

House Republican Press Release

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Representative Frey: New Laws Take Effect October 1



Hartford, CT—State Rep. John H. Frey, R-Ridgefield, today reminded Ridgefielders that a number of new laws take effect on Sunday, October 1.

Public Act 06-187 will help protect the interests of senior citizens by requiring companies providing homemaker or companion services to obtain a certificate of registration from the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP). It also gives DCP authority to suspend, revoke, refuse to issue the registration or take other disciplinary measures in response to violations of the law.

Under the new law, these agencies must require new employees to undergo comprehensive background checks and take specified factors into account when making employment decisions based on the checks. Homecare agencies must also provide their clients with written individualized contracts or service plans that identify the scope, type, frequency, and duration of services to be provided. In addition, agencies that enter into a contract with a client's family must detail exact compensation.

“There have been documented cases in Connecticut in which homecare aides took advantage of their elderly clients,” said Rep. Frey, who serves as an Assistant Minority Leader. “This legislation addresses a number of issues that will help protect our senior citizens from such incidents.”

Public Act 06-112 is designed to address a loophole in state law that has allowed underage drinking on private property. Under current law, the penalty for illegal possession in public places is a fine of \$200 to \$500. The new law makes it illegal for a minor to possess alcohol anywhere, rather than only in public places and makes a first offense an infraction. It also makes subsequent offenses subject to up to one year in prison, a fine of up to \$500, or both. It specifies that minors may only possess alcohol on private property if accompanied by a parent, guardian, or spouse over age 21.

Also, Public Act 06-95 bans alcohol vaporization devices, which are machines that process products containing alcoholic liquor with oxygen or another gas to produce a vaporized product for human inhalation. The new law subjects violators who sell, purchase or possess the devices to imprisonment for up to six months, a fine of up to \$1,000, or both.

“The Town of Ridgefield has an ordinance in place addressing underage drinking on private property,” said Rep. Frey, who was an early co-sponsor of PA 06-112. “However, the loophole in state law that permitted it in other towns needs to be closed. The new law will ultimately help save lives in many communities in Connecticut. Also, because alcohol vaporization machines are becoming fashionable in certain parts of the United States and Europe, it is important for our state to take proactive measures to prohibit this dangerous type of alcohol consumption before it becomes commonplace here.”

Finally, Public Act 06-81 tightens pollution notice requirements by requiring sellers of homes who are or will be served by well water to notify prospective buyers of the water test results for volatile organic compounds. By law, home sellers must disclose to prospective purchasers information concerning certain environmental matters, such as the presence of lead and radon. The new law requires the sellers of homes that are or will be served by well water to also disclose the results of any water test for volatile organic compounds. It also requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to notify state, federal, labor, and employer representatives about contaminated sites.

In addition, PA 06-81 requires the DEP to take certain steps if it orders the testing of a private drinking well and the test finds a contaminant level that exceeds the maximum contaminant level applicable to public water supply systems for any contaminant listed in the public health code or state drinking water action level list.

“This new law will make prospective homeowners aware of several serious with drinking water supplies streamlines the contamination notification of process for public officials as well,” said Rep. Frey.