

# The Capitol Update

DECEMBER 2014

**MURTHA**  
CULLINA

*Glendower- "I can call spirits from the vasty deep."*

*Hotspur- "Why, so can I, or so can any man, but will they come when you do call for them?"*

- Shakespeare's "Henry IV, Part I"

## ELECTION 2014

### Governor

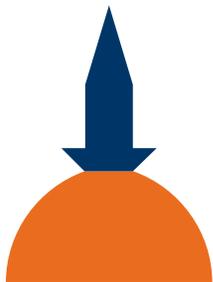
In a rematch of the 2010 gubernatorial election, former ambassador Tom Foley (R) was convinced he could summon the collective anger of the voters to beat the seemingly vulnerable incumbent Governor Dan Malloy (D). With economic rankings below the majority of the states, unemployment higher than the national average and a favorability rating below 50%, Malloy early on was placed by pundits in the same category as Governors Scott of Florida, Quinn of Illinois and Hickenlooper of Colorado.

In his campaign, Foley hammered away at Connecticut's stagnant economy, the unpopular \$1.3 billion tax increase Malloy pushed through the legislature in 2011 and the impending billion dollar budget deficits for FY16 and FY17. Malloy countered in debates and political ads by tagging Foley as a Greenwich millionaire who paid no or minimal taxes in recent years and as an individual who is not prepared to govern. These negative assaults, combined with Foley's lack of clarity on a host of issues, sank his campaign. Malloy won reelection by more than 28,000 votes, a margin of 2.5 percent. Clearly, Foley did not connect with voters who were searching for a positive direction for this state. The "red wave" of Republican national victories broke over the "blue rock" of Connecticut. In addition to Malloy's reelection, all the state's Democratic

incumbent constitutional officers were reelected.

### The General Assembly

The 2014 election produced modest but strategically significant gains for the Republican Party in both the State House and State Senate. Advantaged by a series of legislative retirements and a host of Democrat primaries, the GOP picked up 10 seats in the House (87 Democrats to 64 Republicans) and one seat in the Senate (21 Democrats to 15 Republicans). These additional Republican seats foreclose a veto-proof House and Senate and could block any partisan move to override the cap on state spending which, by law, takes an affirmative vote of 60 percent of each chamber. Yet with a Democrat majority in both the House and Senate, it is expected that on opening day of the 2015 General Assembly (January 7) the President Pro Tempore of the Senate will be Martin Looney (D- New Haven) and the Speaker of the House will be incumbent Brendan Sharkey (D- Hamden). The Senate will have new Majority and Minority Leaders- Democrat Bob Duff (D- Norwalk) and Republican Leonard Fasano (R- North Haven). Completing the House leadership posts will be Democrat Majority Leader Joe Aresimowicz (D-



An update on Connecticut State Government and Politics from The Government Affairs Group of Murtha Cullina LLP.

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Berlin) and new Republican Minority Leader Themis Klarides (R- Derby).

## Congressional

All five Democrat U.S. House incumbents easily won their Congressional races in Connecticut. In the two most competitive races, first-term Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty (D-5) bested her Republican opponent Mark Greenberg by 16,000 votes and third-term Congressman Jim Himes (D-4) was elected over Republican Dan DeBicella with a margin of more than 15,000 votes. Again, Connecticut proved to be a political anomaly with the state's voters pushing back against the national Republican tide in which the Democrats lost 9 seats (54 R/ 46 D) in the U.S. Senate and 15 seats (247 R/ 188 D) in the House giving the Republicans a solid majority in both federal chambers.

## THE STATE'S ECONOMY

Confronting Governor Malloy as Connecticut tries to recover from the lingering impact of the 2007-2009 recession, will be the lack of real wage growth, a weak housing market, the possible repeat of a federal sequester and a soft business climate. While the state's unemployment numbers have improved to 6.6 percent, projections suggest the state will not regain all the jobs lost in the past few years until 2016. Connecticut's all-important finance industry shrank 11 percent since the end of the recession from \$36.2 billion to \$32.3 billion in 2013.

On the positive side, with a rebound in the stock market, New York-centric Fairfield County residents can expect to see a dramatic increase in personal income. This will lead to an appreciable growth in the state's personal income tax receipts which we have not seen since pre-recession days. With Fairfield County generating approximately 42 percent of the state's income tax, these new revenues will be important in balancing future state budgets that the legislature's Office of Fiscal Analysis indicates may show a \$1.3 billion deficit in FY16 and a \$1.4 billion deficit in FY17.

## ISSUES - 2015 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### Budget

Priority one will be the resolution of the impending state budget deficits. Governor Malloy in his campaign statements pledged not to raise taxes to mitigate revenue deficiencies in the two-year budget he will propose to the General Assembly in February. As a result, the Governor and the legislature will have to look at budget reductions in existing state programs and municipal aid or turn to bonding securitized by future state revenues to balance the budget. In addition, state officials may have to explore greater use of non-profit organizations to provide existing state services, the sale of state assets with lease back opportunities, restructuring state employee and state retiree health care programs and the merger of state agencies.

### Other Issues

While difficult budget decisions are debated behind closed doors by administrative officials and legislative leaders, the members of the twenty-two standing and three statutory committees of the General Assembly will have plenty of time to consider and debate a wide range of social and economic issues. Primary among them will be proposals for local property tax reform through mandate reductions and efficiency incentives, possible revision of the state's campaign finance laws and reform of the process of enrolling voters and election day balloting and a review of consumer protection safeguards for utility customers. Additionally, the legislature will most likely consider a number of measures that failed last year including physician-assisted suicide for the terminally ill, removal of a regional trigger mechanism which delays the labeling of certain foods containing genetically modified ingredients, limits on property tax exemptions for non-profit institutions and a proposal to provide post-traumatic stress disorder benefits for on-the-job trauma.

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Every two years, it is the prerogative of the leadership of the General Assembly to decide who will chair the legislative committees which raise bills, hold hearings and ultimately report approved measures to the floor of the House and Senate. Unlike Congress, the path to becoming a committee chair in the General

Assembly has less to do with seniority than with political allegiance to the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. The following is a listing of the legislators selected by leadership to chair the committees of the General Assembly:

### Aging

Sen. Mae Flexer (D-29)\* | Rep. Joseph Serra (D-33)

### Appropriations

Sen. Beth Bye (D-5) | Rep. Toni Walker (D-93)

### Banks

Sen. Carlo Leone (D-27) | Rep. Matt Lesser (D-100)\*

### Children

Sen. Danté Bartolomeo (D-13) | Rep. Diana Urban (D-43)

### Commerce

Sen. Joan Hartley (D-15)\* | Rep. Chris Perone (D-137)

### Education

Sen. Gayle Slossberg (D-14)\* | Rep. Andrew Fleischmann (D-18)

### Energy & Technology

Sen. Paul Doyle (D-9)\* | Rep. Lonnie Reed (D-102)

### Environment

Sen. Ted Kennedy, Jr. (D-12)\* | Rep. James Albis (D-99)\*

### Executive & Legislative Nominations

Sen. Bob Duff (D-25)\* | Rep. Claire Janowski (D-56)

### Finance Revenue & Bonding

Sen. John Fonfara (D-1) | Rep. Jeff Berger (D-73)\*

### General Law

Sen. Andres Ayala (D-23)\* | Rep. David Barum (D-15)

### Government Administration & Elections

Sen. Steve Cassano (D-4)\* | Rep. Ed Jutila (D-37)

### Higher Education & Employment Advancement

Sen. Danté Bartolomeo (D-13)\* | Rep. Roberta Willis (D-64)

### Housing

Sen. Gary Winfield (D-10)\* | Rep. Larry Butler (D-72)

### Human Services

Sen. Marilyn Moore (D-22)\* | Rep. Cathy Abercrombie (D-83)

### Insurance & Real Estate

Sen. Joe Crisco (D-17) | Rep. Robert Megna (D-97)

### Internship

Sen. Ted Kennedy, Jr. (D-12)\* | Rep. Theresa Conroy (D-105)\*

### Judiciary

Sen. Eric Coleman (D-2) | Rep. William Tong (D-147)\*

### Labor & Public Employees

Sen. Gary Winfield (D-10) | Rep. Peter Tercyak (D-26)

### Legislative Management

Sen. Martin Looney (D-11)\* | Rep. Brendan Sharkey (D-88)

### Planning & Development

Sen. Cathy Osten (D-19)\* | Rep. Auden Grogins (D-129)\*

### Program Review & Investigations

Sen. John Fonfara (D-1)\* | Rep. Christie Carpino (R-32)\*

### Public Health

Sen. Terry Gerratana (D-6) | Rep. Matt Ritter (D-1)\*

### Public Safety

Sen. Tim Larson (D-3)\* | Rep. Stephen Dargan (D-115)

### Regulations Review

Sen. Clark Chapin (R-30)\* | Rep. Brian Becker (D-19)\*

### Transportation

Sen. Andrew Maynard (D-18) | Rep. Antonio Guerrero (D-29)

### Veterans' Affairs

Sen. Mae Flexer (D-29)\* | Rep. Jack Hennessy (D-127)

\* Indicates a change in chair from last session

## QUESTIONS & CONTACT

If you have questions regarding any issues discussed within this publication, please contact one of the members of our Government Affairs Group:

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Mr. McQuade's extensive experience in state and federal legislative procedure has served private and public interests for more than 25 years. He is an expert in local, state and federal government administrative functions and has extensive experience in advocacy before public interest and community groups. From 1991 to 1994, Mr. McQuade served as Chief of Staff for the Senate Majority Office of the Connecticut General Assembly. He served seven years under Governor William A. O'Neill as Chief of Staff and as Administrative Aide for Policies and Programs. Previously, Mr. McQuade had been Manager of Governmental/Regional Policies for the Greater Hartford Chamber of Commerce. He served in the Office of Congressman William R. Cotter as Chief District Aide and Press Secretary and continues to maintain excellent media contacts. Mr. McQuade began his career in 1973 in the General Assembly's Office of Legislative Research. He holds a Bachelor's degree from George Washington University and a Master's degree in political science from the University of Connecticut.

### Janemarie W. Murphy

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Ms. Murphy's expertise in state and municipal government is coupled with her extensive experience with community groups and in public interest negotiations. From 1990 to 1994, she served as Senior Legislative Aide to the Senate President Pro Tempore of the Connecticut General Assembly. Previously, Ms. Murphy had been a Legislative Assistant to the State Senate Majority Office and served as staff to the Legislative Task Force on Manufacturing. She has served as a grant seeker with the

United Connecticut Action for Neighborhoods, a housing consultant with Imagineers, and a community organizer with Hartford Areas Rally Together. In 2014, Ms. Murphy was elected as President and Chair of State Law Resources, Inc. ("SLR"), an international network of independent law firms selected for their experience in government relations at the state and national level. Murtha Cullina LLP has been the SLR member firm for the State of Connecticut since 2000. Ms. Murphy holds a Bachelor's degree in political science from Holy Cross College.

### Michael J. Martone

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Mr. Martone has a strong background in state and federal government and politics. Prior to joining Murtha Cullina LLP, he was the political director of a successful gubernatorial re-election effort. He also served a gubernatorial administration as a legislative program director at the Department of Economic and Community Development from 1997 to 1998, as director of constituent services from 1995 to 1997. Mr. Martone has also served as director of constituent service for a Congressional Office from 1985 to 1991. He holds a Bachelor's degree in history from Quinnipiac College and has continued graduate studies at Southern Connecticut State University.

### Elizabeth M. Gemski

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Ms. Gemski has over 10 years of experience in federal and state government affairs working in Washington, DC, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. Previously, Ms. Gemski was State Vice President of Health and Advocacy Initiatives for the American Cancer Society in Rhode Island where she was responsible for state-level planning, implementation and evaluation of health initiatives, as well as government affairs programs. Ms. Gemski received her B.A. from Clark University and interned at the Office of Greville Janner, Queen's Court, Member of Parliament in London, England.

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