

House Republican Press Release

May 1, 2007
Press Office: 860-240-8700

SO PAY ATTENTION!



By State Representative John J. Ryan

In last week's column, we outlined the bad news on the budget proposal from the Democrat party, holders of the "super majority" in Connecticut's General Assembly. As you know, this year's legislative session is a "long session year," the major purpose is adopting the State's Budget for the biennium. And you also know that Governor Rell kicked off this process with her Budget Address in February.

So did the news of an increase in that new Estate tax, an increase in the income tax rates, and still more dollars coming from lower Fairfield County brighten your Spring Day ? Were you glumly reminding yourself that we are already the most highly taxed State in the Country; the last to reach "Tax Freedom Day" every year on the calendar? Well you may be interested to learn (if you missed the news coverage) that there is yet a further budget proposal, that I trust you will find a bit more palatable, and it is from the small but resilient House Republican caucus of which I am a member.

In brief, the House Republican budget proposal not only requires no (you read correctly, NO) new taxes, balances the budget, does not cut State programs and services, and does not increase spending as the Democrat budget proposed by a horrifying additional \$1.7 BILLION! Some of the high points are increasing spending for:

- \$358 million in public school funding and \$1.1 billion for fully funding teachers' pensions;
- Medicaid reimbursements for hospitals increases by \$87 million to expand healthcare access for low income families;
- Another \$50 million for other providers and \$13 million for nursing homes;
- Municipal aid for town and city PILOTS, Town Aid Road and the Pequot Fund goes up by \$23 million;
- \$20 million for a unique first-time home buyer's initiative for college graduates that will help keep young people in Connecticut;

So what sort of gimmickry is afoot here? No, only sound and prudent fiscal management here....you know, the sort you have to do to balance the checkbook in your own household? The key component of the House Republican "No Tax Increase Plan" is the regular ongoing surplus that the State generates nearly every year. Some years, we are able to prudently park a goodly chunk of that money in the State's "Rainy Day Fund", but

why has it not occurred to the majority party, and many of our daily newspapers, that a surplus of hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue nearly every year actually means that you, the taxpayer, are being consistently over-taxed! To put in the simplest terms, this budget took a look back for more than a dozen years on Connecticut's tax revenue trends, and then made a realistic re-evaluation of our budget process, and created a new budget proposal accordingly!

Of course, this is all too detailed for the limited space that we have here, but please take a look at our comprehensive 31 page info packet that you can find at the House Republican website at <http://www.housegop.ct.gov>.

In short, there is no reason for government to continue to demand tax increase after tax increase; government revenues in Connecticut have steadily continued to rise. But how much more of the already disproportionate burden must lower Fairfield County share, to get less and less in return? Will voters, and the media, ever pay attention? Will a well-crafted, sensible "No tax increase" get the hoopla it deserves?

As always 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@housegop.ct.gov or call my office toll-free at 1-800-842-1423.