

House Republican Press Release

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HOUSE REPUBLICANS TOUT 'SENIOR SECURITY' AGENDA



HARTFORD – The Norwalk Senior Center unveiled some much needed new furniture today, compliments of House Republican Leader state Rep. Lawrence F. Cafero, who also presented those on hand with proposals to exempt their pensions from taxes and allow towns and cities to reward them for volunteering through property tax relief.

Cafero said he was glad to donate \$1,000 from his surplus campaign fund to buy chairs for the center and stressed how much he appreciates the work done at the center for hundreds of greater Norwalk's older adults. "It is a pleasure for me personally to be able to provide some assistance that can make a little difference in someone's day," he said. "The center staff identified a need and I was happy to pitch in."

Cafero then took the opportunity to lay out his caucus agenda targeted to seniors' needs. Some of the House Republican will:

- exempt pensions from state taxes over three years beginning at age 62 to give those on fixed incomes a much needed break. This would save an estimated \$200 million annually;
- allow towns and cities to provide property tax breaks for those who volunteer in their communities up to a maximum of \$750 annually;
- permit towns to lower the age of eligibility for the property tax freeze from 70 to 65.
- expand ConnPACE income eligibility thresholds for singles from \$23,100 to \$28,200, and for married couples from \$31,100 to \$38,100;
- expand the pilot "Money Follows the Person" program to increase greater flexibility for home care of seniors.

Cafero said of the pension exemption proposal, "It is not right that Connecticut treats pensions as 'earned income' subject to the state income tax. **Connecticut is one of only four states** that fails to provide any pension tax relief and it is long over due that we eliminate that burden on people who have worked all their lives to save for retirement."

He added, "We owe it to older adults to lessen the burden they face in their retirement years because of all they have meant to their communities and all they still have to offer. We want seniors to be able to live comfortably in their homes and keep them in Connecticut. These are volunteers, our parents and grandparents."

Numerous studies show that Connecticut continues to lose population, both young and old, to other states where taxes are kept relatively lower and where those on little or fixed incomes can better manage their family budgets.