

House Republican Press Release

January 18, 2007
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Rep. Caron Expects Improved Highway Snow Removal



State Rep. Michael Caron, R-44, Killingly, Plainfield, Sterling, expects the state Department of Transportation (DOT) will do a better job of keeping Routes 6 and 101 clear this winter, following a meeting he arranged with DOT and local officials.

Rep. Caron noted that DOT is using a new process to treat winter snowfalls this year, rather than the past mixture of sand and salt. Recently, the DOT announced it will use plows, salt and liquid calcium chloride to clear roads and also treat some surfaces before storms.

Caron said the state has quit using sand, as have most other surrounding states. Sand previously had been used to create traction, but it left behind a mucky mixture of sand and snow. Sand also had to be swept up in the spring. Studies by the U.S. Department of Transportation and several university studies have questioned sand's effectiveness.

"Now with the new salt solution," said Rep. Caron, "we expect to see more consistent and better snow storm management. This is an important issue to residents, businesses, school bus drivers, and visitors. The DOT is cooperating with local officials to help improve public safety on the highways of northeastern Connecticut."

Caron said a problem in the past is that DOT had only two trucks to plow snow east of route 97 to the Rhode Island border, and they were running continuously. Better treatment methods should speed the snow removal process in the future, Caron said.

Rep. Caron arranged the meeting at the request of Killingly School Bus Supervisor Richard H. Levola, who is also fire chief in Danielson. Attending from DOT were Mel Grenier and Wayne McAluster.

"We appreciate DOT's cooperation to find ways to improve highway safety for the people of our region," said Rep. Caron. "It was great to have DOT regional decision makers come to our town garage and give us their time."

Levola said, "DOT responded to our concerns and agreed to update us on plans for snow removal from state highways this winter. Fortunately, we have not had a snowy winter so far, but it is important to prepare for the storms that are sure to come."

Also, Rep. Caron said the discussion included improved signs to direct traffic onto Interstate Route 395 northbound and southbound in the Moosup area.

Rep. Caron serves the 44th Assembly District of Killingly, Plainfield and Sterling in the state House of Representatives. He is also an Assistant Minority Leader.