

House Republican Press Release

March 21, 2007
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Rep. Hamzy: Majority Democrats' Stalling on Electricity Rate Relief, Health Care, Short Changes CT



Urges Action on Republican Initiatives Introduced In January

With the 2007 legislative session now half over, the majority Democrats are far from agreement on measures to lower electricity rates for Connecticut consumers and provide health insurance coverage to the uninsured, Deputy House

Republican Leader William A. Hamzy said today.

“Just before the legislative session got underway, the General Assembly’s majority Democrats promised quick and decisive action on electricity rate relief and comprehensive health insurance coverage,” said Representative Hamzy, R-78th District. “We are now at the midpoint of the 2007 legislative session and the promises they made are weeks overdue. While the Democrats, who enjoy veto-proof majorities in both legislative chambers, have so far failed to reach agreement on two of the most pressing issues facing our state, Republican legislators in the state House and Senate have introduced several common sense proposals to address those issues.”

“With electricity rates at record highs, we introduced several measures that offer both short- and long-term solutions to energy shortages and skyrocketing costs,” Representative Hamzy said. “Meanwhile, the ‘super majority’ Democrats continue to squabble over which of four major bills passed by the Energy and Technology Committee they should support. Before it’s too late to take meaningful action on our energy problems, they should give our proposals a chance and allow them to reach the floor of the House and Senate for up or down votes before the General Assembly adjourns June 6th.”

Republican energy proposals include:

- Rolling back the state taxes on electrical rates for six months to save nearly \$100 million.
- Tax savings for those who invest in energy efficient heating and cooling systems.
- Enacting incentives to encourage Connecticut companies to install alternative power generation facilities on their properties, which would remove large energy consumers from the electrical grid that most homes and small businesses use and significantly reduce overall power demands.

The Republican health care plan would:

- Allow a deduction from the state income tax for out-of-pocket expenses incurred by individuals for health insurance premiums.
- Allow previously uninsured small businesses to be eligible for a tax credit to enable them to afford newly-established health insurance plans.

- Expand access by increasing Medicaid reimbursements, giving low-income families greater access to doctors while easing the financial burden on troubled hospitals.

“During the 2006 campaign, the Democrats made ‘universal’ health coverage one of their top issues,” Representative Hamzy said. “Now, House and Senate Democrats have put together two competing bills that would cost Connecticut taxpayers at least \$450 million each – but have failed to reach agreement on how to move ahead with a compromise measure that could pass both Houses. Again, we have offered proposals that we believe will substantially reduce the number of uninsured people in Connecticut and significantly improve access to health care.”