

## House Republican Press Release

September 26, 2006  
Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **\$233,000 in 'STEAP' Funding For Airline State Park Trail, Town Park in Pomfret**



Governor M. Jodi Rell announced today that \$233,000 in new state funding will soon be available to help the Town of Pomfret improve access to the Airline State Park Trail and make improvements to its recreation park.

A \$140,000 grant will be used to acquire two acres of land for a trailhead entrance to Airline State Park Trail. A \$93,000 grant will fund improvements and amenities at the recreation park on Route 97.

The funding will come from the state's Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP), with approval expected at the next meeting of the State Bond Commission.

"Airline State Park Trail is a tremendous recreational asset for residents of Pomfret and all of Connecticut," Governor Rell said. "Helping the town acquire land for the trailhead will provide better access for everyone who wants to enjoy all that this extensive rail trail has to offer.

"I am also pleased to approve a grant to help the town develop its recreation park," the Governor said. "The improvements include grass replanting and irrigation for the soccer field, a pavilion, rest rooms and water service. This will help Pomfret residents enjoy the best possible recreational opportunities."

"It is gratifying to help secure this new funding for the Town of Pomfret," said Senator Anthony Guglielmo. "The town has been working hard to expand its recreational resources, and these STEAP grants will help tremendously. I thank Governor Rell for her leadership in helping the town improve access to the Airline rail trail and upgrade the recreation site with healthy turf and modern amenities.

Representative Mike Alberts said, "This new state funding will help move two outstanding projects along. Residents of Pomfret and the entire area will have better access to the great Airline rail trail, and the Pomfret town park will be a first-class facility. I am pleased to work with Governor Rell to make this happen."

Airline State Park Trail follows the interior Connecticut route of the old 'Air Line' passenger trains that connected Boston with New York from 1885 to 1924.

Passenger trains continued to run from Boston to Willimantic, and then to Hartford, until 1955, according to the Air Line Rail Trail website (<http://pages.cthome.net/mbartel/ARRhome.htm>). The rail trail for hiking and biking now stretches 50 miles through the towns of East Hampton, Colchester, Hebron, Lebanon, Columbia, Windham, Chaplin, Hampton, Pomfret, Putnam, and Thompson.

A total of \$20 million has been authorized for more than 100 small towns under the STEAP program this fiscal year. The Bond Commission, chaired by Governor Rell, will meet Friday, October 6, at 10:30 a.m. in the Legislative Office Building in Hartford.