

House Republican Press Release

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Reps Hamzy, Burns: \$500,000 State Grant Awarded to Bristol Hospital Department of Social Services Grant to Be Used for Hospital's Quality Improvement Program



The state Department of Social Services (DSS) has awarded a \$500,000 grant to Bristol Hospital from the state's Hospital Hardship Fund, state representatives William A. Hamzy, R-78th District, and Ron Burns, R-77th District, announced today.

The funding will be used for the hospital's quality improvement program and for a "strategic planning review that identifies optimal hospital service offerings in consideration of specialty services at other area hospitals," DSS Commissioner Michael P. Starkowski said in a letter informing Michael Orr, Bristol Hospital's vice president for finance, that the grant had been approved.

"Although we had hoped for a larger grant that would have included funding for equipment for the hospital's diagnostic imaging department as well as for the quality improvement program, we are very pleased that this grant has been approved," Representatives Hamzy and Burns said. "Bristol Hospital has always been recognized for the quality patient care it provides for Greater Bristol area residents. This grant will help the hospital enhance and broaden those services over the next few years. We'd like to thank Commissioner Starkowski, Public Health Commissioner J. Robert Galvin, Health Care Access Commissioner Cristine Vogel, and the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority for their support for this grant."

On October 3, 2007, representatives Burns and Hamzy, state representatives Frank N. Nicastro Sr., D-79th District, and Elizabeth A. Boukus, D-22nd District, and state Senator Thomas A. Colapietro, D-31st District, sent a letter to Commissioner Starkowski urging him to support the hospital's grant application.

"The hospital has established a good track record by virtue of the investment it made with the generous \$1.2 million grant it was awarded by the Department of Social Services last year to enhance the operations of the emergency department. Bristol Hospital is on the cusp of making a full comeback and this additional grant will enable it to better fulfill its mission. The importance of this institution to the Greater Bristol area cannot be overstated," the legislators wrote.

DSS today announced the award of more than \$20.3 million, including the \$500,000 for Bristol Hospital, from the state's Hospital Hardship Fund to help eight hospitals around the state meet critical operating expenses, expand facilities and strengthen their long-term financial health.

The hardship grants will help upgrade and modernize services and facilities, or meet extraordinary operating expenses at the hospitals.

The funding was authorized under 2007 legislation that established a \$30 million Hospital Hardship Fund to be administered by DSS. Selection factors for the grants include hospital

utilization by patients eligible for state assistance programs, licensure and certification compliance history; and reasonableness of actual and projected revenues and expenditures.