



Waterbury Regional Chamber  
*driving business to business*

# Legislative Summit

Addressing Issues That Impact  
You and Your Business

Featuring



**Governor  
Ned Lamont**

Friday, March 1, 2024

Wyndham Southbury Hotel

7:30 AM - 9:45 AM



# Legislative Summit Agenda

7:45 a.m. **Breakfast & Networking**

8:15 a.m. **Welcome & Sponsor Recognition**  
Mary Chiappalone, Biondi & Rosengrant, LLC  
Chairwoman, Board of Directors

**Presentation of 2024 Legislative Agenda**  
Jack E. Traver, Jr., Traver IDC  
Chairman, Public Policy

**Mayoral Greeting**  
Paul K. Pernerewski, Jr.  
Mayor, City of Waterbury

**Introduction of Governor**  
Michael L. O'Connor  
Regional President, Webster Bank

**Governor's Address & Q+A**  
Governor Ned Lamont  
State of Connecticut

9:15-9:45 a.m. **Breakout Sessions**

## Session A:

**Taxes & Spending**

## Session B:

**Economic Development,  
Transportation, and  
Energy & Environment**

## Session C:

**Health, Human Services,  
and Workforce Development**

## Nutmeg Ballroom

### Moderator:

Armando Paolino,  
Levin, Paolino, & Christ  
Government Relations

### Discussion will include:

Fiscal Guardrails  
Bi-Partisan Budget  
Cost of State Workers and Benefits

### Invited Legislators:

Sen. Eric Berthel (R-32)  
Sen. Joan Hartley (D-15)  
Rep. Cindy Harrison (R-69)  
Rep. Ron Napoli (R-73)  
Rep. Joe Polletta (R-68)  
Rep. Geraldo Reyes (D-75)

## Woodruff Hall

### Moderator:

Bill Palomba,  
Blasius Chevrolet Cadillac

### Discussion will include:

Energy Costs  
Waste Management  
Electric Vehicle Reform  
Municipality Development Efforts

### Invited Legislators:

Sen. Jorge Cabrera (D-17)  
Sen. Henri Martin (R-31)  
Rep. Seth Bronko (R-70)  
Rep. Michael DiGiovancarlo (D-74)  
Rep. David Labriola (R-131)  
Rep. John Piscopo (R-76)

## Great Hill

### Moderator:

Daniel Keenan,  
Trinity Health of New England

### Discussion will include:

Healthcare Policies  
Rebuilding Healthcare and  
Manufacturing Workforce  
Regional Sector Partnerships

### Invited Legislators:

Sen. Jan Hochadel (D-13)  
Sen. Rob Sampson (R-16)  
Rep. Gale Mastrofrancesco (R-80)  
Rep. Bill Pizzuto (R-71)  
Rep. Lezlye Zupkus (R-89)



# Waterbury Regional Chamber 2024 Legislative Agenda

Waterbury Regional Chamber  
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## **Focus On Economic & Business Development Must Continue**

On February 7, 2024, the Connecticut legislature reconvened, and Governor Ned Lamont began his second term. The Waterbury Regional Chamber, its affiliates, the Naugatuck Chamber, the Watertown Oakville Chamber, the Southbury Chamber, and our members expect that our elected officials will continue to focus on economic growth, business attraction and retention, and workforce challenges. We urge members of the State House and Senate to thoughtfully fulfill their roles in determining policy and regulatory changes. We implore the legislature and Governor Lamont to understand the tremendous impact the pandemic and the ensuing inflationary period has had on businesses in the state. It is vital to the state’s economy to enact policies that not only help businesses survive but thrive in this turbulent economy.



Chairman of Public Policy  
**Jack E. Traver Jr.**  
President  
Traver IDC

Below is the Chamber’s legislative agenda outlining the key priorities and objectives for the State in 2024. Additionally, there is a comprehensive overview of the specific legislative changes, innovative concepts, and programs that our chamber advocates for, encompassing both regional and local levels.

## **2024 STATE POLICY OBJECTIVES**

<p><b>TAXES &amp; SPENDING</b></p> <p>The business community favors continued efforts to pay down pension debts and reduce overall cost of employees and benefits for the state.</p>	<p><b>LABOR &amp; WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>Continue to focus on tailoring workforce development programs, and prioritizing the needs of the industry sectors that drive each regional workforce areas economies.</p>	<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <p>Support equitable funding for public institutions of higher education, while working to reduce costs and improve efficiencies; create a balanced approach for public, private, for-profit and nonprofit post-secondary schools.</p>
<p><b>MANUFACTURING</b></p> <p>Prioritize funding for STEM/trade education and training; adequately fund programs that support manufacturing jobs &amp; incumbent-worker training.</p>	<p><b>HEALTH CARE &amp; PUBLIC SAFETY</b></p> <p>Support policies that ensure the healthcare infrastructure in greater Waterbury continues to serve the entire community; prioritize educational and workforce initiatives to support healthcare jobs and training.</p> <p>Reexamine treatment of repeat and juvenile offenders to ensure safety and wellbeing of law abiding citizens.</p>	<p><b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &amp; TOURISM</b></p> <p>Support legislation to enhance the business environment across the greater Waterbury region and each municipality’s development efforts; support commitments to level/annually fund tourism appropriate to other New England states. Move away from single year/season campaign.</p>
<p><b>ENERGY &amp; ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>Support a comprehensive review of energy infrastructure and goals that will provide for continued economic growth and job development in the future. Encourage legislature to move cautiously regarding the transition from Internal Combustion Engine vehicles to EVs. Recommend applying flexibility to those deadlines to allow for a more thoughtful and collaborative approach to achieving reduced emissions.</p>	<p><b>REGULATORY REFORM</b></p> <p>Reduce or eliminate unnecessary or outdated regulations to promote business development and job creation; eliminate piecemeal approach to requirements that drag out permitting &amp; approval of projects.</p>	<p><b>TRANSPORTATION &amp; INFRASTRUCTURE</b></p> <p>Prioritize and fund infrastructure maintenance and repair projects; complete improvements to the Waterbury rail line; support policies that promote transit-oriented development.</p>

## TAXES & SPENDING

- Deliver greater value to taxpayers by expanding the use of nonprofit organizations and businesses to deliver state services, implementing broad-based technology solutions, cutting duplicative state functions and eliminating overtime and mileage in pension calculations;
- Restore the R&D tax credit to attract entrepreneurs, foster startups, and promote private-sector investment;
- Restore the pass-through entity tax credit to its original level, returning more than \$60 million to 123,000 small businesses for job growth;
- Support the permanent sunset of the corporate tax surcharge;
- Continue to pay down and make one time payment towards the debt of the unemployment compensation fund;
- Responsible management of the record budget surplus;
- Oppose new business taxes and tax increases;
- Prudent and responsible allocation of one-time federal COVID relief funds;
- Support tax policies that encourage investment in job creation and expand apprenticeships;
- Create tax incentives for STEM students at Connecticut colleges and universities to accept employment in Connecticut upon graduation;
- Repeal the 6.35% state sales tax on employment training and safety apparel, including personal protective equipment (PPE);
- Support replacing collective bargaining for state employee contracts with administrative branch negotiation & retain required approval votes by both legislative chambers.

## LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Support an update to the apprenticeship hiring ratios to encourage entry into the trades;
- Facilitate growth of regional industry sector partnerships;
- Oppose expansion of workers' compensation benefits;
- Tailor workforce development programs to prioritize high-value, in-demand industries and focus on defined pathways for educational and career development;
- Oppose predictive scheduling policies;
- Support requiring state contractors to hire Connecticut residents first;
- Support the portability of worker's sexual harassment certification training;
- Support reducing the minimum age to operate specific small machinery to 16 or 17 years old.

## EDUCATION

- Maintain funding for vocational-technical schools and for advanced manufacturing programs at CT State Community College Naugatuck Valley and other community colleges;
- Recognize the importance of community colleges as an economic driver in the region;
- Align school curricula with industry-sector work force needs;
- Fully fund Educational Cost-Sharing grants to school districts and correct the inequities of the Educational Cost Sharing formula;
- Support policies and initiatives that promote STEM and trade training opportunities for a post-high school career;
- Support duplication of Children's Community School model.

## MANUFACTURING

- Promote new biotech industries by incentivizing the creation of more lab space;
- Maintain funding for apprentice training & development and remove barriers for apprenticeship training requirements;
- Support initiatives of the Legislature's Manufacturing Caucus and Chief Manufacturing Officer;
- Maintain funding for the Manufacturing Innovation Fund;
- Support working with the CT Manufacturing Collaborative to develop ways to support manufacturers in Connecticut;
- Support the efforts to expand promotion of and training for manufacturing careers in the state;
- Support the Northwest Regional Sector Partnerships for manufacturing including careers in manufacturing.

## HEALTHCARE

- Let small businesses access more affordable, high-quality health insurance options for employees;
- Support policies that ensure the healthcare infrastructure in greater Waterbury remains available to support the entire community and region;
- Convene a group of stakeholders to work with the state to produce a comprehensive plan to mitigate the exponential growth in the Medicaid program;
- Support healthcare workforce initiatives that strengthen the healthcare workforce pipeline and reduce administrative burdens on licensure.
- Support measures that strengthen Connecticut hospitals and health systems and recognize their vital importance to the economy and health of local communities;

## HEALTHCARE (CONT.)

- Support fully funding Medicaid reimbursement and increase provider reimbursement rates;
- Support requiring the state to strictly follow federal Medicaid reimbursement rules and guidelines and reject cost-settling on a “fee for service” rate-based reimbursement system;
- Maintain current funding levels for behavioral healthcare and oppose further reductions;
- Use Waterbury’s model for healthcare spending reform to reduce state retiree healthcare costs;
- Support the Northwest Regional Sector Partnerships or healthcare;

## PUBLIC SAFETY

- Address the lack of accountability for juveniles who commit crimes;
- Reexamine treatment of repeat and juvenile offenders to ensure the safety and wellbeing of law abiding citizens;
- Support the reconsideration and modification of the Police Accountability act of 2020 to better support law enforcement;

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

- Support further state and local involvement in the CTC-Connecticut Tourism Coalition;
- Support downtown Waterbury revitalization efforts, including efforts to revitalize the central business district;
- Support grants, tax credits and deferrals to help at-risk business sectors that are still struggling due to the pandemic;
- Support downtown revitalization efforts in the region, specifically in Naugatuck and Watertown/Oakville, as well as economic development in Southbury;
- Support Main Street Waterbury and its mission to support the city’s downtown;
- Support efforts to promote tourism throughout the region;
- Maintain the state’s investment in the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to ensure quality counseling & technical support remains available to small businesses;
- Support the Arts & Culture Collaborative of the Waterbury Region.

## ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

- Make business investments in renewable energy more attainable by eliminating savings ratio requirements for related capital projects;
- Advocate for further change in order to expedite redevelopment of transfer act properties;
- Support full funding and current structure of the CT Energy Efficiency fund;
- Support the exemption of the prevailing wage requirement for Brownfield funding and projects;
- Review and modernize Brownfield remediation statutes and regulations, streamline permitting process, and conforming state rules to federal standards;
- Support expediting environmental permits required for business starts and expansion;
- Support comprehensive review of energy infrastructure and goals that will provide for continued economic growth and job development;
- Maintain flexibility regarding electric vehicle dead lines to allow for a more thoughtful and collaborative approach to achieving reduced emissions.

## REGULATORY REFORM

- Monitor new data privacy provisions aimed at small and medium sized businesses;
- Recognize equivalent out-of-state licenses for those moving here;
- Streamline the professional licensing process;
- Support eliminating unnecessary/outdated regulations and streamlining permitting & approval processes.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

- Support the widening of the I-84 corridor from Waterbury to Danbury;
- Support developing a Multi-Modal Transportation Center and continued improvements to the Waterbury Rail Branch Line by leveraging federal relief funds;
- Support Naugatuck’s transportation-oriented development plans and proposed freight rail improvements for the Port of Naugatuck;
- Support development of a new Naugatuck industrial park

# Keynote Speaker



Ned Lamont was sworn into office as the 89th governor of Connecticut on January 9, 2019. He began his second term on January 4, 2023.

Lamont got involved in public service shortly after college, founding a weekly newspaper in a town hit by the loss of its largest employer. Covering town meetings and the Board of Selectmen, he helped to bring voice and transparency to a community working to recover from job losses and reinvent itself. Later, as a member of both the Greenwich Board of Selectmen and the Board of Estimate and Taxation, Lamont worked in a bipartisan effort to safeguard a multimillion-dollar budget and deliver results for constituents. For four years, Lamont also served as Chairman of the State Investment Advisory Council, overseeing a multibillion-dollar state pension fund.

Lamont started his own company, taking on the large and established giants of the telecom industry. Under his vision and stewardship, the company grew to serve over 400 of America's largest college campuses and 1 million college students across the nation.

As a volunteer teacher, Lamont sought to give back to his community by volunteering at Harding High School in Bridgeport. In an effort to spark entrepreneurship, Lamont taught students about the inner workings of small businesses, bringing in local businesspeople to share their own experiences, and helping to place students in local internships. Lamont is on the faculty of Central Connecticut State University as an adjunct professor of political science and philosophy, where he also helped to found a popular business start-up competition. In early 2009, he helped lead an initiative to bring together Connecticut leaders from across the business, nonprofit, and labor sectors to unite in a strategy to create new jobs in the state.

As a candidate for United States Senate in 2006, he stood up for his convictions and challenged the political establishment. Taking on long-time incumbent Joe Lieberman for the Democratic nomination for United States Senate, Lamont campaigned on the platform that wars in the Middle East were draining resources and attention that could be better focused on pressing domestic issues like the economy, education, and healthcare. As a private citizen, he fought for the issues in which he believes, serving on the boards of Mercy Corps and the Conservation Services Group, non-profits that seek to make a difference in the humanitarian and renewable energy fields, respectively.

Lamont was born on January 3, 1954, in Washington, D.C. to Camille Helene and Edward Miner Lamont. The eldest of three children, he attended Phillips Exeter Academy, and served as president of the student newspaper, The Exonian. After graduating from Phillips Exeter in 1972, he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Harvard College in 1976 and a Master of Business Administration from the Yale School of Management in 1980.

Lamont married his wife Annie on September 10, 1983. They have three children: Emily, Lindsay, and Teddy.

# Regional Legislative Delegation

## Senate

### State Senator Eric Berthel, R-32



*Deputy Senate Republican Leader*  
**Ranking Member:** Appropriations; Banking; and Education  
**Co-Chair:** Internship Committee  
**Representing:** Bethel, Bethlehem, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Middlebury, Oxford, Roxbury, Seymour, Southbury, Washington, Watertown, Woodbury  
**Year Elected:** 2017  
**Email:** eric.berthel@cga.ct.gov

### State Senator Jan Hochadel, D-13



*Deputy Majority Leader*  
**Chair:** Aging  
**Vice-Chair:** Environment  
**Member:** Banking; Commerce; Housing; Planning and Development  
**Representing:** Cheshire, Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown  
**Year Elected:** 2023  
**Email:** jan.hochadel@senatedems.ct.gov

### State Senator Jorge Cabrera, D-17



*Deputy President Pro Tempore*  
**Chair:** Insurance & Real Estate  
**Vice-Chair:** Labor & Public Employees  
**Member:** Energy and Technology; Finance, Revenue, and Bonding; Public Health; Transportation  
**Representing:** Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Derby, Hamden, Naugatuck, Woodbridge  
**Year Elected:** 2021  
**Email:** Jorge.cabrera@cga.ct.gov

### State Senator Henri Martin, R-31



*Chief Deputy Senate Republican Leader*  
**Ranking Member:** Commerce; Finance, Revenue, and Bonding  
**Member:** Executive & Legislative Nominations Committee; Transportation  
**Representing:** Bristol, Harwinton, Plainville, Plymouth, Thomaston  
**Year Elected:** 2015  
**Email:** henri.martin@cga.ct.gov

### State Senator Joan Hartley, D-15



*Chief Deputy President Pro Tempore*  
**Chair:** Commerce  
**Vice-Chair:** Appropriations  
**Member:** Executive & Legislative Nominations; Legislative Management; Regulation Review  
**Representing:** Waterbury, Middlebury, Naugatuck  
**Year Elected:** 1985  
**Email:** hartley@senatedems.ct.gov

### State Senator Rob Sampson, R-16



**Ranking Member:** Government Administration & Elections; Housing Committee; Labor & Public Employees Committee  
**Member:** Judiciary  
**Representing:** Cheshire, Prospect, Southington, Waterbury, Wolcott  
**Year Elected:** 2019  
**Email:** rob.sampson@cga.ct.gov

# Regional Legislative Delegation

## House of Representatives

### State Representative Seth Bronko, R-70



**Member:** Finance, Revenue and Bonding; Government Administration and Elections; Transportation  
**Representing:** Naugatuck  
**Year Elected:** 2023  
**Email:** seth.bronko@housegop.ct.gov

### State Representative Cindy Harrison, R-69



**Ranking Member:** Commerce  
**Member:** Appropriations; Environment  
**Representing:** Bridgewater, New Milford, Roxbury, Southbury  
**Year Elected:** 2021  
**Email:** cindy@harrison@housegop.ct.gov

### State Representative Larry Butler, D-72



*Deputy Speaker*  
**Member:** Finance, Revenue, and Bonding; Housing; Human Services; Legislative Management  
**Representing:** Waterbury  
**Year Elected:** 2007  
**Email:** larry.butler@cga.ct.gov

### State Representative Nicole Klarides-Ditria R-105



*Caucus Whip*  
**Ranking Member:** Public Health  
**Member:** Finance, Revenue, and Bonding; Regulation Review  
**Representing:** Beacon Falls, Derby, Seymour  
**Year Elected:** 2017  
**Email:** nicole.klarides@housegop.ct.gov

### State Representative Michael DiGiovancarlo, D-74



**Vice Chair:** Public Safety and Security  
**Member:** Aging; Commerce; Veterans' Affairs  
**Representing:** Waterbury  
**Year Elected:** 2021  
**Email:** michael.digiovancarlo@cga.ct.gov

### State Representative David Labriola, R-131



**Member:** Government Administration and Elections; Judiciary; Transportation  
**Representing:** Oxford, Naugatuck, Southbury  
**Year Elected:** 2003  
**Email:** david.labriola@housegop.ct.gov



# Regional Legislative Delegation

## House of Representatives

### State Representative Liz Linehan, D-103



**Chair:** Children  
**Member:** Public Health; Public Safety and Security  
**Representing:** Cheshire, Hamden, Wallingford  
**Year Elected:** 2017  
**Email:** liz.linehan@cga.ct.gov

### State Representative John Piscopo, R-76



*Chief House Republican Whip*  
**Member:** Energy and Technology; Environment; Finance, Revenue, and Bonding; Legislative Management  
**Representing:** Burlington, Harwinton, Litchfield, Thomaston  
**Year Elected:** 1989  
**Email:** john.piscopo@housegop.ct.gov

### State Representative Gale Mastrofrancesco, R-80



**Ranking Member:** Government Administration and Elections  
**Member:** Children; Human Services  
**Representing:** Southington, Wolcott  
**Year Elected:** 2019  
**Email:** gale.mastrofrancesco@housegop.ct.gov

### State Representative Bill Pizzuto, R-71



**Member:** Children; General Law; Human Services  
**Representing:** Middlebury, Waterbury  
**Year Elected:** 2022  
**Email:** william.pizzuto@housegop.ct.gov

### State Representative Ronald Napoli Jr., D-73



*Assistant Majority Leader*  
**Chair:** Finance, Revenue, and Bonding  
**Member:** Children; Education  
**Representing:** Waterbury  
**Year Elected:** 2019  
**Email:** ron.napoli@cga.ct.gov

### State Representative Joe Polletta, R-68



*House Republican Senior Whip*  
**Member:** Finance, Revenue, and Bonding; Housing; Human Services; Public Safety and Security  
**Representing:** Waterbury, Watertown  
**Year Elected:** 2017  
**Email:** joe.polletta@housegop.ct.gov

# Regional Legislative Delegation

## House of Representatives

### State Representative Geraldo Reyes Jr.,



**D-75th District**

*Deputy Speaker*

**Member:** Appropriations; Environment; Legislative Management; Transportation

**Representing:** Waterbury

**Year Elected:** 2016

**Email:** [geraldoreyes@cga.ct.gov](mailto:geraldoreyes@cga.ct.gov)

### State Representative Lezlye Zupkus, R-89



**Member:** Education; Finance, Revenue, and Bonding; Legislative Management; Public Health

**Representing:** Bethany, Cheshire, Prospect, Waterbury

**Year Elected:** 2013

**Email:**

[lezlye.zupkus@housegop.ct.gov](mailto:lezlye.zupkus@housegop.ct.gov)

### State Representative Karen Reddington-Hughes,



**R-66**

**Member:** Education; Environment; Public Health

**Representing:** Bethlehem, Litchfield, Morris, Warren, Woodbury

**Year Elected:** 2023

**Email:**

[karen.reddington-hughes@housegop.ct.gov](mailto:karen.reddington-hughes@housegop.ct.gov)

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# Public Policy Committee

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## Chairman

**Jack E. Traver Jr.**, *Traver IDC*

## President & CEO

**Lynn Ward**, *Waterbury Regional Chamber*

## Government Affairs & Public Policy Director

**Steve DelVecchio**, *Waterbury Regional Chamber*

## Lobbyist

**Armando Paolino**, *Levin, Paolino & Christ Government Relations*

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## Members

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**Catherine Awwad**, *Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board*

**Sen. Eric Berthel**, *Post University*

**Ralph J. Biondi**, *Biondi & Rosengrant, LLC*

**Rep. Seth Bronko**, *Bronko Construction, LLC*

**Thomas Burden**, *M&T Bank*

**Matt Byrne**, *Minuteman Press*

**Mary M. Chiappalone**, *Biondi & Rosengrant, LLC*

**Chet Doheny**, *We Do Life...Together, A Division of ICES, Inc.*

**Dana Elm**, *Naugatuck Valley Community College*

**John G. Famiglietti**, *Commercial Connection, LLC*

**John W. Ford**, *Alderson-Ford Funeral Homes, Inc.*

**George Frantzis II**, *Quassy Amusement Park, Inc.*

**Justin J. Golden**, *Golden Technology Services, Inc.*

**David Jaffin**, *CFO Business Solutions*

**Curtis C. Jones**, *CIVIL 1*

**Kimberly A. Kalajainen**, *Saint Mary's Hospital / Trinity Health of New England*

**Daniel Keenan**, *Saint Mary's Hospital / Trinity Health of New England*

**Mark E. Lancor**, *DyMar*

**Selim G. Noujaim**, *Noujaim Tool Company, Inc.*

**Bill Palomba**, *Blasius Chevrolet Cadillac*

**Ron Pugliese**, *Naugatuck Economic Development Corporation*

**Edwin Rodriquez**, *St. Vincent DePaul Mission of Waterbury, Inc.*

**Bryan Southworth**, *University of Connecticut Waterbury*

**James R. Strub, Esq.**, *Secor, Cassidy & McPartland, PC*

**William A. Tomasso**, *TBI Construction, A Tomasso Company*

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