



Sam Caligiuri

Sam S. F. Caligiuri's rise in politics is as unique as Sam's championship for the people of Connecticut. On the morning of July 26, 2001, he entered the operating room for elective knee surgery. By the time Sam awoke from surgery, he was the acting mayor of Waterbury.

With Waterbury Mayor Phillip Giordano in police custody, under the City's Charter, Sam, who was serving as president of the Waterbury Board of Aldermen, became the acting mayor. It did not take long for Sam to spring into action. From his hospital bed, he put a plan in place to lead the city through a difficult time.

As acting mayor, Sam led one of the most aggressive municipal ethics reform efforts in Connecticut history. He transformed the city's corrupt process for awarding towing contracts into a merit-based approach focused solely on a company's qualifications. Sam began dismantling the system of patronage that was awarding the bulk of the city's legal work to politically-connected lawyers. Fiscally, Sam negotiated two collective bargaining agreements that saved city taxpayers millions.

Convinced that he could best serve the people of Waterbury from outside the mayor's office, Sam chose not to run for election and conducted an unprecedented transition of power to his successor, Democrat Michael Jarjura. It is one of many chapters in the history of a man whose life and record of service are rooted in principle, rather than political expediency.

Sam is the son of immigrants. His parents, Giacomo and Marie Caligiuri, came to the United States in search of the same economic opportunity and political freedom that has drawn countless other immigrants to our nation. They worked tirelessly to provide a good home and education for Sam and his brother, John. Giacomo worked as a factory machine operator and Marie as an aide in nursing home kitchens.

Sam became the first member of his family to graduate college when he earned a Bachelor of Arts from Boston College. He went on to earn a Master of Arts in Religion from Yale Divinity School and a Juris Doctorate from Catholic University of America.

Sam began his public service with a two-year stint as deputy legal counsel in the Connecticut Governor's Office. He was elected a member of the Waterbury Board of Aldermen in 1997. After just three years, Sam was voted president of the board with the support of a coalition of Republicans and Democrats who shared his unease with then-

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Mayor Phil Giordano. Sam's tenure as president was marked by his ability to lead bipartisan votes on highly contentious issues such as the city budget and the state takeover of the city's finances.

Now a State Senator, Sam is in his second term representing Connecticut's 16th District, consisting of Southington and Wolcott and parts of Cheshire and Waterbury. Sam is the deputy minority leader of the Senate Republican Caucus, and serves as a member of five legislative committees. He is the ranking member, or leading Republican Senator, serving on the Elementary & Secondary Education Committee and the Insurance & Real Estate Committee. He also serves on the Appropriations Committee and the Regulation Review Committee.

Sam emerged quickly as a strong and courageous leader in the General Assembly. In 2007, Sam was the only State Senator in any party, to vote against the state budget, arguing that it was wrong for the people of Connecticut because it exceeded the state spending cap and would lead to huge state deficits. Because of Sam's principled stance against the state budget, newspapers praised him, calling him the "last defender" of the state spending cap and the "last sane man in Hartford." Sam has also been a leader in the fight to enact tougher criminal sentencing laws. He is the founder of the Three Strikes Now Coalition, a nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to enacting a three strikes law in Connecticut for three-time violent criminals. Sam has also fought to give a voice to those who need one. In 2008, he was one of only two Republicans in the General Assembly to support an increase in the minimum wage. One of his top legislative priorities in 2009 was strengthening Connecticut's equal pay laws for women.

Sam has long been active in various community and civic organizations. He has served as chairman of the board of directors of the United Way of Greater Waterbury and as a trustee of the Connecticut Community Foundation. Sam has served as a member of the board of directors of the Governor's Prevention Partnership, Connecticut Legal Services and the Greater Waterbury Chamber of Commerce. He also served on Governor M. Jodi Rell's Commission on Education Finance.

An attorney by profession, Sam is a partner in the Hartford office of Day Pitney LLP. In 2002, he was awarded the Connecticut Law Tribune's Impact Award. He is a fellow of the Connecticut Bar Foundation and has served as an adjunct faculty member at the University of Connecticut School of Law.

Sam is a lifelong resident of Waterbury, where he lives with his wife, Lori, and their children, Grace and Owen.

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