

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

TIME`S UP!! (IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE...)



By State Representative John J. Ryan

As you are reading this, the Connecticut General Assembly Session for this year has **just** concluded. I hope you followed the news coverage on what did and did not happen this week. And you might have noted in the 'news' section of this paper, there

is actually a development relating to this 141st General Assembly District that might interest **you**, but more personal comments on that topic in the future!

I think it might have been Bob Conrad, for many years the dean of the (shrinking) Capitol press corps that pointed out that more than half of the news in a legislative session occurs in the last few days! So as the clock was ticking away the final hours of this year's Legislature, these were the major topics that I hope you paid attention to:

- **'Do Something' or 'Do Nothing Budget'** : you cannot have missed the news coverage that the budget surplus projected for the end of this fiscal year is sliding into a deficit as the economic downturn continues. Rather than follow the "do-nothing" approach that magnifies the chances for mischief, our House Republican budget alternative has gotten lots of attention as we have tried to pass it as an amendment at every opportunity. Did the budget issue turn into a real train wreck as the legislative session wound down? Did our alternative budget pass in the end? Was a last-second budget deal reached? Did the Rainy Day Fund get raided again?

- **Subprime mortgage/foreclosure bill**: as Ranking Member of the Banks Committee, I spent many hours over weeks and weeks negotiating, reviewing and revising drafts of this bill (HB5577) for our caucus. On Monday night we passed this bill in the House that has 2 good components, namely a new regulatory structure (so our Banks Commissioner can police this problem in the future) and a new foreclosure mediation procedure that might be able to help some foreclosure defendants; more problematic in my view is a financing program to buy loans and foreclosed properties...I am personally all for helping as many financially troubled families as we can, I am only concerned that the manner in which we have set up a new bureaucratic system might have a deleterious effect on our CHFA bond ratings. Did this bill also get through the Senate?

- **Conveyance tax** : I trust that you recall our mention of this topic in previous columns, this 'temporary tax increase ' was supposed to "sunset"...did this tax increase finally go away, or was it extended in the closing hours ?

- **Assorted topics**: did a "sick leave bill" (opposed by every business group) pass? Did the hated \$250 "business entity tax" get abolished? Did a worthy topic like, the 'open container law' in the DMV bill, not get taken up (again!)? Did a real ethics bill get passed? Did a gas tax holiday happen? What about "the bottle bill", which looked like it, would become a recycling bill? Did a "billboards bill" agreement ever get reached??

As incredible it might seem to you, as we are writing this with less than 24 hours to go in this year's legislative session, **NOT ONE** of these (or many other newsworthy bills) have been resolved! Can you pronounce "futility"?

I wish there was more we could tell you as "we go to press". But note that story on page 1. It's been fun!

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.