As I write this column, we’re just days away from the opening day of the 2023 legislative session, when 151 state representatives and 36 state senators elected in November will begin their new two-year terms.

I’m honored to be among these elected officials, many of whom spent their summer and fall knocking on doors to introduce themselves to voters.

The legislative session runs through the beginning of June. As always, I walk into the five-month period hopeful that the Democrat majority and Republican minority can find common ground on the biggest issues—particularly, those that affect your wallet. What goes underreported is how often we work and vote together on smaller issues that may not garner big headlines yet carry significant impact on our lives each and every day.

Affordability has been and remains a top issue for me, and recently I’ve found it encouraging to hear Gov. Lamont endorse the idea of a middle-class tax cut similar to the reduction Republicans proposed twice last year—cutting the income tax rate from 5 percent to 4 percent for individuals earning $75k or less and joint filers earning $175k. In a move to make our state more business friendly, the governor has pitched reducing a corporate surcharge that’s been a sore spot for the business sector. I’m hopeful that he’ll look at other taxes, too, such as a recent pass-through entity tax increase affecting businesses and the 1 percent meals tax.

Given that this a long session when all legislators can submit individual bill proposals—only committee bills are allowed in the short session, or even numbered years—it’s likely that we’ll tackle a wide variety of other subjects.

Among them are headline-grabbers, such as the high cost of home energy and construction of a framework for early voting, and those that won’t gain much coverage in the media, such as adding legislative appointments to the state Board of Education. I look forward to telling you more about these topics, and my specific proposals, as the session takes shape.

At this point, the details of how we’ll conduct business—virtual versus in-person—have yet to be finalized. I remain a proponent of doing as much as possible, if not all our work, in the building. With that said, I recognize that the Covid pandemic may have made virtual meeting rooms, and public hearings in particular, a permanent component in the legislative process. I’ll share more information with you as this picture becomes clearer.

In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions, concerns, or ideas you have about state government: vincent.candelora@housegop.ct.gov or 860-240-8700.

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