

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **Belden Hails Funding for Valley Dental Clinic**



#### *Community Based Six-Chair Clinic Will Serve Valley Area*

HARTFORD – State Representative Dick Belden (R-Shelton) today applauded the State Bond Commission’s approval of over \$1 million for a new six-chair dental clinic and an expansion of the Parent Child Resource Center. The funding includes a new roof, and upgrades to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The clinic and upgrades will be constructed on the empty 7,000 square foot second story of the TEAM Century Center Condominium facility on Elizabeth Street in Derby.

In March of 2006, a task force was established consisting of interested parties who felt that there was a serious problem providing dental care for certain segments of the population. The task force included Diana Stroman of Training Education and Manpower, Inc. (TEAM); Richard J. Knoll, Executive Director of TEAM; Dr. Ronald Linden, President, Valley Dental Association; Dr. Gwen Testa, Director of Hill Health Center Dental Clinic; Ms. Debbie Horvath, Naugatuck Valley Health District; Ms. Barbara Bradley, Valley Even Start; Ms. Rita Crana, Coordinator of Social Work Services at Griffin Hospital; Ms. Christy Fisher, New Haven Legal Assistance; Representative Belden and other Valley legislators, and a representative from the Connecticut Department of Social Services.

In January, Rep. Belden spearheaded an effort joined by the Valley area legislators supporting the application of TEAM to expand dental health services and the Parent Child Resource Center. Only one dentist in the Valley Region was known to accept Medicaid patients, providing virtually no dental care for low-income, welfare, elderly, disabled or poor patients.

The proposed clinic would serve residents in Shelton, Derby, Ansonia, Seymour, Beacon Falls and Naugatuck. It will include a dental lab, six dental suites, and x-ray facilities. The facility is expected to serve about 2,500 clients, and will be operated by Hill Health Center Dental Services.

“This funding will enable a very under-served group of people in the Valley region to get the dental care they need,” said Belden. “I join TEAM in being grateful to Governor Rell for recognizing the need in this area and making dental care for those in the Valley a priority.”

