

House Republican Press Release

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REP. STRIPP JOINS IN BIPARTISAN DEFICIT MITIGATION PLAN



HARTFORD- In continued demonstration of bipartisan collaboration this session, legislative Republicans and Democrats came together to support a deficit mitigation package that closes \$1.2 billion of the budget deficit for the current fiscal year ending this June.

The compromise package between both parties included no cuts in state aid to cities and towns, no tax increases, and took only \$271 million from the state's \$1.4 billion Rainy Day Fund.

“Republicans certainly have a few concerns with this compromise package,” said House Assistant Leader John Stripp (R-Weston). “We would have preferred to see greater efforts to streamline government and reduce spending. But the membership of both parties worked hard to get together and come up with a deficit mitigation package which addresses the budget shortfall this year without tax increases or shifting the burden to our struggling cities and towns.”

The final package also included \$168 million in savings that Republicans had proposed in their own deficit mitigation proposal, and managed to remove potential cuts in special education funding and local bridge repairs which were contained in the Democrats' original bill.

"It would have been irresponsible to make mid-year cuts in municipal aid -- particularly in the area of special education reimbursement," said Stripp. "I am pleased that this \$8 million was restored in the final bill.

Stripp also noted that a centerpiece of the bill is a provision which changes prescription drug coverage which will save 30,000 Connecticut seniors an average of \$1,200 per year in prescription drug costs while simultaneously saving the state money.

“This was an encouraging step this evening,” said Stripp. “We still have a massive \$8 billion deficit over the next two years to tackle, and some very tough choices yet to make this session as a result. We still have a state government that we can no longer afford and the tough decisions have yet to be made. House Republicans want to close that deficit, shrink government and not raise taxes in the process. I am hopeful that the two parties here at the Capitol can continue to work together to make that happen.”