United States has the right to vote. It is one of the things that makes our country great but with today's work schedules sometime it is hard to get to the polling place. Connecticut has fallen behind on making it easier for people to vote, I think we should follow the lead of other states around the county and allow early voting for our citizens.

**Rick Varrone** (Republican)

No response received.

For State Representative - 120<sup>th</sup> District

**Laura Hoydick** (Republican, Independent)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

Public service has been a major component of my life. When serving, I am able to positively contribute to my community. I am running for public office so I may continue to serve the residents of Stratford by being their voice in Hartford and to represent their priorities and needs.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My top three legislative priorities are job growth, budget and financial stability and improved child support collection.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

Previous voting barriers are being eliminated with the creation of online voter registration and the ability to register to vote when at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

*4. Should Connecticut institute high-speed (e.g., E-ZPass) tolls on major highways to help pay for road and rail improvements? If so, where?*

Routinely governors and legislatures raid the funds for non-transportation purposes. I do not believe Connecticut should institute tolls on our highways. Rather I would support a Special Transportation Fund lock box meant to protect the dedicated funds derived from taxes to be spent on only transportation expenditures.

**Frederick Streets** (Democratic)

No response received.

Clifton Price (petitioning)

No response received.

For State Representative - 121<sup>st</sup> District (Stratford)

**Joe Gresko** (Democratic; unopposed)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I'm seeking re-election to continue my service to Stratford. I have a unique combination of both public and private work experience, along with working both behind the scenes and in the forefront on issues. Stratford is a great town and I want to do my part to make it even better by doing what I can to promote economic development and improved education.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My top legislative priorities include helping our recycling redemption centers to stay in business by increasing their handling fee reimbursements, working on a new education cost sharing formula that brings Stratford its fair share of education funds and promoting manufacturing incentives to spur economic development.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

I believe Connecticut is moving in the right direction with its recent compliance with the "motor voter" program, but I'd like to see "no excuse" absentee ballots as our next barrier to overcome.

For State Representative - 132<sup>nd</sup> District

For More Information on Candidate Positions

| Candidates      | Party | Web Site                       | Facebook                                 | Twitter         |
|-----------------|-------|--------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Dru Giorgiadis  | D     | Vote4Dru.com                   | vote4Dru                                 | @Vote4Dru       |
| Brenda Kupchick | R, I  | Brendakupchickforfairfield.com | Brenda Kupchick for State Representative | @BrendaKupchick |

**Dru Giorgiadis** (Democratic)

Website: [www.vote4dru.com](http://www.vote4dru.com)

Facebook: Dru Giorgiadis for State Representative

Twitter: @vote4dru132

*Why are you running for this office?*

I'm running for State Representative because I genuinely care about people and finding real solutions to problems. Connecticut's economy has changed, and we need to change with it. I was raised by a single mom who brought up three girls on \$12,000 a year. My family worked to make ends meet and, in the face of our budgetary crisis, Connecticut needs to do the same. I know the value of money and how to advocate for myself and the people I care about. And I apply time, focus, and determination to everything I do. As a community leader and activist, I've learned that if you want to make a difference, you've got to roll your sleeves up and do the work. That's exactly what I've done in Fairfield and I'll bring that same work ethic when I'm representing you in Hartford.

*What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

Connecticut's budget deficit will be nearly a billion dollars in 2017. Our credit rating has plummeted due to reckless borrowing, making it harder for us to afford important programs. I will push for greater accountability in state spending to ensure that our tax dollars are used effectively and Fairfield gets its fair share. And I will work to develop the economic vibrancy of Connecticut's cities to make them stronger contributors to growth. We need fiscal responsibility, not politics as usual. Education is the cornerstone of Connecticut's vibrant economy. I am committed to securing a brighter future for our children by championing stronger schools statewide, restoring Fairfield's educational funding, and keeping property taxes in check. Patients in Connecticut are still over-prescribed highly addictive painkillers. I will work to further limit access and enforce strict

penalties for excessive distribution of prescription pain medicine, while improving access to rehabilitation and treatment.

*Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

The most significant barrier to voting in Connecticut is our lack of early voting. It is time for us to join the other 33 States that have already taken this step to ensure that all citizens have the opportunity to exercise their most important Constitutional right. The success of our Democracy hinges upon an active, engaged electorate. Other states that have taken this step to combat low turnout have been successful. As a former commuter who caught the 6:07 AM train into NYC and often didn't return home until 7:30, I understand the need for early voting firsthand. As the hours of salaried jobs expand, commutes become longer, and the schedules of hourly workers grow increasingly unpredictable, it is becoming clearer than ever that we need to adopt early voting to protect the rights of Connecticut's citizens.

*4. What do you propose as specific, achievable strategies for balancing the state budget? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

Connecticut's debt is one of the greatest challenges we face. In 2017 our deficit will be nearly a billion dollars, and that number is projected to increase over the next three years. Unsustainable borrowing has destroyed our credit and created an unstable business environment. We need to put a lid on this practice, pay down our debt, reduce our long-term liabilities, and adopt higher accountability standards. We need to make smart investments in education and infrastructure to keep attracting new businesses—and their tax revenue—to our state. Connecticut relies too heavily upon property taxes; I support exploring new revenue models to make our cities vibrant contributors to our State economy. And I will push for greater transparency and efficiency in state spending, empowering the Office of Fiscal Analysis to evaluate and publish the impact of every line item to ensure that our tax dollars don't go to waste.

*5. What achievable strategies do you advocate to address CT's underfunded liabilities, such as bonded indebtedness, and state employee and teacher pensions and post-employment benefits? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

Connecticut's historically underfunded liabilities have compromised our fiscal health. It is crucial that we honor our past commitments to state employees. And it is equally important that we commit to full funding our long-term liabilities, covering recurring costs with recurring revenue. Hartford has been managing the budget poorly for two decades, and kicking our habit of kicking the can will not be easy. But we can start by bringing standards of compensation, post-employment benefits, and state employees per capita in line with those of other states in our region. We should do a better by our teachers to attract young families to our aging state. And we must reduce borrowing until our debt per capita becomes sustainable. The transition from band-aid solutions to long-term responsibility needs to start now. These changes will make Connecticut competitive, creating job growth and a business-friendly environment that benefits Fairfield and communities across our state.

*6. Some businesses claim state tax codes and regulations are a bigger headache for business owners than state tax rates. Do you agree? What specifics would you propose to tackle the issue near term in ways that aid business and spur job growth?*

Red tape stifles small businesses. Some regulation makes us safer: consumer protection laws keep food and medicine safe for our families; anti-trust laws promote competition, allowing start-ups to compete with larger corporations; and environmental laws stop companies from dumping carcinogens into our rivers and atmosphere. But overly robust regulation can stifle the most crucial

drivers of Connecticut's recovery: innovation, entrepreneurship, and job growth. If elected, I will work hard to balance these interests, making it easy for new businesses to come to Connecticut and for existing ones to expand. We can reduce bureaucratic inefficiency by simplifying our rules and making them easier to navigate online, replacing the messy network of agency websites with a central, searchable system. We should streamline our licensing process by lowering fees and shortening forms. And we must simplify our tax code, make it more transparent, and improve the quality of tax resources for business owners.

**Brenda Kupchick** (Republican, Independent)

Facebook: Brenda Kupchick for State Representative

Website: [www.BrendaKupchickforFairfield.com](http://www.BrendaKupchickforFairfield.com)

Twitter: BrendaKupchick

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I first ran for local office because I was tired of local politicians ignoring the concerns of my neighbors and friends. After founding a group that successfully worked to have the public's voice included in town decisions on education, I started to pay attention to the state legislature. Seniors, young people and those of us in between are facing serious challenges in Connecticut. Residents write, call and tell me in person they're worried and many are making plans to leave Connecticut. People are frustrated with the direction our state has gone; they don't like waste, arrogance or concentrated power in any one person or party. I do this work to be a common sense voice, to listen, learn and lead on issues important to the people of my hometown. Simply put, I run because I care. I believe a more balanced legislature can turn our state around.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

**Jobs/Economy:** The majority in the legislature has created an unsteady environment. The jobs Connecticut regained after the 2008 recession were mostly lower paying jobs. Of the 55,000 jobs lost paying more than \$80,000, only 8,200 have returned. We need to promote tax policy that encourages business investments, jobs, innovation and productivity.

**Budget:** The legislature's most important job is to develop and pass responsible budgets. It is imperative to set fiscal policy that's sustainable, business-friendly, and can support core government functions like public safety, education, transportation, infrastructure, protecting our environment, and caring for our seniors and our most vulnerable citizens.

**Transportation:** I believe infrastructure and transportation upgrades are vital if we want to increase our economic competitiveness. Our state's transportation infrastructure is in desperate need of improvements. In Fairfield County, commute times are extremely long due to overcrowded highways and inadequate Metro-North services. We need to prioritize investing in transportation.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I believe Connecticut has worked hard to increase voter registration and access. We have Election Day registration in Connecticut allowing citizens to register and vote on Election Day. We also have automatic voter registration which should add more voters to our state's rolls and increase opportunity to vote. We have given residents access to check if they are registered online and allow online registration which makes it much easier than the paper process of the past. In addition, Connecticut requires canvassing of electors in order to make sure voter rolls are as up to date as possible.

4. *What do you propose as specific, achievable strategies for balancing the state budget? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

Connecticut's debt is one of the highest in the country at \$22 billion. Over the past five years, the majority party doubled the amount of state borrowing. In this year's Republican alternative budget, we proposed reasonable levels of borrowing that would save more than \$1 billion over the first five years. We have over \$40 billion in unfunded liabilities. We need to make changes to the state's pension liability, such as excluding overtime pay from being factored in pension calculations. Moving new employees to defined contribution pension plans would result in significant savings. Finally, state employee healthcare benefits include zero deductible and five-dollar c/o pays for prescriptions. I supported a plan to set a fair moderate rate for state healthcare premiums that will save taxpayers over \$100 million a year and be more in line with the average citizen's healthcare costs

5. *What achievable strategies do you advocate to address CT's underfunded liabilities, such as bonded indebtedness, and state employee and teacher pensions and post-employment benefits? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

The legislature's most important job is to develop and pass responsible budgets that are sustainable, business-friendly, and can support core government functions such as public safety, education, transportation, infrastructure and caring for our seniors and most vulnerable citizens. Connecticut's budget is perpetually in deficit because revenue estimates are coming in far lower than expected. All future budgets must be based off achievable revenue estimates. We also need to reduce debt service by instituting a bond allocation cap. Another crucial part is securing labor savings that roll out into the future including controlling excessive overtime costs and the exclusion of overtime and legislative mileage from the calculation of pension benefits. I support a budget plan that reduces spending and creates a more efficient government through consolidating redundancies. We must budget based on what we have, not what we wish we had and only borrow what we can afford to pay back.

6. *Some businesses claim state tax codes and regulations are a bigger headache for business owners than state tax rates. Do you agree? What specifics would you propose to tackle the issue near term in ways that aid business and spur job growth?*

As a small business owner, I live with the frustration of running a business in Connecticut every day. CBIA's 2016 Survey of Small Businesses shows widespread concerns over threats to profitability and growth, with over 40% of respondents listing state government regulations, mandates, taxes, and costs as major issues. The biggest drawbacks, respondents said, are the state's taxes (particularly the personal income tax), regulatory burdens, and an anti-business attitude. Nine out of ten surveyed businesses said state government policies do not help efforts of small businesses in Connecticut.

We should promote tax policy that encourages business investments, jobs, innovation, and productivity, but the most important factor in improving Connecticut's business climate is to stabilize the state budget. We can do this through setting and enforcing a constitutional spending cap, and implementing sustainable budget reforms. We also should use zero-based budgeting and focus on delivering core functions of government.

For State Representative - 133<sup>rd</sup> District

For More Information on Candidate Positions:

| Candidates | Party | Web Site                 | Facebook | Twitter        |
|------------|-------|--------------------------|----------|----------------|
| Cristin    | D, WF | Cristinmccarthyvahey.com | Cmv2016  | @mccarthyvahey |

|                            |      |  |                      |                  |
|----------------------------|------|--|----------------------|------------------|
| McCarthy<br>Vahey          |      |  |                      |                  |
| Raymond<br>J.<br>Neuberger | R, I |  | neubergerforstaterep | @neubergerct2016 |

**Cristin McCarthy Vahey** (Democratic, Working Families)

Website: [www.Cristinmccarthyvahey.com](http://www.Cristinmccarthyvahey.com)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

After completing my first term as a State Representative for the 133<sup>rd</sup> district, I am eager to continue to serve my community and our state, collaborate with stakeholders and create solutions that will guide our state and all its residents toward a healthy and prosperous future. As a social worker, and with experience in local government, I believe in bringing together diverse groups of stakeholders who can listen to one another and create solutions.

Both Fairfield as a town and Connecticut as a state have many strengths. I believe that by building on those strengths and tapping into the diverse experience, education and passion of our populace, we will move forward together.

*2. Top Three Legislative Priorities*

Fighting for Economic Development and Job Creation

- Member of permanent Commission on Economic Competitiveness
- Championed LLC law, making Connecticut more competitive;
- Working closely with local businesses and economic development leaders

Strong Advocate for Public Schools and Higher Education

- Member, House Education Committee
- Championed Legislation to address outmoded student assessments;
- Worked with local advocates to develop Student Data Privacy legislation;
- Co-sponsored legislation to expedite approval of academic programs to meet industry needs through workforce training

Fighting to Revitalize our Transportation Infrastructure

- Advocating for public transit, trains and roadways that are safe, efficient and affordable and designed with an eye towards our future;
- State leader for pedestrian and bicycle safety and accessibility

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut?*

The right to vote is one which must be promoted and protected. We should take whatever steps we can to insure that all eligible voters have access to the ballot each and every Election Day.

During my husband's military service, we lived in a state that offered ballots by mail to any voter who made the request – no questions asked. Election Day Registration, early voting and no excuse absentee ballots are all ways to make voting more accessible to the voters of our state.

*4. What do you propose as specific, achievable strategies for balancing the state budget? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

Balancing the budget requires long term vision, not a short term fix. We must invest in education to grow a workforce that has the skills to meet the needs of the state's current and future business and economic growth. We must invest wisely in multimodal transportation that supports a vibrant business climate and technologies that reduce costs and our carbon footprint. We must continue the

work we started to create innovation places, CT 500 and update the LLC legislation to help grow and expand Connecticut businesses. We must scrutinize all expenses and properly prioritize our needs.

The recent announcements from Sikorsky and Pratt & Whitney each adding 8,000 jobs are a step in the right direction towards business expansion and job growth. Wise investment in business growth and job creation, supported by a well-educated population and a reliable infrastructure, will result in sustainable long term revenue for Connecticut.

*5. What achievable strategies do you advocate to address CT's underfunded liabilities, such as bonded indebtedness, and state employee and teacher pensions and post-employment benefits? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

Three of our state's Constitutional officers have outlined solutions to address our pension obligations. A collaborative approach that takes advantage of actuarial data, research and analysis will lead to the best long term solutions. I strongly support a strategy that encourages all parties to create an actionable solution to be tackled in steps, codified in legislation if necessary and implemented over several budget cycles. This will take leadership, vision and cooperation, but will result in protections for both our workers and taxpayers.

Connecticut's current liabilities are the result of decades of decisions by state leaders. To honor obligations that were made years ago to employees and communities, the recommendations made by our constitutional officers must be negotiated, agreed upon and put into action.

*6. Some businesses claim state tax codes and regulations are a bigger headache for business owners than state tax rates. Do you agree? What specifics would you propose to tackle the issue near term in ways that aid business and spur job growth?*

As a member of the permanent Commission on Economic Competitiveness, I join business, labor and academic leaders in addressing our state's business climate, economic growth and jobs. This past year I worked closely with local experts to assure updates to Connecticut's woefully outdated LLC law. This statute, which I co-sponsored, will make it simpler for new businesses to file here in Connecticut. It creates a clear and predictable set of "default rules" that fill gaps not addressed previously.

Programs like the Entrepreneur's Learner Permit program the legislature passed last session and others like it will help to pave the way for new businesses.

In addition I was endorsed by the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. I will continue to fight for business growth, jobs, local grants and funding for local projects.

**Raymond J. Neuberger** (Republican, Independent)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for State Representative in the 133rd district because as a young professional in Fairfield, I believe Connecticut needs to reverse course and not force residents and businesses to leave our great state. Current leadership has effectively driven corporate Connecticut and small business out-of-state, which has diminished our tax base, forcing the Fairfield taxpayers to shoulder a heavier tax burden. With a depleted tax roll and a swollen, budgetary payroll, Connecticut can no longer afford to spend more than revenue raised. As we have seen, the result in fiscal irresponsibility only result in cuts to Connecticut's most vulnerable, from precious education money to levying unmanageable taxes on our hospitals threatening the services and care for all. There is no greater issue this year than rectifying the budgetary practices in Hartford that have led us into billions of dollars of deficit.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

1. To revitalize our economy by providing companies with incentives to operate business in Connecticut which will retain and attract more jobs for Connecticut employees.
2. To protect all education dollars from the state to local municipalities that have been cut as a result of improper budgeting and reckless spending.
3. To eliminate all wasteful spending like a study on the Mileage Tax and work with fellow legislators to vote on exorbitant state employee contracts that have not been voted on or considered by the legislature in 30 years.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I don't currently believe there are any barriers to voting in Connecticut. I fully support the right of all U.S., law-abiding citizens to vote.

*4. What do you propose as specific, achievable strategies for balancing the state budget? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

In order to balance the budget, we need to increase revenue and decrease spending. Connecticut needs to start implementing policy in Hartford that facilitates business rather than impugning it. Legislators should implement zero-based budgeting so we are not funding programs that do not work or are completely inefficient.

On spending, we have to eliminate unnecessary waste like the Mileage Tax study and taxpayer funded campaigns. Curtailing state money used for political campaigns can save millions of dollars. Furthermore, our legislature needs to start voting on all state employee contracts. We have been rubber stamping contracts for 30 years without mitigation. Some contracts entitle employees that work 15 minutes of overtime to 4 hours of compensation.

Rules and regulations on small business' need to be moderated. Between 2011 and 2014, Connecticut had a net loss of 44,000 people and \$5 billion tax dollars to other states according to the Yankee Institute.

*5. What achievable strategies do you advocate to address CT's underfunded liabilities, such as bonded indebtedness, and state employee and teacher pensions and post-employment benefits? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

The very first measure to take is to make sure we don't add to underfunded liabilities, which seems to have been taken for granted amongst legislators over the last decade. Connecticut needs to move state pensions to a defined contribution benefit, like a 401k type plan. The state needs its 50,000 state employees to contribute substantially more to their healthcare.

In 2014, the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research stated that Connecticut offers its employees the best wages and benefits in the nation but unfortunately having both is unsustainable. Also, at the very least, the state must greatly reduce or completely eliminate overtime from the pension calculator. Gradual change shouldered by all 50,000 state employees will drastically reduce the unfunded liabilities placed on Connecticut.

*6. Some businesses claim state tax codes and regulations are a bigger headache for business owners than state tax rates. Do you agree? What specifics would you propose to tackle the issue near term in ways that aid business and spur job growth?*

Both state tax rates and codes/regulations equally provide major hindrances to job production and business growth. I would have supported Republican amendments to the state budget which would have rolled back taxes on small businesses, restored cuts to state hospitals, reduced the tax on computer data processing, reduced the online sales tax, and eliminated the unitary tax, the tax that convinced General Electric (GE) to leave CT.

After 25 years since the state income tax was introduced, we've lost nearly 200,000 residents with an estimated loss in \$8.7 billion according to the Yankee Institute. As a state, we need a board or committee specifically tasked with the responsibility of learning the code and regulation specifics that led to a departure from CT but most importantly to recruit new enterprise to Connecticut. Job growth can only be achieved if we allow businesses to do business cost-effectively and without government intervention.

For State Representative - 134<sup>th</sup> District

For More Information on Candidate Positions

| Candidates            | Party | Web Site             | Facebook                               | Twitter           |
|-----------------------|-------|----------------------|--|-------------------|
| Frederick Garrity Jr. | D     | Fredgarrity.com      | /fredgarrity2016                       | @fredgarrity      |
| Laura M. Devlin       | R, I  | Lauraforstaterep.com | /laura devlin for state representative | @lauradevlinct134 |

**Frederick Garrity Jr. (Democratic)**

Website: [www.Fredgarrity.com](http://www.Fredgarrity.com)

*1. What do you propose as specific, achievable strategies for balancing the state budget? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

The budget is required to be balanced every year, however it is the formula used, based on assumptive income projections not materializing that's the issue. Income taxes from the middle class are generally steady and predictable, a major flaw is income tax based on Wall Street gains from higher income brackets. The flux of unpredictable Wall Street gains taxed every year needs to be harnessed and balanced in a rainy day fund; using high income years to balance lower income years, creating real strategies and policies that are more predictable. When new legislators change tax laws, businesses can't plan investments, we need steady formulas that more accurately predict revenues, and most importantly reduce spending accordingly. We have to stop non mandatory spending when we are in a deficit. If we don't have it, we can't spend it. CT needs to be a State destination of choice for business.

*2. What achievable strategies do you advocate to address CT's underfunded liabilities, such as bonded indebtedness, and state employee and teacher pensions and post-employment benefits? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

A common theme to all our financial issues is creating policies that help attract companies to do more business in CT, thereby increasing revenues. We have to stop bonding beyond our means of safe or predictable return payment within our existing patterns of revenue income. Simply assuming tax increases to pay down our debt must cease. CT is in budgetary crisis management, accordingly, as a matter of necessity, a plan of priorities must work from high to low. By reducing current spending, we free up available capital for existing debt. Addressing current and future employee benefits to be in line with predicted revenue needs to be a priority. We can not balance a budget, or pay off our debt on the backs of our State employees, but in the same turn we need to be able to provide competitive wages and sustainable benefits for those employees.

*3. Some businesses claim state tax codes and regulations are a bigger headache for business owners than state tax rates. Do you agree? What specifics would you propose to tackle the issue near term in ways that aid business and spur job growth?*

I've talked with small business owners in Fairfield and Trumbull, they strongly reiterate the same message, that businesses need a level of predictability in their taxes that will be due for their own business plans to succeed. Constantly changing the tax codes, or creating retroactive taxes, are just more straws in the bad camel's back that are crippling our local businesses. Businesses can not predict inventory costs, manpower, and operating costs if the tax codes and regulations are ever changing. Setting tax rates during the budget process is needed, but stopping the creation of new taxes over continued spending without the equal revenue stream, needs to become standard procedure. When revenues decline, spending should decline, we should not be looking for new ways to tax businesses to make up budget gaps. Frankly speaking, our businesses deserve consistent tax laws, resulting in attracting new businesses to the state.

**Laura M. Devlin** (Republican, Independent)

Website: [www.Lauraforstaterep.com](http://www.Lauraforstaterep.com)

Facebook: Lauradevlinct134

Twitter: @repdevlin

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for re-election because I care about our local communities and our state. The ongoing tax and spend policies forced by the majority party in Hartford are pushing residents and businesses from our state and crippling our state's economy. I've lived in Fairfield for over 20 years. My husband and I were married here, and it's my children's hometown. Fairfield is where they were raised, educated and where they would like to earn a living and raise a family. But for them, like many others, Connecticut is unaffordable and jobs are scarce. This is a resounding theme I hear from voters – young and old – as I go door to door. I'm committed to continuing to work hard for Fairfield and Trumbull residents to address these issues in Hartford and return Connecticut to the great state it once was.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

**Jobs/Economy** – Connecticut ranks at or near the bottom of most every list as a business unfriendly state. Let's help companies choose Connecticut by reducing or eliminating job killing business taxes and unnecessary regulations. When we encourage companies to come, stay and grow – they'll create jobs, contribute revenue and help turn our economy around. This includes hospitals and healthcare providers who have been under attack by the majority in Hartford.

**Taxes/Affordability** - Let's return to common sense budgeting and spending at the state level, like we do at home. Spend no more than you make and borrow only what you can afford to pay back.

**Transportation** - For people and businesses to choose Connecticut, we need a reliable transportation infrastructure. It's time to for a truly secure "lock box," to end special interest projects and start investing in the busiest commuter line in the country and the roads in Fairfield County.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

As Americans, one of our most precious rights is that to vote. I believe strongly that every eligible person should exercise their right to vote and Connecticut's current laws support that. As a member of the Government, Administration and Elections committee, one of my priorities is ensuring the integrity around this privilege.

*4. What do you propose as specific, achievable strategies for balancing the state budget? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

It's time to return to common sense budgeting and spending at the state level, like we do at home. Spend no more than you make and borrow only what you can afford to pay back. I propose: Implementing a comprehensive spending cap – this was the deal made with voters and it should be kept. The accounting tricks that hide the real condition of our states' finances must end. Following the two largest tax increases in Connecticut's history, spending is up 26%. This is not sustainable as revenues continue to decline.

Reducing borrowing by establishing a bonding cap and ending the practice of selling bonds at a premium to cover operating expenses.

Privatizing certain state services to provide long-term savings. The DMV is a good example where a private company (AAA) is available to provide many services more effectively and efficiently.

*5. What achievable strategies do you advocate to address CT's underfunded liabilities, such as bonded indebtedness, and state employee and teacher pensions and post-employment benefits? Discuss up to three such strategies.*

Today, 25% of state spending is tied to the fixed costs of pension contributions, debt service payments and retiree health contributions. Connecticut's unfunded liabilities must be addressed and our state's borrowing must slow.

We can do this by establishing a bonding cap and re-evaluating and prioritizing all currently funded projects that have yet to be started. In addition, the total compensation plans for Connecticut state employees should be reevaluated. The pay and benefit plans for Connecticut state employees outpace the private sector and exceed those of every other state in the nation. While I believe benefits promised to workers who have earned them should remain, we must make changes going forward, specifically for healthcare and retirement benefits.

*6. Some businesses claim state tax codes and regulations are a bigger headache for business owners than state tax rates. Do you agree? What specifics would you propose to tackle the issue near term in ways that aid business and spur job growth?*

Connecticut ranks at or near the bottom of most every list as a business unfriendly state. Let's help companies choose Connecticut by reducing/eliminating job killing business taxes and unnecessary regulations, and providing predictability which will build confidence and lead to job growth. We should:

Evaluate existing regulations and reconsider those that are outdated or highly uncompetitive.

Ban retroactive tax increases – not only unfair, they contribute to unpredictability that makes it difficult for businesses to plan.

Repeal the Corporation Income Tax Surcharge and the Business Entity Tax to provide relief to both large and small businesses.

Reinstate the net operating loss carryforwards for corporations, especially important to the biotech industry, which requires large upfront investments.

End mandates on businesses and require “business impact statements” for bills before the legislature, that will provide an economic analysis on each bill – much like the local fiscal impact statements that are currently required before voting.

For State Representative - 136<sup>th</sup> District (Westport)

**Jonathan Steinberg** (Democratic)

Website: <http://www.steinbergforstaterep.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/steinbergforstaterep/>

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I seek my fourth term in the General Assembly knowing full well how tough it will be to deal with another billion-plus budget deficit. Over the past two years, I've worked hard to master budget policy and what can be done to establish a truly sustainable budget for the long-term.

Most importantly, I've played a larger role in the budget process. As the leader of the Moderates Caucus within House Democrats, I fought to roll back ill-advised business tax increases, which we accomplished. We also fought income tax increases, which I voted against.

Calling for change isn't good enough. You have to have a plan. We've advocated for the CT21 Initiative, proposals which collectively can save state government over a \$1 billion annually.

We've already had success: overtime costs have been cut dramatically and a prison closed because of imposed efficiencies. I'm committed to seeing the remaining recommendations instituted.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

Transportation, the budget and the economy are clearly the top priorities.

As Chair of the Transportation Bonding Subcommittee, I helped secure over \$5 billion in capital to repair aging railroad bridges and highways. The operating budget has been constrained by budget cuts. I pledge to restore funding to assure we stick to the program we promised.

As I've mentioned, I've become a factor in the budget process and expect to play a role going forward. As a member of the State's Spending Cap Commission, I'm committed to restoring the balance required to achieve budget sustainability.

I'm endorsed by the Connecticut Business and Industry Association and National Federation of Small Businesses because they recognize I've been worked continuously to improve the business climate in Connecticut. I've supported legislation to help entrepreneurs and small businesses, train students for skilled, better-paying jobs and promoted growing business clusters like bioscience and green technology.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

Connecticut has made great strides in making it easier to vote and assuring the process is fair and secure. But, as a member of the Legislature's Government Administration & Election Committee, I know there's more we can do.

Let's get one thing straight: voter fraud is a myth perpetrated by conservatives to suppress the votes of minorities and the disadvantaged. There's little evidence of real fraud. I'm proud that our state has not resorted to discriminatory voting registration rules imposed in other states. Our system requires reasonable proof of identity and has not been subject to voting abuses.

I favor an extended early voting period so that voters who have made up their minds can vote without having to take a day from work on Election Day. I'm also open-minded about exploring new voting and registration technologies which can be proven secure and easy to use.

**Cathy Walsh** (Republican, Independent)

Facebook: [www.Facebook.com/CathyWalsh4Westport/](http://www.Facebook.com/CathyWalsh4Westport/)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

The reason I'm running for State Representative is because the 40 year one party rule in Hartford is responsible for our massive budget deficit. They have shown a lack of common sense, inability to plan long term and inattention to structural issues that harm the economy of CT. The results have been devastating: massive tax increases, cuts in services, and over regulation on businesses causing a flight of capital away from CT. As an executive in the steel industry, and Chair of the Westport

P&Z commission, I believe I have the right skill set to help break the log jam in Hartford. My history in Westport is one of being able to work in a bi-partisan manner. I'm endorsed by both the Republican and Independent parties. In order to change our fiscal direction, we must change the composition of the Legislature and Senate.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My first legislative priority is to restore fiscal sanity by balancing the budget and enacting the spending cap. I will work to reform the prevailing wage law to fix our crumbling infrastructure, stimulate commerce and reduce traffic. Working with my colleagues I hope to pursue both sides of the merits of renegotiating excessive wage contracts and reducing regulatory and tax burdens on business in order to spur economic growth. My goal is to create a stable business friendly environment to attract new employers into the state so that we can all prosper.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I do not believe there are barriers to voting in CT, but there are rules in place to prevent voter fraud. I believe CT has been exemplary in providing ample opportunity and support to all citizens, who qualify, to vote. There is a level of personal responsibility to maintain your eligibility to vote. Name changes after marriage or divorce are common but it is simple to stay current by contacting your town clerk.

For State Representative - 144<sup>th</sup> District

**Steven Kolenberg** (Republican, Independent)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I grew up in Stamford and love my city and state. Connecticut is in serious financial trouble and I feel the people in Hartford aren't doing enough to stop it. I've never been a guy who sits around and complains, thus I feel like it's my duty to step in and try to correct it.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

1. Get our state budget under control and increase job growth
2. Reduce gun violence and keep Stamford's streets safe
3. Restore our environment and combat climate change

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I believe that as a state, Connecticut is doing a wonderful job of ensuring that everyone has a chance to exercise their right to vote. With Election Day registration, automatic voting registration through state agencies, and allowing voter registration online our state has put the pieces in place to maximize voter registration possibilities. I believe, however, that with all these avenues to voting, at this point our state needs to focus on outreach efforts to get newly registered voters out on Election Day and active in the democratic process. The state should work with nonprofit organizations that advocate for voter participation and find out what can be done to allow for more effective voter outreach.

**Caroline Simmons** (Democratic)

No response received.

For State Representative – 149<sup>th</sup> district

**Livvy Floren** (Republican; unopposed)

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

Public service is a privilege. I am running for my 9th term as a State Representative because I love the job and feel that I know the people, I know the process, and I know how to get things done for all of my constituents in Greenwich and Stamford.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My top three legislative priorities are lowering and moderating taxes; improving safety and mass transportation; and attracting business and creating jobs.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do the eliminate them?*

I would encourage increased voter participation by establishing no-fault absentee ballots. Voting in Connecticut is technologically sound and user friendly, and our polling places are all ADA compliant. I think we should adopt a no-fault absentee ballot process which would encourage all eligible voters to obtain a ballot and vote more conveniently.

*4. The state of CT is appealing the recent court ruling on CCJEF which will impact the state's school funding formula. Gov. Malloy asked the General Assembly to find solutions instead of relying on the court's future decision. What possible legislative solutions would you propose?*

The Education Cost Sharing formula is not fair across all 169 cities and towns in Connecticut. Distribution of funds should be more equitable, and special education mandates should be paid for by the convening authority, usually the federal government. We must craft a new mechanism that takes into consideration property taxes and success rates -- rewarding academically achieving schools and returning a fair percentage of money to the districts where taxes were collected.

*5. State traffic congestion is a continuing issue. What solutions do you support?*

We must make mass transportation convenient, clean and consistently on time. Parking near each railroad station must be adequate. In addition, we should utilize trains to move more freight, which would take more trucks off our roads.

*6. Do you support increasing disclosure for campaign contributors? Why or why not?*

I support full disclosure of all sources of campaign donations. Transparency and accountability are the hallmarks of clean elections.

For State Representative - 150<sup>th</sup> District

**Mike Bocchino** (Republican; unopposed)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/electbocchino/>

*Why are you running for this office?*

As the incumbent candidate proudly representing the 150th District I am running for office to make certain that my constituents voices are heard in Hartford and that the issues and concerns that are important to them are addressed. I will continue my efforts to bring fiscal conservatism back to our State and to end the wasteful spending that is causing our residents and businesses to move elsewhere. I will fight against any newly proposed tax and/or tax increases while calling for

accountability and proper management of all our departments of government. It is time to work to put CT back onto a path to prosperity.

*What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

Work to balance the CT State budget under an enforced spending cap. It is imperative that we make fundamental changes to the way we budget and stop spending what we don't have. We also need to allow for the legislature to debate and vote on union contracts that are crippling our economy.

Ensure that the Town of Greenwich receives reimbursement from the State of CT for the New Lebanon Elementary School construction project which is a key component to the State Board of Education requirements regarding the districts racial imbalance plan.

Eliminate the corporate tax surcharge and reduce the corporate business tax rate to make CT competitive once again. I will also work to repeal both the inheritance and gift tax that are driving our residents and business owners out of our state.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

I believe voting in CT is accessible to all would-be voters. Yet I also believe that it may be too accessible at times without the proper enforcement of showing picture identification when one goes to vote. Fortunately, in Greenwich we have amazing group of poll workers and a registrar of voters who understands the importance of showing identification. Even though a poll worker may have been friends with my Grandfather or may know my Mother they still ask for my Identification. And I am happy to provide it.

For State Representative - 151<sup>st</sup> District.

**Dita Bhargava** (Democratic)

Website: <http://ditaforgreenwich.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DitaBhargava/?fref=ts>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ditagreenwichct>

*1. Why are you running for this office?*

I am running for state representative of the 151st district in Greenwich because Connecticut is at a crossroads and we need a voice of change in Hartford. I believe Connecticut has many strengths and tremendous potential to thrive in this modern economy, but it's critical that we get our fiscal house back in order.

My background as a Portfolio Manager and Senior Trader qualifies me to tackle the challenges we face with our budget and the economy. We also need to make it easier for families and future generations to stay in Connecticut and to thrive. As a co-founder and Board Member of several local non-profit organizations that work to empower families and communities, I understand what we need to do to maintain a robust workforce that allows families to balance professional and personal obligations.

*2. What are your top 3 legislative priorities?*

My first priority will be addressing the budget. I will not vote for raising taxes because we can fix our budget issues without placing more of a burden on our taxpayers. We can grow our tax base and raise revenue by strategically recruiting companies in growth industries that will also help retain our young educated workforce by creating jobs.

Second, we must champion more innovative legislation that will help revamp our transportation infrastructure, without leading to significant cuts for other programs. By introducing private

financial investment, we can mitigate the costs to our taxpayers and expedite the building of new roads and rail.

Finally, I will fight to keep our young generation in Connecticut by introducing legislation that helps relieve cumbersome college loans. Through public-private partnership, I will advocate for a program where loans will be largely forgiven if a college graduate commits to work in Connecticut for five years.

*3. Do you believe there are barriers to voting in Connecticut? If so, what would you do to eliminate them?*

Connecticut has a good track record when it comes to making voting accessible, but there is always room for improvement. I applaud the recent efforts of the state to help voters automatically register to vote when they are at the DMV. I also support the adoption of early in-person voting, especially with a weekend option, since many of our residents commute to Manhattan, making voting on a weekday challenging. And, to the extent that we can put appropriate safeguards in place, I would support expanded absentee voting. Increasing voter turnout is important since it engages our citizens in our democracy.

**Fred Camillo** (Republican)

No response received.