

House Republican Press Release

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Belden: “Move Over” for Emergency Vehicles



Legislator Proposes Bill Requiring Motorists to Move to Next Lane

HARTFORD- State Representative Dick Belden (R-Shelton) has introduced legislation this session of the Connecticut General Assembly that would require motorists to move over one lane if possible, when an emergency vehicle with flashing lights is parked on the shoulder or in the lane of a highway. If it is not possible to safely move over one lane, drivers would be required to decrease vehicle speed to below the speed limit and be prepared to stop.

“This is a pretty common-sense safety measure,” said Belden. “If you are driving on a highway, and a police car has pulled someone over to the shoulder, or a DOT truck is working on the shoulder or in a lane, you should give these vehicles a wide berth, for your own safety, as well as for the safety of the operator of the emergency vehicle and anyone they may be assisting. Passing quickly right up against an emergency vehicle is dangerous and this proposal would require motorists to pass more widely and more carefully.”

According to the Office of Legislative Research, twenty-four other states have laws on the books requiring motorists to move over for emergency vehicles if possible. Belden added that by bringing Connecticut on board with such a “Move-Over” law would add to the uniformity of traffic law nationwide.

Belden noted that the legislation would reduce the risk to motorists and emergency personnel by requiring greater space between vehicles passing such emergency vehicles. “When you give them more room, it naturally follows that there is a lower risk for an accident,” he said.

The bill, HB 5086, has been referred to the legislature’s joint Committee on Transportation, and received a public hearing on January 29th.