

## House Republican Press Release

October 6, 2006  
Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **Gov. Rell, Rep. Bacchiochi: \$48,000 STEAP Grant Approved for Somers Park Project**



The State Bond Commission has approved a \$48,000 grant to help Somers complete an innovative playground in memory of Connor Swan, a five-year-old local boy whose passing inspired his family to join a community effort to help all children enjoy playing outdoors, Governor M. Jodi Rell and state Representative Penny Bacchiochi, R-52<sup>nd</sup> District, announced today.

The funding, which comes from the state's Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP), was approved at today's Bond Commission's meeting.

"Connor's Place, as the playground at Field Road Park will be known, represents the generosity of a great many Somers residents," Governor Rell said. "It also reflects the principle that all children, regardless of whether they have a special need or disability, can play and have fun together. This all-inclusive and accessible playground will be a fitting tribute to not only Connor but to the caring nature of his family and the people of Somers."

"The volunteer spirit behind the success of Connor's Place exemplifies the best qualities of the people of Somers," Representative Bacchiochi said. "In fact, the community effort involves the upgrading of several playgrounds and I have no doubt it will be completely successful. I congratulate the folks at town hall and all residents who are participating, and thank Governor Rell for her support."

Connor's Place is part of a town-wide effort to upgrade three playgrounds for the children of Somers and neighboring areas. The town's funding application noted, "In 2003 Kurt and Natalie Swan became members of the Playground Committee after losing their five-year-old son Connor. In order to celebrate Connor's short but beautiful life, they established the Connor Swan Memorial Fund to honor him by building a playground in his memory where all children can play together...The playground will now be named in Connor's memory as Connor's Place."

The Town of Somers requested \$48,000 in STEAP funding to help fund installation of newly-purchased playground equipment for Connor's Place. Community and municipal contributions, including \$50,000 from the Connor Swan Memorial Fund and \$58,000 from the Somers Playground Committee, are underwriting most of the cost.

A total of \$20 million was authorized for more than 100 small towns under the STEAP program this fiscal year.