

House Republican Press Release

July 22, 2008
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Summer, and a surplus....



By State Representative John J. Ryan

Summer seems to be ½ over already, and our Editor, still vainly hoping that capable pitching will get his Reds to .500, seems to want us to focus on State government, and not reminders that if you are not making it to lower Fairfield County's summer (free!)

events like John Cutrone & Friends Sunday Jazz in waterfront SoNo, you are missing out (this Sunday featured Tom Malone from the Letterman Band and the Blues Brothers!). So let's follow up on some surplus news, and some other topics that we had recently visited:

- **Surplus!** : There is one!! You can note the good news at the Governor's website (again at www.ct.gov/governorrell) this week as to how belt-tightening and frugality (if we could only be in this mode permanently!) eked out a small surplus at the end of the fiscal year on July 30. While this is certainly a positive development (especially since most of the New England states and New York ended the fiscal year with deficits), note that there continues to be a projection for a sizeable deficit for next year. More on this in future columns...

And "turning to other news":

- **Charter Oak Plan:** We recently mentioned that reports indicate that 1000s of calls are coming in inquiring, in only the first weeks of the Plan's availability. I had the pleasure of being with Gov. Rell on Friday in Norwalk on a visit explaining the plan, and you might want to know that the toll-free # is to get details is 1-877-772-8625; if you might be eligible, give them a call! You might also want to know that this is the first health plan in the nation for the uninsured that does not require income limits, employer mandates or individual mandates. While Connecticut is not one of the states with a high uninsured population, this is an important step, and isn't it nice to be able to have a positive 'first' once in a while?

- **Hartford and inner-city issues:** If nothing else, I hope this column encourages you to pay some attention to what happens in State government, and where your tax \$\$ go and why. Our last column briefly mentioned a "Hartford Blight persists" topic; if you want to actually follow some of the issues in the Capitol City, take a look at a few of these recent news items. "Spinmeister" the editorial in the Hartford Courant

on July 13, and the July 10 story in that paper that the editorial refers to; or the Chris Powell editorial on July 19 in the (Manchester) Journal Inquirer, "Can state get relevant on the cycle of poverty?" And if you are really intrigued by the doings in Connecticut's 'big cities', see the story in the Connecticut Post of July 21 "Ban would limit Bridgeport DTC's power". Unfortunately, lower Fairfield County taxpayers continue to have little notion of the issues in other key areas of our State! (If I can peruse other newspapers 'on line', then anyone can do it!)

- Population loss: I hope you noted the series of stories about 10-12 days ago on Connecticut's non-growth, and the economic and political implications thereof. Does anyone ever connect our #1 tax status with any of these factors? Do you know anyone who is moving/has plans to retire out-of-state?

- And...Lottery results! who says there is no good economic news in Connecticut? Did you see last week's news story that the Connecticut Lottery Corp. "set a record during the last fiscal year with \$998.5 million in sales" up \$41.5 million over FY 2007. And there always seem to be stories on how the 2 casinos in Eastern Connecticut are always expanding...so remind me...are these items really good news?

I hope your air conditioning has been working well!

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.