

House Republican Press Release

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**A VIEW FROM THE INSIDE**  
**State Representative Ruth Fahrbach**



**Make Connecticut safe, secure and  
more affordable**

Many Connecticut families are struggling to make ends meet. Judging by responses to my 2008 legislative survey and comments from people in the towns I represent, it is evident that the high cost of living in Connecticut is a major concern our state's citizens. Hundreds of people responded to a legislative questionnaire that I sent to households in the 61<sup>st</sup> District. The results are in and they are clear. People are concerned about taxes, energy costs and public safety.

These opinions are very helpful in driving legislation to set the future direction of the state. People are looking for solutions to help make Connecticut more affordable. Here are some examples. Though the results are not scientific, they offer a reliable sense of public opinion among my constituents.

**Question:** Should the legislature continue to focus on developing 'no tax increase' budgets?

**Answer:** A resounding 85 percent said yes. My constituents believe that this is no time to raise taxes, and I certainly agree.

**Question:** Do you support another increase in the gasoline tax to pay for infrastructure improvements?

**Answer:** A definitive 86 percent said no to this question. Developing alternative fuels is one thing, funding mass transit is another but when people can't afford to even drive to work, we've gone much too far down the road of taxing gasoline.

**Question:** Do you support a three strikes law that would require mandatory life sentences after three violent felony convictions?

**Answer:** Two-thirds of respondents (66 percent) agreed that repeat violent felony offenders should be imprisoned for life after a third conviction. Recent events, with the perpetrators in many cases having extensive criminal records, indicate that we must

continue to fight for a tough three strikes law to give prosecutors another tool to keep repeat violent felons off our streets.

Other questions on my legislative survey included a query about whether tolls should be brought back to create revenue to fund transportation improvements. Not surprisingly, tolls are still unpopular, with 71 percent of survey respondents saying they would not support bringing back tolls on Connecticut's highways.

With regard to the state spending cap, 82 percent of respondents indicated that cap should not be revised or changed in order to allow for more state spending.

These legislative survey results reflect that economic security and public safety are critically important issues on people's minds. Now it is government's turn to respond quickly and creatively to make Connecticut safe, secure and more affordable for all of its citizens.

As of this writing, very few of these important issues have been addressed by the General Assembly, and that is indeed disappointing. Hopefully many of these critical issues will be addressed in the remaining days of this legislative session.

*State Rep. Ruth Fahrbach represents the 61<sup>st</sup> District, including Suffield, and parts of Windsor and East Granby, in the General Assembly.*