

House Republican Press Release

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**Ring in the New Year with some new laws...**



*By State Representative John J. Ryan*

Holiday decorations are coming down, Presidential primaries and the NFL playoffs are the all-encompassing news items, and did you know that the Connecticut Turnpike celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday last week?

And the news from the State Capitol is a little slow, although your State Legislature is technically in Special Session and supposedly going to convene and vote this month on increased penalties for burglaries and related topics.

So before getting back to discussing what issues will and won't be likely to be resolved in the next regular legislative session convening on February 6, let's take a quick look at new laws that become effective at the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.

As a regular column reader, you know that while rarely a law is passed as "effective on passage", most laws are set up to come into effect on October 1 of the year they are passed. You probably already noted the news coverage last fall (and our columns) on topics like the budget issues, the eminent domain bill (P.A. 07- 141), the lost or stolen firearms bill (P.A. 07-163), my bill on protests at funerals (P.A. 07-98), violation of parking in handicapped space (P.A. 07-52)..... to mention only a few of those new laws already in effect.

But you may not be aware that some laws, for a variety of reasons, become effective on January 1! So if you missed them, you might want to take note of the following:

[P.A. 07-242](#) was the (legislature's major energy bill) and includes many laws for the New Year the first is an expanded sales tax exemption for fuel-efficient vehicles. The bill also requires each car or light-duty truck in the state's fleet to have a fuel efficiency rating in the top third of vehicles in its class. And between Jan. 1, 2008, and Dec. 31, 2009, at least 50 percent of the state's purchased vehicles must be alternative-fueled, hybrid, electric or plug-in electric vehicles. It must be 100 percent starting Jan. 1, 2010. The bill includes provisions expanding a temporary state sales tax exemption for passenger cars that get at least 40 miles per gallon to all passenger trucks, vans and motorcycles with the same fuel efficiency. The exemption runs to July 1, 2010.

In [P.A. 07-77](#) , insurance companies must offer premium discounts to homeowners who prove they have installed permanent storm shutters or impact-resistant glass.

P.A. 07-6 requires State weigh station personnel to maintain logs for each shift. The logs must include information such as the hours the station's open sign is illuminated and the number and types of citations issued.

[P.A. 07-75](#) will allow people who've been denied health care coverage from their insurer and have exhausted all internal appeals have 60 days to file an external appeal with the state Department of Insurance. They previously had 30 days.

In future columns we will look at proposed legislation of local interest, what new (or old!) topics are being discussed, and what topics, despite much talking, will go nowhere. Please note that you can follow the General Assembly's doings on-line at [cga.ct.gov](http://cga.ct.gov)!

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, and Hartford, CT 06106-1591, send me e-mail at [John.Ryan@housegop.ct.gov](mailto:John.Ryan@housegop.ct.gov) or call my office toll-free at 1-800-842-1423.