

House Republican Press Release

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April Fools....on you taxpayers?



By State Representative John J. Ryan

The General Assembly is churning towards its last six weeks, and wouldn't it be great if we quit on time, had a tolerable budget that did not do further damage to our oppressed taxpayers (much less give you any tax relief!), and we did not have any more \$\$-burning Special

Sessions this summer? And what is the first day of this month noteworthy for??

I have to admit that I am shocked that our two local daily papers recently editorialized against a proposed tax increase that we have not had time to tell you about, namely, the scheme to let cities increase the sales tax on consumers in their jurisdictions ! The rationale (please guess who the supporters were!) was simple...we need more \$\$! (Stamford, for instance, *only* has the second highest Grand List in our state- a tad below \$24 Billion!) I have to admit, I am absolutely incredulous that both editorials figure out the glaringly obvious: won't shoppers just go to a store a mile away where the tax is less? (Maybe our recent columns bashing lame editorial thinking are having a subtle telepathic effect ...)

A real April Fools' joke was perpetrated on the taxpayers last week, when the Finance Committee voted to extend (again) the supposedly "temporary increase" in the conveyance tax passed years ago. One of the annual events at the State Capitol, Realtors' Day, occurred recently, and as I do every year, I chided the group of realtors from our area who attend meetings with legislators on that day, to pay absolutely no attention to what your elected officials say, but to follow how they vote! And I again, I opined that, as in previous years (while I had agreed with, and voted in accordance with, their viewpoint on the tax), it was extremely unlikely that they could expect the tax increase to be sunsetted, as had been the original proposal! So would you like to guess how the vote came out in the committee on March 27? Remember, as we try to mention as often as we can, you can look up almost everything 'on line' and it is easy! Just go to www.cga.ct.gov and look at HB-5885 and the results of the vote, or you could find it by going to the Finance Committee page, and then their agendas.....anyway, you might be interested to know who voted for/against. We can't say it often enough, it is your tax dollars that are being voted on!

And as we "are going to press", the Appropriations Committee and the Finance Committees are hitting their "JF deadlines", which an astute reader knows is the

date that each committee must finish its work for the session. Stay tuned for the results and the implications on this year's budget fight, or budget agreement!

Finally, I am certain that you have heard the view expressed here that usually, and unfortunately, government is reactive rather than proactive (pick lots of examples here: flooding problems? affordable housing? subprime foreclosure mess...). You may have noted our last column mentioned that this year's proposed "3 Strikes bill" was killed in committee, and my view "you can expect to see the proposal turn up" again. The latest horrible home invasion/murder case of a few days ago made the topic news immediately. You might want to look at Gov. Rell's March 31 statement at www.ct.gov/governorrell . It is tragic to say the least, that sometimes horrible events are what it takes for government to act.

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 or call my office toll-free at 1-800-842-1423.