

House Republican Press Release

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Two more overlooked election topics!



By State Representative John J. Ryan

Since I never made it to Yankee Stadium once this year, I assume that I really can't take the blame for another early playoff exit. But I did get to my alma mater for a football weekend, and seeing a typical turnpike sign "Next Exit - 23 Miles" reminded me again that in most of America, an Interstate Highway is not configured like our local I-95. And seeing the campaign TV commercials half a dozen states away (which, except for the names and faces, looked distressingly similar to so many here!) reminded me that it is my least favorite portion of the elective calendar, namely the time of negative campaigning, nasty robo-calls, and all of those other "marketing techniques" that turn off voters to the system. (I continue to cling to the irrational hope that voters will note with approval, and vote their support for candidates with positive, result-based messages....)

And since election time is now less than a month away, this is a good point to look at two very important election topics that our major media outlets have (once again) totally overlooked, and their significance. You probably know that every seat in Congress is up this year, and that our U.S. Senate race in Connecticut has garnered national attention, but were you aware that every spot in State Government is on the ballot this year? So here goes:

- The entire General Assembly (both State Senate and House) is up for election this year! -- you can only vote for the State Senate and State House candidates in your legislative district, but the total result is extremely important! Were you aware that the current make-up of the State Senate is 24 Democrats vs. 12 Republicans, and the State House is comprised of 99 Democrats and only 52 Republicans? Now while some folks believe that "power sharing" between the executive branch and the legislative branch may be a good thing because the two parties are forced to work together and compromise if any legislation is to pass, the issue that Governor Rell has commented on in every appearance that she has made is not that we have a power sharing situation in Connecticut, but that we are very nearly in a "super-majority" situation.

A legislative "super majority" means that one party not only has majority control, but there is such a large majority, namely more than 2/3 of the total vote in the chamber, that there are enough votes to override a gubernatorial veto! In the

State Senate, a simple exercise of arithmetic indicates that the Democrat Party already has that two-thirds majority to override any legislation that Governor Rell might choose to veto, and in the House, the Democrats are only 2 votes away from gaining such a super- majority! In other words, a supermajority in both chambers effectively makes the Governor irrelevant!

Therefore, one would think that this important possibility, and the related focus on how legislative races in total are proceeding, might be important to our statewide media? And since incumbent Governor Rell seems to be light-years ahead in the polling and favorability data, don't you think this consideration would be a topic of discussion? Could the "political experts" quoted in our daily papers think it might be relevant to a Governor's ability to get things done to know that a Governor might not even be able to muster enough support on a party line vote to sustain a veto of a bill?

- And all of the State's "Constitutional Officers" (Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, Comptroller, Treasurer and Attorney General) are up for election this year! - were you even aware that all of these positions are on the ballot this year? Did you know that of the current 6 such officials, Governor Rell is the only serving Republican? Do you even know who the candidates are, and what these positions have as budgets and responsibilities? And has our statewide major media given any coverage whatsoever to these important races?

So once again, I am hopeful that we might entreat you to please pay some attention, do some homework, get informed and get involved. At the very least, I hope that you can be supportive of those who are positive, not negative, informative not accusatory, and who deliver, instead of merely promising.

Please feel free to contact me with your concerns and issues. As your state representative, it is my job, and my priority to represent you and to make sure that your needs and concerns are addressed at the capitol. You can write to me at Room 4200, Legislative Office Building, Hartford, CT 06106-1591, send me e-mail at John.Ryan@housegov.state.ct.us or call my office toll-free at 1-800-842-1423.