



# **The Honorable Edwin A. Gomes**

*Connecticut State Senator 23rd District 2005 - 2012*





## State Senator Edwin A. Gomes

This book is a celebration of the extraordinary work and achievements of Senator Ed Gomes, an advocate for all the people of Connecticut and the cities of Bridgeport and Stratford.

It was prepared in recognition of Ed's many years of public service by Virginia Monteiro, his Legislative Assistant, and Frank Gerratana MD, his friend and Bridgeport native.

Ed Gomes continues to give his voice to the civil rights and labor movements of Connecticut and beyond.





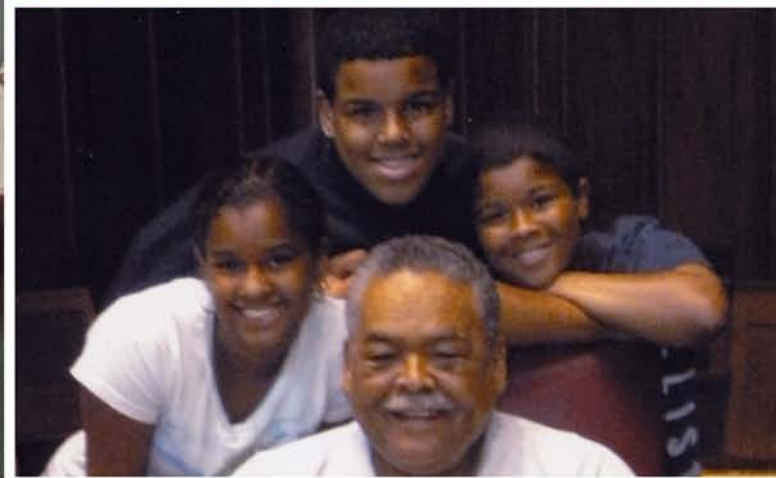


The Connecticut State Capitol  
Hartford, CT





Carpenter Steel where Senator Gomes began working in 1963.  
Bridgeport, CT



Senator Gomes with his mother,  
brother and grandchildren

## **Senator Edwin A. Gomes**

### **Deputy Majority Leader**

**Chair:** Housing Committee

**Vice Chair:** Labor & Public Employees

**Member:** Appropriations; General Law; Judiciary

Ed Gomes was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1936, the second child among seven brothers and two sisters. Ed himself has been blessed with six children, 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. His family moved to Bridgeport, Connecticut in 1944 where he attended Bridgeport public schools.

Ed enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1958 and was stationed in Fort Belvoir, Virginia for his first two years. At that time, Virginia was a segregated state and Ed experienced life under racial segregation when he was off the military base. He was stationed in Korea from 1961 to 1962 and served the balance of his enlistment at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Silver Spring, Maryland. Ed was honorably discharged in October 1963.

While stationed at Walter Reed, Ed was part of the historic March for Jobs and Freedom held in Washington, D.C. on August 28, 1963. The architect of the March was A. Philip Randolph, founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union and a civil rights leader since the early 1900's. The main organizer of the march was Bayard Rustin, a master civil rights strategist. The March for Jobs and Freedom as well as Randolph and Rustin had a profound impact of shaping Ed Gomes' life and work.

In November 1963, Ed began working as a laborer then as an annealer at Carpenter Steel in Bridgeport. He immediately got active in his local union (United Steelworkers of America Local 2215) and was named shop steward within six months and grievance person within one year. He eventually ran for office in Local 2215, elected recording secretary and then president.



In July 1977, Ed left Carpenter Steel to become an International Representative for District 1 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), comprised of all the New England states. He was also named the USWA District 1 Civil Rights Coordinator. Soon after, he worked closely with A. Philip Randolph, Bayard Rustin and Norman Hill, Executive Director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute. Ed also became involved with the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

Ed was elected to serve on the Bridgeport City Council in 1983 where he served until 1989. He fought for well-paying jobs, good schools, strong neighborhoods, and seniors, just as he does today. Ed revived the Bridgeport Black Democratic Club and had the club join the Connecticut Federation of Black Democratic Clubs. He was elected as a Vice President and member of the Connecticut AFL-CIO Executive Board.

In 1991, Ed was part of a group of Bridgeport civil rights activists who filed a federal lawsuit challenging the racial inequity of Bridgeport's City Council districts. The legal team was headed by John Brittain, a UConn law professor and lead counsel on the Hartford school desegregation case *Sheff v. O'Neill*. Ed testified before Federal District Judge Peter Dorsey, and the case was won in 1993.

Ed retired from the United Steelworkers of America in February 1998. He was elected once more to the Bridgeport City Council in 1999 and served until 2005. Ed served as Chair of the School Building Committee, starting the construction of the first new schools (five in total) Bridgeport has seen in the last quarter-century. Ed is also a founding member of Education First and Bridgeport First.

In May 2002, Ed joined forces with Brennan Center for Justice, the Connecticut Citizen Action Group, and Common Cause Connecticut to successfully challenge Connecticut's discriminatory delegate primary system. Once again, Ed testified before Judge Dorsey and proved to be a most compelling witness in shaping Judge Dorsey's decision to overturn the delegate primary system and pave the way for our open primary system. Ed later joined the Board of the Connecticut Citizen Action Group.

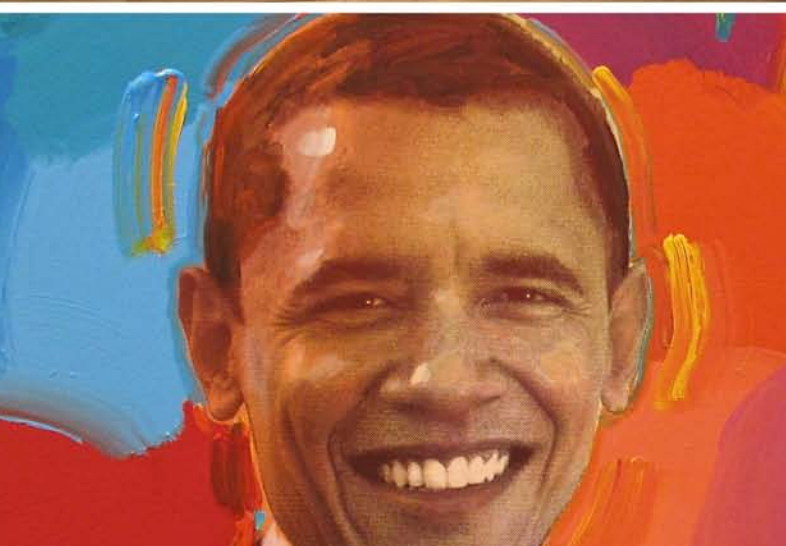
Ed was first elected to serve as State Senator for the 23rd Senatorial District in a special election on November 14, 2005, and was overwhelmingly re-elected in November 2006. He served in the Connecticut State Senate until January 2013. Ed continues his lifelong fight for social and economic justice for all.



## The Gomes-Obama Team



State Senator Ed Gomes with then U.S. Senator Barack Obama (D-Illinois), keynote speaker at the Connecticut Democratic Party sponsored Jefferson Jackson Bailey Dinner. (March 30, 2006)





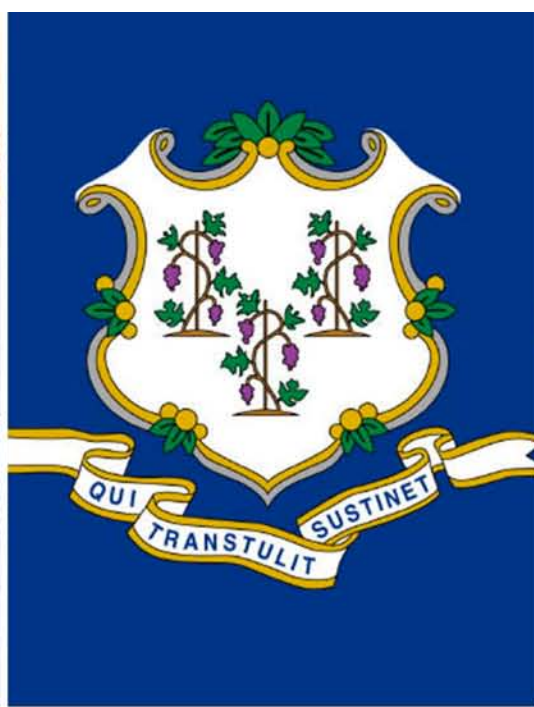


Vice-President Joe Biden and Congressman Jim Himes with State Senator Ed Gomes.



Senator Gomes reading to children at Roosevelt School on Park Ave. in Bridgeport









Senator Gomes touring the Beardsley Park Zoo in Bridgeport, CT.





## BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

BY FRANK GERRATANA, CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER, "SUNDAY HERALD"





Ed enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1958 and was stationed in Fort Belvoir, Virginia for his first two years. He was stationed in Korea from 1961 to 1962 and served the balance of his enlistment at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Silver Spring, Maryland.



# A. PHILIP RANDOLPH

## Civil Rights and Labor Activist



Prints and Photographs Division  
LC-USZ62-97544

### The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters

When African American porters working for the staunchly anti-union Pullman Company decided to organize in the 1920s, they turned to Harlem labor activist Asa Philip Randolph (1889–1979), who had established his reputation as an eloquent soapbox orator and cofounder of *The Messenger*, the “only radical Negro magazine in America.” Officially launched in August 1925, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, led by Randolph, battled Pullman’s union-busting tactics for twelve years, winning the respect of the hitherto all-white affiliates of the American Federation of Labor. In 1937, Randolph finally obtained a contract from Pullman for better wages and working conditions, the first agreement ever negotiated between a major corporation and an all-black union. Randolph went on to successfully campaign against racial discrimination in the armed forces and defense industries and to organize the famous 1963 March on Washington. He is now regarded as the greatest black labor leader in American history and an influential figure in the civil rights movement.



Photograph by Gordon Parks, November 1962  
Prints and Photographs Division  
LC-USZ62-11886-6

*“Freedom is never given;  
it is won.”*

—Keynote speech, Second National Negro Congress, 1936



Civil rights and labor activist A. Philip Randolph inspired Senator Gomes.





Pedro Verona Rodrigues Pires, President of the Republic of Cape Verde, 22 March 2001 to 9 September 2011



# The Republic of Cape Verde

Senator Ed Gomes and his legislative assistant, Virginia Monteiro met at the State Capitol with Minister of Communities Maria Fernanda Tavares Fernandes of Cape Verde, and other members of the Cape Verdean diplomatic delegation. (July 2, 2012)





Senator Gomes joined a gathering on the North Steps of the State Capitol to demonstrate public support for multiple pieces of legislation that promote equality and justice for everyone in Connecticut.



Senate Labor Committee vice-chair Ed Gomes listens to United Illuminating executives during the legislative hearings on Connecticut's readiness and response to Tropical Storm Irene.



Senator Gomes at the Ralphola Taylor Community Center in Bridgeport.





Senator Gomes greets CEO and President of the NAACP Benjamin Jealous and President of the CT NAACP State Conference Scot X. Esdale at the State Capitol. President Jealous met with Governor Malloy and Senate leadership to urge their support of the passage of the bill to Repeal the Death Penalty. Senator Gomes was a strong supporter and co-sponsor of the Senate bill which passed on April 11, 2012.



Senator Gomes speaks at a press conference with the Connecticut Action Alliance for a Fair Economy about release of a report on questionable practices at Bank of America. (April 14, 2011)



Senator Ed Gomes, Senate Chair of the Housing Committee, joined Governor Malloy and Co-Chair Rep. Larry Butler in Hartford to announce the overhaul of hundreds of deteriorating public housing units across Connecticut. The plan will invest \$300 million over ten years, by far Connecticut's largest housing investment in decades. (February 1, 2012)







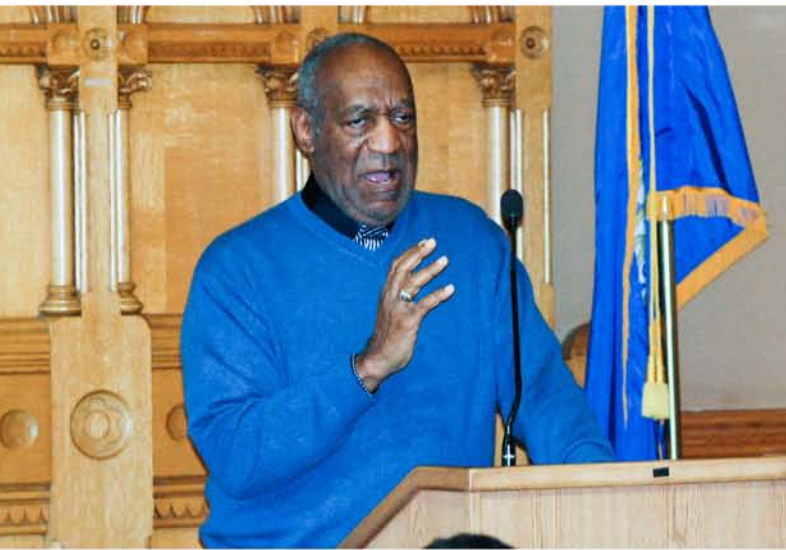


Historic photos of Bridgeport including the police chief, Holy Rosary Church, Barnum School, an East Side grocery and Barnum Festival Parade.





Senators Ed Gomes and members of the Black & Puerto Rican Caucus join Dr. Cato T. Laurencin, Dean of the University of Connecticut School of Medicine, at a ceremony to unveil a portrait painted of him by the artist Simmie Knox. (May 9, 2012)



Dr. Bill Cosby speaks at the Connecticut State Capitol to advocate for helping more minority students to enter scientific, medical, and other notable career fields. He arrived on the occasion of the unveiling of a portrait of Dr. Cato T. Laurencin, Dean of the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. (May 9, 2012)



Senator Gomes and Executive Director Esperina Baptiste at the Ralphola Taylor Community Center in Bridgeport. Senator Gomes was visiting the center to discuss recent state funding he helped to secure for the center to provide computer and homework classes, life and job readiness skill development, and recreational services.





Senator Gomes with constituents from Bridgeport who visited the Capitol to participate in AIDS Awareness Day. (May 11, 2011)



Senator Ed Gomes was recognized by Richard A. Caron, Sr., Executive Director of the CT Pardon Team, for his efforts to help rehabilitated individuals move past their criminal records and get back to work. (March 28, 2012)



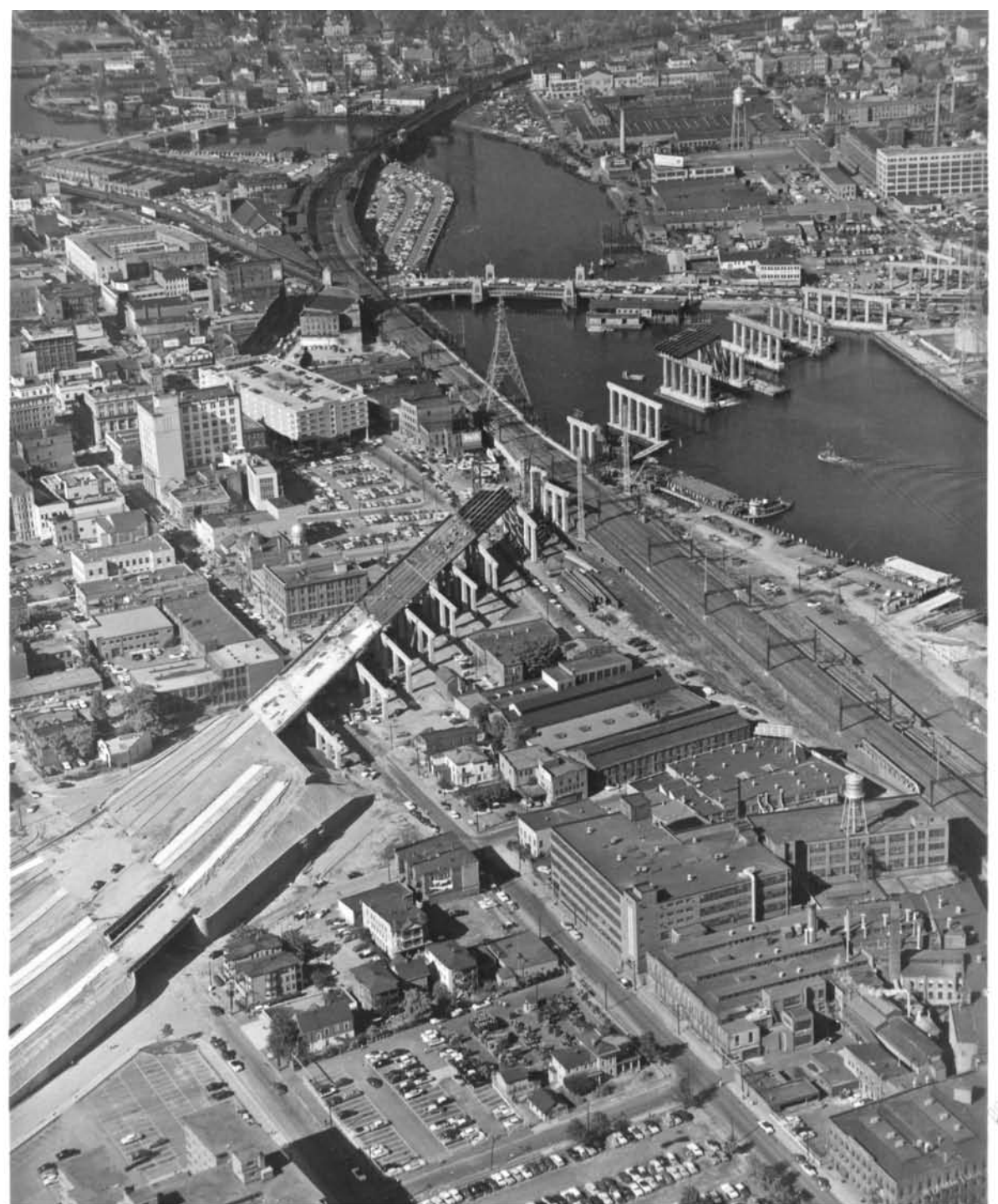
State Senator Ed Gomes calls on the City of New London to hire CT Fire Academy Recruit Al Mayo, who was discriminated against and wrongfully pulled from the Academy only three days prior to graduation, according to a new report from the State Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection. With the senator are Al Mayo, Rep. Ernest Hewett, and Scot X Esdaile, President of the CT NAACP. (April 24, 2012)





A view of Main Street in Bridgeport looking to the north.





Downtown Bridgeport showing the construction of I-95.





A few of the historic buildings of Bridgeport, CT





Some of Senator Gomes' friends and colleagues at the State Capitol in Hartford, Connecticut





Senator Gomes, Vice Chair of the Labor Committee, meets with daycare providers from Bridgeport asking for his support of a bill that would allow certain home care workers and daycare providers collective bargaining rights. The Bill passed May 3, 2012



Senator Ed Gomes welcomes to the State Capitol a group of Bridgeport residents who are fighting to raise awareness and support for people living with HIV/AIDS. (April 26, 2012)



State Senator Ed Gomes held a press conference at Heroes Village LLC in Bridgeport to raise awareness of the state's STEP-UP job training and employment program, and to detail how a recent expansion of that program will help reduce unemployment amongst post 9/11 combat veterans in Bridgeport and across the state. (July 12, 2012)



A Prescription for: *Universal Healthcare:*  
*Accessible, Quality Care While Stabilizing*





Long-time friends and supporters from CCAG, WFP and more



Tom Swan from the Connecticut Citizen Action Group.



Lindsey Farrell from the Connecticut Working Families Party.

Marilyn Moore, Ed's lifelong friend and former Legislative Assistant.



John Murphy from Ed's campaign trails.







Senator Gomes at the Cesar A. Batalla School and Captain's Cove in Bridgeport, CT





PLEASURE BEACH

BARNUM FESTIVAL







Senator Gomes with Charles Tisdale and Marilyn Jones.

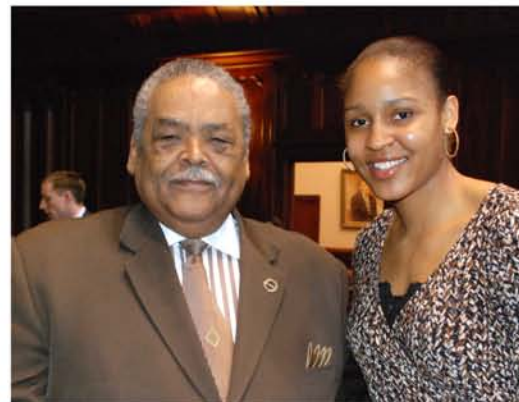


# UCONN Husky Day - April 27, 2011

Senator Gomes spends a moment with UConn women's basketball MVP Maya Moore during Husky Day at the State Capitol. (Right)



Senator Gomes spends a moment with members of the NCAA champion UConn men's basketball team during Husky Day at the State Capitol. L-R: Tyler Olander, Jeremy Lamb, Roscoe Smith, Senator Gomes, Michael Bradley, and coach Kevin Ollie. (Below)







# BARNUM & BAILEY



© Connecticut Senate Democrats

EDWIN A. GOMES  
Alderman-136th District

**GOMES**

Edwin A. Gomes  
*City Council Member 135th District*











The Steel Point section of the East Side of Bridgeport, CT









The corner of Main St. and Fairfield Ave. in Bridgeport, CT





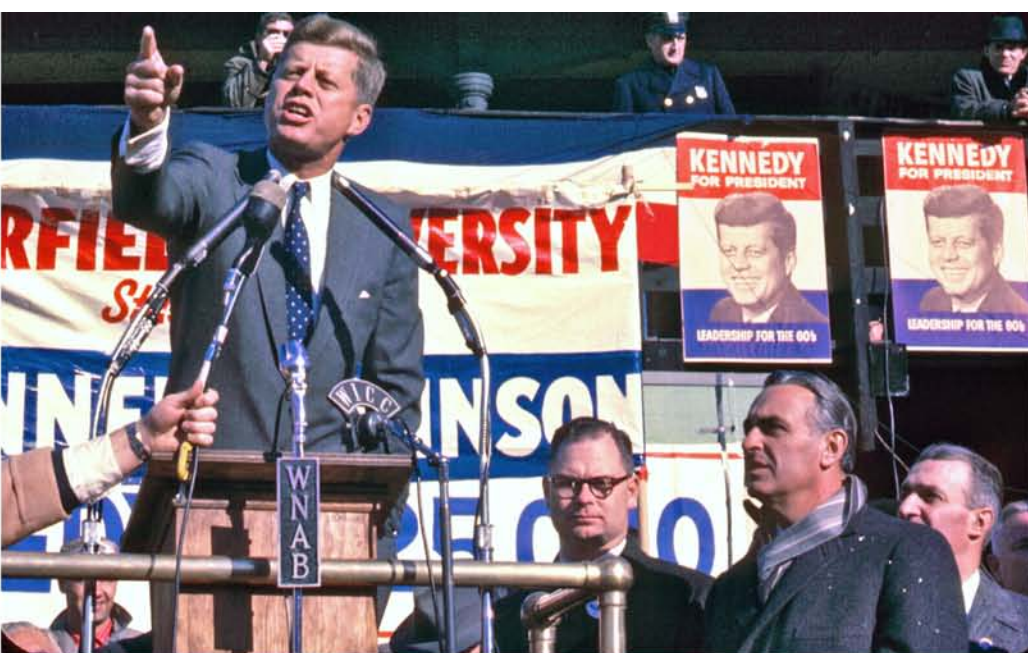
TRUMAN

ROOSEVELT



US Presidents Truman and Roosevelt on trains at the Bridgeport railway station.



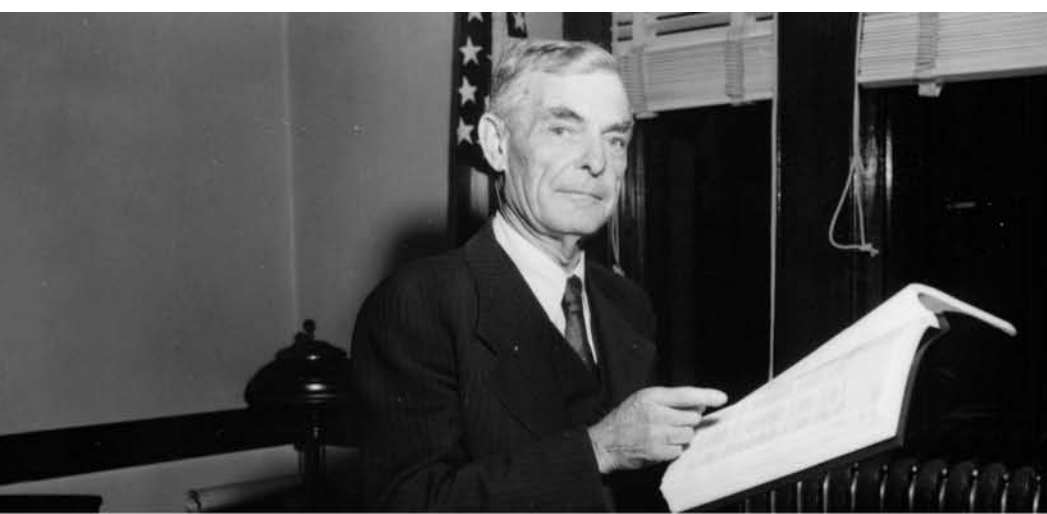


# KENNEDY



Then US Senator John Kennedy campaigning for President at the Bridgeport, CT railroad station.





Scenes of Bridgeport including long time Mayor Jasper McLevy, the Singer factory on Barnum Ave., Trumbull Gardens Apartments and the Jenny Lind celebration.





Bridgeport's Main St. with the Majestic and Loew's Poli theaters in the foreground





**GRASSO**



**RIBICOFF**



# CONNECTICUT POST

NEW ENGLAND NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

WEDNESDAY November 5, 2008

www.connpost.com

Making history: A divided America elects its first black president

# OBAMA



Barack Obama swept to victory as the nation's first black president Tuesday night in a landslide that overcame racial barriers as old as America itself.

"Change has come," he told a huge throng of supporters. The son of a black father from Kenya and a white mother from Kansas, the Democratic senator from Illinois sealed his historic triumph by defeating Republican Sen. John McCain in a string of wins in hard-fought battleground states.

Coverage begins on A5

## ELECTION COVERAGE: A4-23

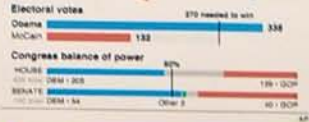
**Stratford OKs Long Beach West sale**  
Stratford voters approved the proposed sale of Long Beach West to the U.S. government. **A6**

**Constitutional convention rejected**  
Voters in Connecticut decided against holding a convention to amend the state's constitution. **A8**

**Musto unseats Russo in Senate**  
Trumbull Town Treasurer Anthony Musto unseated state Sen. Rob Russo in the 22nd District. **A10**

**Town-by-town results**  
Election results from throughout the region. **A12** and at [connpost.com](http://connpost.com)

State winner's percentage of total vote



## Blacks celebrate

The region's traditionally black churches cheer Obama's victory. **A8**

## DeLauro cruises

U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro wins her 11th term representing the 3rd District, defeating Bo Islak. **A11**

## Democrats gain

North Carolina Sen. Elizabeth Dole loses her bid for re-election, as Democrats expand their majorities in Congress. **A18**



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60 51

**CATARACT BREAKTHROUGH**  
NOW SEE NEAR, FAR AND IN BETWEEN WITH DR. ROBBINS CRYSTALENS OR RESTORE CATARACT SURGERY

Robbins

Posters from Senator Gomes' office featuring his favorite President and favorite football team, the Steelers.





Connecticut's US Senators Christopher Murphy and Richard Blumenthal. Also, Congressmen Rosa DeLauro, Barbara Kennelly and John Larson





US Senator Thomas Dodd with President Lyndon Johnson visiting Fairfield County. His son, US Senator Christopher Dodd is pictured upper right.





Fifty years ago, this year, I began my life-long march for jobs and freedom in our nation's capital.

It has been my life's work to defend the freedom of all citizens and fight for jobs for everyone.

Never were the words of the late Senator Ted Kennedy more relevant. What he said in 1980, still rings true today:

“The work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives, and the dream shall never die.”

*Senator Ed Gomes* December 31, 2012





Three views of the Capitol building from 1930, from about 1950, and in 2011 with Ted Kennedy Jr at a labor rally.





Legislative Office Building





Senator Gomes final speech to his colleagues.





Good friends celebrating in Hartford in April 2013 - Senator Ed Gomes, Frank Gerratana and Art Perry









Senator Gomes with Senate President Pro Tempore Donald Williams Jr. and Senate Majority Leader Martin Looney in the Senate Chamber. (April, 2011)