

## House Republican Press Release

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### Klarides & GOP Want Action on Energy Now



HARTFORD – Deputy House Republican Leader Themis Klarides (R-Derby) stood today with House and Senate Republicans as they proposed sweeping compromises to stalled energy bills that have been caught in a year-long legislative logjam and will provide consumer relief through efficiencies, conservation and changes in electrical generation.

With 19 days left in the regular session, House and Senate Democrats who promised a comprehensive energy plan to address rising consumer costs nearly six months ago have failed to pass any legislation. GOP legislators today stepped in to offer alternatives to the failed efforts to deal with the negative ripple effects of industry deregulation.

“There is really no good reason to delay action any further,” said Klarides. “The majority in the House and the majority in the Senate have had over a year to work out the differences that caused them to fail to pass a bill last session. That’s why we are coming forward, and identifying those areas where everyone agrees, and we’re hoping this will enable some action to be taken.”

Among those areas that Republicans brought forth where there is broad agreement among proposals that have been out at the capitol for months are:

#### **Conservation**

- Restore previously raided conservation funds;
- Offer an air conditioner/furnace replacement program;
- Expand “Green Buildings” program for state projects.

#### **Generation**

- Require planning to determine current and future generation needs;
- Increase required renewable portfolio standards for clean energy and expand Class III renewable credits;
- Require municipal utilities to promote renewable energy.

#### **Energy Taxes**

- Make permanent tax exemption for weatherization as well as compact fluorescent lights;

- Create property and sales tax exemptions for hybrid vehicles and those with 40 mpg ratings.

The Republicans also outlined areas where there is broad disagreement on the three general areas, but urged quick action to separate those from where there is overwhelming consensus. Some issues, such as the Republican plans to eliminate the state gasoline tax of 25 cents per gallon for three months and Governor Rell's cap on gross receipts tax on oil companies, will be part of the overall budget negotiations.

The GOP legislators said that the state has lost numerous opportunities to act on behalf of consumers who have seen their electric bills sky-rocket this winter when utility rates were doubled. Republicans said they don't want a repeat of last year when a huge energy bill was put out by Democrats on the last day of session and nothing was passed.