

House Republican Press Release

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Candelora Sets Sites on Legislative Goals



Freshman Legislator Readies for First Session

HARTFORD- State Representative Vincent Candelora (R-North Branford) heads into the 2007 session of the legislature with a full agenda of items to accomplish. Candelora was sworn into office on January 3rd, as the representative for the 86th District which includes North Branford, and portions of East Haven and Wallingford. He replaces Robert M. Ward, who served 24 years in the legislature, twelve of them as the House Republican Leader, and now Commissioner of the State Department of Motor Vehicles.

Candelora has focused on legislation to place a cap on assessed value of a real property to 20% under revaluation. The legislation is intended to limit the exposure and shift of the tax burden onto certain residences due to a dramatic rise in value. “Towns are seeing shifts in the tax burden to certain classes of homes due to the dramatic increase in house values. This legislation would prevent the shift from continuing and is intended to evenly disburse the tax burden to all classification of real property,” said Candelora. “The current method of revaluation is pricing people out of their homes, and the legislature needs to address this problem.”

Candelora also introduced legislation this session which would increase the prevailing wage threshold for public works projects where the total cost is one million dollars or for remodeling, refurbishing, rehabilitation, alteration or repair where the total cost is less than five hundred thousand dollars. “Applying the current prevailing wage standard to these smaller projects has always been unnecessary and cost millions of wasted taxpayer dollars,” said Candelora. “I have seen this waste from the municipal government side of the equation, and it’s time to give relief to municipalities from this cost.”

Another bill Candelora has introduced clarifies existing law by allowing any municipality to exempt one or more farm buildings from the property tax to an amount up to one hundred thousand dollars of the cumulative assessed value. “Our communities still have a thriving but struggling agricultural economy,” said Candelora. “The current legislation provides municipalities with the flexibility to offer the appropriate amount of relief to our farmers.”

Other priorities Candelora has for the session include affordable housing; tax breaks for seniors, college graduates and volunteers; health care cost and a diversified energy policy that promotes conservation.

Among the measures Candelora intends to work for are:

- **First Time Home Buyers Fund:** The state income taxes for recent college graduates who remain in Connecticut would be placed in an investment account and participants would have 10 years to use that money for a first-time home purchase.
- **Seniors' pensions** would be exempt from state income taxes and senior volunteers would get a property tax break.
- The \$250 **minimum business entity tax** would be eliminated. Small stores still pay the same penalty tax just for opening their doors as huge corporations.
- **Health care:** create portable plans for individuals who don't purchase plans through an employer and flexible alternatives for businesses and insurance companies that are free of mandates for younger adults aged 19 to 26. Provide additional funding for long-term care facilities and expand health care access by committing more money to community health centers.

“These are sensible and attainable priorities,” said Candelora. “I look forward to the challenges of the coming session and am hoping to work with the Democrats in the General Assembly, as well as Governor Rell in addressing these issues.”