

State Senator Toni Boucher Biography

State Senator Toni Boucher was elected to represent the 26th Senatorial District in 2008, after having served as the State Representative from the 143rd Assembly District for 12 years. The 26th Senatorial District includes the communities of Bethel, New Canaan, Redding, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport and Wilton.

Senator Boucher has earned leadership roles in both the public and private sectors. Her election to the State Senate followed a distinguished career in the House of Representatives where she held caucus leadership positions and served on several legislative committees.

In the State Senate, Senator Boucher serves as an Assistant Minority Leader. Senator Boucher is the Senate Ranking Member of the General Assembly's Transportation Committee and of its Select Committee on Children. She also serves as a member of the General Assembly's Elementary and Secondary Education Committee and of its Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee.

Senator Boucher has assumed a leadership role on the Transportation Committee at a time when the state and nation is reaffirming its commitment to mass transportation. While serving as a member of the Transportation Committee as a State Representative, she worked to protect and improve the Danbury Branch line and helped lead the way on traffic relief initiatives for Southwestern Connecticut, especially with respect to rail service. Today, Senator Boucher continues to work to modernize commuter rail lines by keeping public policy focused on parking, train station enhancements and more frequent, faster, rail service.

As a member of the Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee, Senator Boucher is working to resolve the state's existing fiscal problems and plan for the future in a bipartisan manner. She believes that Connecticut must recreate an environment where businesses can grow and families can prosper. Senator Boucher, who served on the Appropriations Committee as a State Representative, is now on the front line of efforts to balance the state's growing budget deficit while holding the line on taxes, reducing government spending, saving businesses and growing jobs.

Senator Boucher calls on her extensive experience in the business world when working with her legislative colleagues on state government fiscal issues. Senator Boucher, who holds an MBA from UCONN Business School, is the founder and former owner of a small business and a former member of corporate management for two Fortune 50 firms. Senator Boucher also co-founded and served on the Board of Directors of a marketing design agency in San Diego, California which specializes in clients working in biogenetic, aerospace and

leading edge computer applications. She is honored to have been a recipient of the Southwest Area (CT) Commerce and Industry Association's Community Leader Award.

Currently, Senator Boucher, who holds series 7 and series 63 licenses, is the director of the Commonfund Institute, the educational and research arm of Commonfund, a \$38-billion nonprofit fund manager for 1,900 educational, nonprofit and health care institutions started by the Ford Foundation in 1971. In December 2008, she co-authored a publication on *Ethics and the Nonprofit*. As a member of the Elementary and Secondary Education Committee, Senator Boucher helps to oversee legislation relating to the state Department of Education, local and regional school boards, state libraries, museums and other historical associations. As a Ranking Member of the Select Committee on Children, Senator Boucher works on legislation dealing with children's issues.

Senator Boucher became known in the legislature as an outspoken advocate for education at all levels when she was a State Representative. She authored and helped pass legislation to reduce the mandatory age at which a child must enroll in school from seven to five, and reformed bilingual education, and helped institute the Connecticut College Trust Fund to help parents save for their children's college education. She successfully worked for legislation to promote early reading success, preschool education programs for disadvantaged children and to enhance educational accountability. For her support of arts education, the Connecticut Association of Arts Administrators presented then Representative Boucher with its 2006 Outstanding Contributions in Arts Advocacy Award. More recently, then Representative Boucher received the 2008 Connecticut Arts Advocate Award from the Connecticut Arts Educators Association and the 2008 Music Education Advocate Award from CMEA.

Senator Boucher's involvement with education and youth issues pre-dates her service in the General Assembly. She has served as a member of the Connecticut State Board of Education, where she was chair of the state's policy and long-range planning committees. From 1986 to 1994, she served on the Wilton Board of Education, during which time she served as both the board's chair and secretary. She also served on the Board of Directors of the Wilton Education Foundation and five school/community based planning teams; the Quality and Integrated Education Local Planning Committee and the Foreign Language Task Force (1978-92). Also, she was active in the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education and the National Association of State Boards of Education; Wilton YMCA Expansion Fund; Board of the Wilton Youth Council's Project 94, 96 and 2000; Technology Task Force (1993-present); Gifted Task Force (1988-90); and the Wilton Parent-Teacher Associations. Early in her career, Senator Boucher worked as a translator and secondary education language teacher. She is fluent in Spanish and Italian.

Senator Boucher's history of community involvement extends beyond education and children's issues. She has served as a member of the Wilton Board of Selectmen and as the town of Wilton's representative to the Council on Public Facilities and Insurance Committee. Also, she was active in the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. In the past, she has served as an advisory board member of the New Canaan Nature Center and as a member of the Our Lady of Fatima Fundraising Steering Committee, Greystone Estates Association Board of Directors, Advisory Board of New Canaan Cares, Wilton League of Women Voters, Wilton Historical Society, Board of Directors of the Wilton Chapter of the AFS, and Friends of the Wilton Library.

Presently, Senator Boucher serves as an advisory board member of UConn's nonprofit Leadership Institute, advisory board member of the Alden Weir Farm Art Center, and a board member of the Norwalk Human Services Committee. Previously, she served as a member of board of Elder House and of the Norwalk Youth Symphony.

Senator Boucher continues her interest in working with her legislative colleagues on issues she pursued as a State Representative. For example, during her tenure in the House of Representatives she successfully promoted legislation for the elderly such as: providing assisted living services in the home, preventing elder abuse and permitting seniors to work without financial penalties. As a state representative, she was honored to be chosen as a Connecticut delegate to The White House Conference on Aging in December 2005. Also, she was the recipient of the Connecticut Legal Immigrant and Refugee Coalition's 1998 Outstanding Legal Immigrant Award and of "Legislator of the Year" awards from state and national anti-drug organizations for her leadership role in successful anti-drug legislation