

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

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



### **Special session to raise taxes** **unnecessary, irresponsible**

As I have indicated in previous columns, the legislature will be called back into special session to deal with some unfinished business. Under the current circumstances, that might not be the worst idea in the world. People in Connecticut are being stressed by record-high gasoline prices and slumping home values.

And what is the response of the Connecticut legislative supermajority? Operating in some sort of alternate reality, the “Do-Nothing” supermajority is convening a June 11 special session that will allow gasoline taxes to rise on July 1 and to extend a tax on home sales.

What is the legislative supermajority thinking? And whom do they represent? Not the middle-class people who have no choice but to drive to work. Not the people who are trying to sell their homes in a down market.

House Republicans continue to offer a “Do Something” budget alternative, which I wrote about in last week’s column, and we continue to say there is a better way.

The Republican budget proposal is balanced, offers significant and lasting tax cuts, addresses shortfalls in the Special Transportation Fund (STF) and funds the two major criminal justice initiatives adopted this year. The proposal calls for spending \$16.84 billion, \$221 million below the existing 2008-2009 state budget.

By doing nothing substantive with the budget - except allowing the gross receipts tax to increase on July 1 and reinstating the real estate conveyance tax – the legislature is failing to address the needs of the people of Connecticut. Here is a breakdown of some of the areas where the majority party in the legislature is failing to lead:

#### **“Do-Nothing” Budget Failures**

- The second year budget that takes effect July 1 fails to provide relief during these economic hard times that people are facing, nor does it address the state’s fiscal situation that is slipping into red ink.

- **No economic relief.** The failure to make any adjustments to the second year budget leaves Connecticut residents without any tax relief and without any economic assistance, as we had proposed.
- **No small business relief.** Though both parties agreed before the session, there ended up being NO relief for small Mom and Pop businesses from the business entity nuisance tax that was instituted in 2003 to close a budget shortfall.
- **No incentives for young adults, seniors to stay in CT.** There was nothing to help keep young adults and retirees in Connecticut, such as the Learn Here, Live Hear plan for first time home buyers. There was no relief from the Connecticut income tax on pension benefits, which most other states provide to retirees.
- **Gas Taxes.** With gasoline prices rising, the Connecticut gas tax will continue to be an issue of public interest, especially leading up to the next Petroleum Gross Receipts Tax increase scheduled for July 1.
- **Connecticut continues to be at a competitive disadvantage** with other states where lower costs attract jobs, income and population growth and where Connecticut lags the entire nation.

In short, the majority party in Hartford needs to wake up and address the needs of the people of our state, or get out the way and let the House Republicans lead the way.

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