

## | CHAMBER HAPPENINGS |

# Get your voice heard at legislative summit

**O**n Feb. 11, our Waterbury Regional Chamber will host the annual legislative summit, giving area member business owners and representatives the opportunity to hear firsthand from the region's legislators.

During the event, participants will have the chance to talk with lawmakers about the issues that are most important to them, while at the same time learning about what priorities are at the forefront for legislators as they begin the new legislative session in Hartford that starts Feb. 9.

The legislative summit will take place from 7:30 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. at the Wyndham Southbury hotel. Governor Ned Lamont has been invited to give our keynote address. We have also invited 21 area lawmakers; more than half have responded that they will be attending. One of those in attendance is state Representative Ron Napoli of Waterbury.

"I am absolutely looking forward to meeting with the busi-



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ness community," he said recently. "Our local businesses are the backbone of our economy here in Waterbury and I believe it is vital to listen to their concerns and ideas as a state representative. I hope individuals in our community will feel satisfied with the important discussions at the event and will leave feeling more informed."

Napoli says it's important for lawmakers and various stakeholders to meet in order to build a consensus on certain issues.

State Senator Eric Berthel of Watertown, said, "Business owners from across the spectrum—micro, small, and large business—need a clear direction with what laws or regulations

might be enacted that will directly impact their bottom lines... We must provide businesses with enough information so that they can make decisions that enable them to grow, driving our economy," said Berthel.

For Berthel, the issues of main concern to him revolve around the extension of the state's public health/civil preparedness emergency and any related executive powers, as he says business leaders fear having to live in the shadow of another potential mandated shutdown, which would be detrimental to their bottom lines.

State Senator Joan Hartley, who represents Waterbury and parts of Naugatuck and Middlebury, said, "It's so important to have this input. While it's a short session, it's going to be a very important session. It's really about getting in front of this pandemic and plugging those gaps where government can connect entities, resources, and programs."

During the summit, we will have several "breakout rooms," which will be another opportunity for legislators to field questions from the audience and go in-depth on topics.

The legislative summit is open to chamber members and potential members. To register, visit [waterburychamber.com](http://waterburychamber.com).

We are grateful to our summit sponsors for this event, Trinity Health of New England/St. Mary's Hospital, Waterbury Health and Webster Bank; our Breakout Session sponsors, Eversource and Post University; our gold sponsors, AT&T and Savings Bank of Danbury; and our silver sponsors, Hubbard-Hall, Paolino Public Affairs Consulting, Powerstation Events, Secor, Cassidy & McPartland, and the Tomasso Group.

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