

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Labriola, House Republicans Test Telecommuting, Push Flexible Workforce Hours



Initiative Could Lead to Greener, Leaner Government; Cleaner Air; Gasoline Savings

House Republican Leader Lawrence F. Cafero Jr., state Representative David K. Labriola and other House Republican legislators today underscored their support for more flexible work weeks for state employees by promoting their own office plan to allow for telecommuting, a policy aimed at saving taxpayer dollars, making workers more productive and getting commuters off clogged highways.

“We want to make Connecticut and its government ‘Leaner and Greener’ with a test program to allow staff to work from home one day a week,” Representative Cafero, R-Norwalk, said at a Capitol news conference today. Four-day work weeks also should be considered, he added.

To highlight the telecommuting initiative, Representative Labriola spoke with his Legislative Aide Lisa Roy, who was at her home, via a telephone hook up during the news conference.

“Telecommuting is a creative and progressive initiative that is cost-neutral and fully takes advantage of new technology,” said Representative Labriola, R-131st District. “I know very well what a challenge commuting through Waterbury to Hartford can be. Telecommuting is a common sense solution that will benefit both our state work force and the citizens of Connecticut.”

In order to implement the policy, legislative leaders must agree to offer the telecommuting option. Legislative Republicans are awaiting approval from their Democrat counterparts on the trial program.

“Other states have turned thousands of lost commuting hours into productive work, saved workers millions in gas bills and reduced pollution and congestion,” Representative Cafero said. “Not only will this not cost taxpayers a dime, it will save them in the long run through workplace efficiencies.”

Representative Cafero noted that other states and at least seven towns and cities in Connecticut have also gone to four-day work weeks to save money, which could be another option for the state. He said the flexible schedules will not work for all state agencies, but Connecticut needs to be creative. He outlined the pilot telecommuting program he hopes to test and evaluate over the next few months. Under the pilot program:

- House Republican staff members would telecommute one day per week, ensuring that all their legislative responsibilities are covered.
- Staff would use laptop computers that are already available to communicate easily with the Legislative Office Building.
- Because telecommuting would be staggered throughout the office, no disruption of service for constituents or anyone else who contacts the offices would take place.

Connecticut is one of 13 states that already allows for telecommuting for state workers when it is proved to be cost effective. Only 140 state workers participated last year, Representative Labriola said.