

House Republican Press Release

July 15, 2008
Press Office: 860-240-8700

House Republicans first to test drive telecommuting; to save millions in gas costs, make air cleaner



HARTFORD – State Penny Bacchiochi (R-Somers) joined her House Republican colleagues today in announcing that their office plans to allow employees to work remotely from home on a staggered basis to create more efficiencies in state government, get commuters off clogged highways and combat soaring gas prices.

“This pilot program takes into account the changing landscape and economy in Connecticut. If successful, these telecommuting efforts will cut back on traffic on our congested highways and show the way for the private sector by example,” said Rep. Bacchiochi. “We must make our state government leaner and greener, and this proposal is a good first step toward that goal.”

Highlights of the pilot program that will be tested over the next few months and evaluated:

- Staff members will be allowed to telecommute one day per week based on a lottery system, ensuring that all Legislative Office Building responsibilities will be covered;
- Staff will use laptop computers that are already available to allow them to perform all their usual office functions;
- The voluntary program has been tried in other states such as Georgia where state workers have converted 181,000 hours of commuting time into productive working hours and 175,000 fewer pounds of air pollution;
- Because the telecommuting will be staggered throughout the offices, there will be no disruption of service for constituents.

Connecticut is one of 13 states that already allows for telecommuting for state workers when it is proved to be “cost effective.” But last year only 140 state employees actually took advantage of the telecommuting option.

A 2007 national study by the Consumer Electronics Association estimated that telecommuting saves enough energy in the traditional workplace to power one million households for a year. The same study determined that 3.9 million telecommuters saved 840 million gallons of gas.

The pilot program can only be implemented with the approval of Democratic legislative leaders.

State Rep. Penny Bacchiocchi (R-Somers) represents Somers, Stafford and Union in the General Assembly.