

## House Republican Press Release

February 4, 2009  
Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **REP. STRIPP APPLAUDS GOV. RELL TOUGH BUT FAIR BUDGET**



HARTFORD- State Representative John E. Stripp, of Weston applauded Governor M. Jodi Rell's proposed fiscally responsible budget.

"The Governor has done a good job of producing a balanced budget over the next two years without raising taxes and without cutting critical services that the public has come to expect and truly deserves," said Rep Stripp.

"This is an historic time, with the opportunity to reform government away from bloated, multi-layered departments to a consolidated and streamlined operation that delivers services quicker and cheaper," said Rep. Stripp.

"I am grateful Governor Rell has crafted a budget without any major increases in borrowing or through a variety of "hidden" fee increases that could be construed as tax increases."

"Last week, mayors and first selectmen across the state came to Hartford, including Easton 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Tom Herrmann and Redding 1<sup>st</sup> Selectwoman Natalie Ketchum and asked for no cuts in municipal aid and instead asked for flat funding for education funding or road and town aid. The Governor was able to keep the promise to local governments by not cutting the state's obligation," added Rep. Stripp.

Included in the Governor's proposal, is the consolidation of numerous state agencies into others and the reduction of the state workforce through two means:

- Elimination of 400 currently unfilled positions through consolidation and the elimination of 462 positions that are filled
- Elimination of a number of small agencies within the purview of the Legislature.
- Merging the Office of Workforce Competitiveness into the Department of Economic and Community Development.

The budget also calls for concessions and other considerations from state employees:

- Builds in \$275 million in savings in each of the two years of the budget for savings.

- It builds in \$2 billion in anticipated federal money including hundreds of millions in Medicaid payments.

Mandates are eliminated on towns and cities:

Incorporates the House Republican proposal, to delay implementation of the program to treat 16 and 17 year old offenders as juveniles to save an estimated \$95 million for towns and cities

Delays implementation of the plan, as House Republicans first proposed, to require special in-school suspension.

The suspension of binding arbitration requirements for two years and at the end of the two-year suspension limit mandatory subjects of binding arbitration to salaries and benefits only not scheduling, the size of parking spaces, picnics and parties on state time.