

From The House

New Laws for 2018

By Rep. Matt Ritter

Happy New Year!

While the 2017 legislative session had more than its share of challenges, with hard work and perseverance, the General Assembly approved a full menu of legislation. We were able to pass legislation that further tackles the opioid crisis, continues our efforts to reform the criminal justice system and expands health care coverage to those who need it most.

These new laws, which just went into effect Jan. 1, not only put families first but further improve Connecticut's quality of life.

Among the new laws slated to take effect at the start of the New Year are bills that address a growing public health crisis in Connecticut. I'll highlight one here - House Bill 7052 will help reduce addiction and overdoses by limiting the maximum opioid drug prescription from 7 days to 5 days. The new law additionally requires health insurers to cover medically necessary, in-patient detoxification services for an insured diagnosed with a substance abuse disorder.

We not only took steps to address the opioid crisis that has taken hold of this state, but we fought to expand health care coverage for women battling cancer. By extending fertility coverage to those who have been diagnosed with cancer, women no longer have to choose between receiving the treatment they need to survive and having a family.

We also continued to spearhead efforts to further understand the connection between mental health and crime. This year, we passed legislation that bans the solitary confinement of minors, provides for greater transparency regarding this type of imprisonment and adds training and wellness initiatives for correctional staff.

While these are just three of the more than 30 new laws that took effect on New Year's Day, there's more work to be done. I look forward to working with all of you as we prepare for the 2018 legislative session that is just around the corner.