



LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR THE 2026 SESSION, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- **Early Voting: Review municipal data sets from early voting 2024 and 2025.**
 - Reduce the number of days of early voting to seven (7) including one weekend. The data will show the length of time available for early voting did not increase overall voter turnout, just level spread early voters across more days.
 - Reduce extended hour days to mirror other days at no more than 8 hours to simplify staffing and reduce voter confusion.
- **Unfunded Mandates:** Currently, more than 1,400 unfunded mandates/tax exemptions exist that impact municipalities and Boards of Education. Each of these mandates/exemptions as they exist, place municipalities at greater risk of fiscal distress.
 - Any new bill that is an unfunded mandate/tax exemption must identify two existing unfunded mandates to be removed with the passage of the new bill. Pass legislation to require that any new unfunded mandate/tax exemption shall include the removal of two (2) existing unfunded mandates.
 - Require fiscal impact notes before any vote on the legislation is taken, to allow legislators the opportunity to verify the financial impact before voting.
- **DEEP Solid Waste Permitting:** Increase the capacity of Connecticut's Waste-to-Energy plants to process solid waste. Hauling up to 800,000 tons of waste to other states as a "solution" is no solution at all. Added waste hauling trucks further clog our highways.

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please contact SECOG at 860-889-2324, office@secogct.gov.
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- Provide fast-track permitting from CT DEEP for Lisbon and New Britain locations to add the second burner (these plants were designed for two burners).
- Continue funding and incentives to municipalities and regional waste authorities pursuing strategies such as organic waste composting and pay-as-you-throw.
- **Veterans' Property Tax Exemption Modification:** Further improve the language of PA 24-46 to ensure that tax exemption benefits are properly granted.
 - The “intent” of the bill was to provide property tax relief to veterans who are unable to work and earn a living due to a service-related disability. While the Office of Legislative Research, by way of Dept. of VA estimated that statewide, 1,209 veterans met those criteria in CT, and 176 of those resided in the SECOG region. Presently, more than 610 have qualified in our region, nearly 3.5 times the projected figure. Further, 13 SECOG towns have reported tax loss of more than \$2.4 million in uncollected property tax each year.
 - Language should be added to the statute requiring veterans be 100% permanently and totally disabled, using the VA terminology of “individual unemployability”. Also, require annual re-certification of disability status and an income cap to qualify.
- **Education:** Increase the current level of state funding for special education, which is woefully inadequate.
 - Lower the threshold for reimbursement from the state for students that require special education services from 4.5 times the cost of the average expenditure per student to 2 times the cost of the average expenditure per student.

- Allow the Special Education funding to “follow the student”, to smooth financial impacts on the receiving town, for non-budgeted mid-year expenditures.
- Maximize the State’s use of available federal funding.
- **STATE SALES TAX ALLOCATION:** Create a new recurring Municipal Revenue Sharing Account (MRSA) and allocate one sixth (1/6th) of the existing 6.35% sales tax into said MRSA.
 - Authorize and distribute 50% of these monies annually to municipalities to help offset annual budgetary / capital expenses.
 - State to invest the remaining 50% annually in workforce training and development, to help build a stronger, better-trained Connecticut.

SECOG Legislative Committee

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