

Lawrence F. Cafero Jr.

House Republican Leader

Larry Cafero of Norwalk was again selected by his colleagues to be the House Republican Leader for a third term following the 2010 elections. He previously served as Deputy Leader for six terms. He has made fiscal responsibility, public safety, quality education and common sense hallmarks of the House Republican agenda.

As House Leader Larry and his fellow Republicans were successful in pushing through a *No Tax Increase Budget* in his first term in 2007, while committing record investments in long-term state education upgrades.

The *Do Something Budget* Larry authored in the spring of 2008 would have eliminated the state's deficit at that time without raising taxes and mitigated Connecticut's ongoing fiscal problems.

This year Larry has made the *Common Sense Commitment to Connecticut*, a five-point plan to put our state back on solid fiscal ground, the centerpiece of the House Republican agenda. The approach relies on reducing state spending and less borrowing, making government smaller and more responsive to its residents and achieving greater efficiencies throughout Connecticut's bureaucracy.

A lifelong resident of Norwalk, Larry was a member of the Board of Education for six years and left his post as Chairman when he was elected to the state House of Representatives from the 142nd House District in 1992.

Throughout his legislative career Larry has been instrumental in crafting legislation to support education. Larry has served as the Ranking Republican House member of the Education Committee and was a member of the Judicial, Appropriations and Labor committees.

Larry sees firsthand the difficulties that our children and their families confront just getting through every day life. He continues to serve the Norwalk school system as its Expulsion Hearing Office. His approach has been to mix in compassion and understanding for each individual that comes before him, balanced by what is in the best interests of the entire school community.

Larry has brought the voice of experience to education issues, specifically with the debate over in-school suspensions of students. While he supported the concept, Larry concluded that towns and cities already hit hard by the national recession could not afford this unfunded mandate and succeeded in delaying its implementation.

Larry has authored legislation toughening the state's drunk driving laws and stiffening the penalty against those who use 'date-rape' drugs to commit sexual assaults.

He also helped found the Side-by-Side Community Charter School and was active as a board member, serving as Chairman.

Larry is a graduate of Norwalk High School. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from the University of Connecticut and earned his J.D. from Western New England College School of Law. He is a partner with the law firm of Brown, Rudnick, of Hartford.

He lives in Norwalk with his wife Barbara where they have raised their three children, Jacqueline, Christopher, and Nicholas.

Representative Christopher G. Donovan (D – Meriden)
Speaker of the House
Connecticut General Assembly

Representative Christopher G. Donovan is Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives. He was sworn in as Speaker on January 7, 2009. Representing the 84th Assembly District of Meriden, he was first elected to the Connecticut General Assembly in 1992. Representative Donovan served as House Chair of the Labor and Public Employees Committee from 1997-2003, before being elected Majority Leader in November of 2004. He served two terms as Majority Leader.

Donovan has been a key sponsor of health care reform legislation and has worked to increase access to affordable, quality health care by opening up the state employee health care plan to municipalities, non-profits and small businesses. He believes quality health care coverage should be available to everyone in the state. Rep. Donovan has led successful fights on campaign finance reform, stem cell research funding, and supplemental Medicare coverage, as well as expansions to the HUSKY program, minimum wage increases, school-based health clinics, school nutrition, and mass transit improvements including the push for the New Haven-Springfield commuter rail line.

In 2009-2010, Donovan convened task forces on domestic violence, children in the recession, and regionalism and municipal cooperation. Task force recommendations led to the most sweeping domestic violence legislation in 25 years, the first-in-the-nation law recognizing the needs of children in an economic crisis, and cost-saving initiatives for cities and towns across Connecticut.

Donovan has been recognized by numerous groups including the Connecticut Oral Health Initiative, Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis Inc., the CT Early Childhood Alliance, the Connecticut Family Resource Center, the Connecticut Police Chief's Association, the Connecticut Association of Optometrists, the Connecticut Voices for Children, and the Connecticut Public Health Association.

Donovan is a member of the University of Connecticut School of Social Work Advisory Committee and The Collegiate Education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons Advisory Board. He is a former member of the Connecticut Family Leave Task Force.

Donovan earned his bachelor's degree in biology at Villanova University and his master's degree in social work from the University of Connecticut School of Social Work, specializing in community organizing. He is an adjunct faculty member in the political science and sociology departments at the University of Hartford. As a community organizer in Meriden, Conn., he focused on environmental, energy and housing issues. He also has been active on day care, family leave, and pay equity issues.

Senator John McKinney (R – Fairfield)
Senate Minority Leader
Connecticut General Assembly

John McKinney (R-28) is serving his seventh term in the Connecticut State Senate representing the towns of Easton, Fairfield, Newtown and Weston. He was elected Minority Leader of the Senate in June 2007 and is a ranking member on the General Assembly's Environment, Housing and Executive Nominations committees. McKinney's Web address is www.SenatorMcKinney.cga.ct.gov

In the Senate, McKinney has fought to lower taxes, create jobs and eliminate wasteful government spending. In the tradition of his father, the late Congressman Stewart B. McKinney, McKinney is a fiscally conservative, socially moderate centrist who is at the forefront of state efforts to preserve and protect our environment, increase access to affordable housing and end homelessness.

McKinney served on the Transportation Committee for nine years, leading efforts to change the state's transportation policy to address the long-term challenges of increasing congestion and rising gasoline prices. He was instrumental in helping to pass major transportation initiatives in 2005 and 2006 that will improve I-95, replace all 342 Metro-North rail cars and create a new Metro-North maintenance facility to service them.

In 2007, he helped author and pass Jessica's Law for Connecticut establishing strong mandatory minimum jail sentences for convicted child sex offenders and online child predators. He has led efforts to improve indoor air quality regulations for public schools.

A leading voice for job creation, affordable housing and inner-city economic development, McKinney was named the 2007 Legislator of the Year by the Bridgeport Regional Business Council. He has been recognized as an Environmental Hero by the League of Conservation Voters for his ongoing efforts to preserve Connecticut's open spaces and clean up Long Island Sound.

McKinney is actively involved in several nonprofit organizations. He currently serves on the Boards of the Westport/Weston Family YMCA and Operation Hope. He is a former member of the Board of Directors for the Center for Women and Families in Bridgeport. He is also a past member of the vestry of Trinity Church in Southport. John and his family help provide housing and care for people with AIDS through the Stewart B. McKinney Foundation.

McKinney earned a bachelor of arts degree from Yale University and received his juris doctorate from the University of Connecticut School of Law, with honors. Prior to being elected to the General Assembly, McKinney practiced law at Cummings and Lockwood and was a law clerk to Connecticut Supreme Court Justice Richard N. Palmer.