

## House Republican Press Release

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### **Rep. Hamzy: Q- Poll shows Overwhelming Support for Spending Cuts Urged by GOP State Legislators**



#### *CT Residents want State Budget Balanced by Spending Cuts – Not Tax Increases*

A Quinnipiac University poll released earlier this week shows Connecticut residents overwhelmingly prefer cuts in state spending to balance the state budget – as Republican state legislators have been advocating for months - rather than tax increases, Deputy House Republican Leader William A. Hamzy said today

By a whopping 67-23 percent margin, citizens responding to the poll said spending cuts - not tax increases - should be used to balance the budget and eliminate a projected \$1.35 billion deficit for the fiscal year ending June 30<sup>th</sup> and to wipe out an estimated \$8 billion deficit over the next two years, said Representative Hamzy, R-78<sup>th</sup> District.

The Quinnipiac Poll results sharply contradicted the findings in an earlier poll commissioned and paid for by state government employee unions – whose salaries and benefits are funded with taxpayer dollars and who want state taxes increased to eliminate the deficit.

“The Quinnipiac University Poll is widely respected for its avoidance of loaded questions and for the accuracy of its findings,” Representative Hamzy said. “The results from the latest Q-poll demonstrate conclusively that the people of Connecticut, by overwhelming numbers, do not want their taxes raised during a recession that is the worst we have seen in decades. Since last spring, Republican legislators like myself have been calling for prudent spending reductions to eliminate a projected deficit that has been increasing almost every month.”

The poll shows Democrats to be almost evenly divided on the issue, with 41 percent favoring tax increases and 47 percent supporting spending cuts. The data shows 89 percent of Republicans and 72 percent of unaffiliated voters supporting spending cuts to eliminate the deficit.

“The state legislature’s majority Democrats have either been ignoring the issue or saying they want to ‘keep all options on the table’ – including major tax increases – to eliminate the deficit. They are closely allied with the state employee unions and will not risk offending them by agreeing to spending reductions that could threaten state employee union salaries and benefits. That attitude puts Democrat legislators at odds with the majority of Connecticut residents who neither work for the state nor receive the gold-plated benefits enjoyed by unionized state government employees,” Representative Hamzy said.

“The state legislature’s majority Democrats are completely out of touch with most Connecticut residents. We are in the grip of a serious recession. People are fearful of losing their jobs and their homes. They are struggling to feed and clothe their families and cannot endure another crushing tax increase. The Q-poll findings simply reflect the unease that is afflicting most of the people of our state,” Representative Hamzy said.

Nearly 70 percent of those polled said proposed budget cuts, including elimination of two dozen state agencies, are either appropriate or do not go far enough, Representative Hamzy said.

The Q-Poll also found that:

- At least 82 percent of respondents say now is the time to shrink state government, a proposal Republican legislators have supported for months.
- 59 percent believe the state government employee workforce should be decreased even if it means layoffs or a reduction in services;
- 61 percent said no to tax increases, compared to 36 percent who said some taxes hikes should be considered.

Since last spring Republicans have called for budget adjustments to account for diminishing revenues and proposed spending reductions on everything from printing costs to unnecessary and costly improvements to the Capitol, a rollback of legislators' pay and personnel reductions.

“We have been proposing responsible reductions in state spending for months to avoid burdening the people of Connecticut with more tax increases. The Quinnipiac poll results show that most of the public understands what is at stake and agrees with us on the need to avoid tax increases by streamlining state government through mergers of state agencies that perform similar functions, by eliminating programs that are not getting results, and rooting out waste and inefficiency,” Representative Hamzy said.