

Beacon Hill Byline by Mary Rogeness

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This Office Is Here to Help

Everybody knows that the Legislature spends time in Boston passing laws to provide for the governing of the state, but legislators have other important functions in the daily lives of the voters. You might need help in dealing with a mysterious bureau of the Massachusetts government. It may be that you need to know more about a state regulation than you can find in the library. Or perhaps you want to secure official recognition for an associate who has achieved an honor in community service.

Additionally, you are entitled to a legislator who knows as much as possible about needs and people of the whole district. State officials do a good job of handling the task of taking care of citizens' every-day concerns, but as in any bureaucracy, sometimes the needs of an individual are overlooked. If your particular concern has fallen into a crack, you may need a little help in smoothing the way to facilitate exchange of information or access to services.

My office in the Statehouse is located in the midst of numerous experienced professionals who are well versed in how things work in a bureaucracy. Let us help. Many of you already know that the capitol is a good place to find information. If you need to know about pending legislation or regulations, write or call my office. You can count on me to keep you informed and respond to your questions. It is both a pleasure and a privilege for me to take part in events in our towns that honor students, volunteers and others for special achievements. If you are planning such a celebration, please put me on your list today! Even if I cannot attend, I can arrange for recognition to be provided from the Statehouse.

One of the highlights of my time in office is my participation in the Longmeadow D.A.R.E. graduations this month. The most important factor in providing an effective representative for the voters is a legislator's knowledge about the neighborhoods and individuals in our towns. The information comes largely from your contacts with me. Whether it is the annual meeting of the Jewish Nursing Home, a Selectmen's or School Committee meeting, or just sitting down at a Council on Aging luncheon, your welcome has been enthusiastic. I appreciate the hospitality you have extended, including me on guest lists and sharing your pan of the community. A lawmaker can keep busy every hour of the day meeting these responsibilities. One voter reminisced with me about the ultimate example of constituent service, an old time lawmaker from his home town who would return merchandise to Filene's. That is one service which I regretfully refuse to match.

If you have a more traditional request, please call or write to me. The Boston telephone, 617-722-2100, is available during business hours. My Longmeadow telephone, 567-5480, may be answered by a machine, but I will receive any messages you leave. Address mail to me at the State House, Boston, MA, 02133. In the next column, I will discuss a legislative proposal that many of you have already asked me about, the early retirement bill. A new bill is slated for action in this legislative session, and I will report to you on its development.