

House Republican Press Release

April 5, 2007

Press Office: 860-240-8700

Reps Hamzy, Burns Urge Quicker Action on Legislation to Protect Children from Sex Offenders



Measures Include Enhanced School Security; Child Safety Zones; Internet Safety Training

With the 2007 legislative session more than half over, state representatives William A. Hamzy and Ron Burns today called for prompt action on legislative proposals to protect children from sexual predators.

“There are several measures I support that would provide greater protection for our children from sexual predators that are still awaiting action by the Connecticut General Assembly,” said Representative Hamzy, R-78th District, a Deputy House Republican Leader. “I believe most legislators would support the measures if given the opportunity to vote on them within the next few weeks. They are non-controversial common sense proposals that if enacted into law, will enhance safety for our children in school, at playgrounds, and on the web. If even one child is injured, killed or abducted because the state legislature failed to act on these measures this year, our committee chairs and House and Senate leaders should not be surprised if the people of Connecticut hold them to account.”

“When parents drop their children off at their neighborhood schools, they should have no reason to be concerned about their safety,” said Representative Burns, R-77th District. “Our proposals to enhance school security and ensure that sexual predators are kept well away from schools will provide an extra layer of protection for our children that will enable them to attend classes in an environment that is conducive to both learning and safety. As a parent and a legislator, I strongly support these measures.”

The legislation would:

- Make schools safer by strengthening security and imposing single entrances for all buildings.
- Establish Child Safety Zones where criminals would face significantly tougher penalties for crimes committed within them.
- Require school contractors to submit lists of employees for background checks to ensure individuals who could pose a threat to children are not allowed on school premises. Currently only teachers and janitors are subject to background checks.

- Require that the state's sex offender database display up-to-date addresses, photographs and easily understood information about sex offenders and the crimes they committed.
- Expand the state's Child Identity System and give parents more opportunities to provide local law enforcement agencies with critical information, including DNA samples and photos that accurately reflect the changes in their children's appearance as they age.

Provide for comprehensive Internet safety training to equip teachers, parents, and children with the knowledge they need to avoid the dangers of online predators and other pitfalls.