

## House Republican Press Release

January 25, 2007  
Press Office: 860-240-8700

### Rep. Caron Supports Energy Efficiency and Conservation



#### *Reducing Energy Use Would Help Provide Relief From Rising Electric Bills*

State Rep. Michael Caron, R-44, Killingly Plainfield, Sterling, is supporting a number of energy policy changes that include conservation and greater reliance on diversified fuels that will provide consumers relief.

“We’ve found a lot of common ground among both parties that would ease the burden on consumers. When it comes to conservation and diversifying our fuel sources there is near total agreement. With tax relief, conservation and diversification, we can make a real difference before people start turning on their air conditioners in June,” said Rep. Caron. “We need to act now and not wait until the recent rate increases hit our electric bills.”

Rep. Caron said the legislature is near agreement on various short-term solutions, such as:

- Conservation and efficiency tax exemptions that would lead to less energy use
- Expedited siting of distributed electricity resources
- Energy assistance programs

On longer-term solutions, consensus also is within reach, including:

- Increased usage of renewable fuels such as hydro and wind power which would lower dependence on foreign oil
- Funding natural gas and oil conservation
- Allow for longer-term contracts to stabilize lower wholesale prices.

Rep. Caron also supports rolling back the state gross receipts tax on electricity by 50 percent to save electricity users \$100 million a year and require the DPUC to change rates to reflect that cut.

The state legislature has been considering a large 120-page energy bill since last year, but Rep. Giuliano and colleagues are urging quicker action on parts of the legislation that could have an impact this year.

Specific proposals are:

#### **Tax Exemption for Energy Efficient Products**

Make permanent the previously-enacted exemptions from the state's six percent sales tax for energy efficiency products. These exemptions include programmable thermostats, insulation, windows and doors that meet Energy Star standards, window film, and weather stripping among others. These are due to expire June 30, 2007, and should be extended to continue encouraging consumers to moderate their electric use.

Enact a sales tax exemption on Compact Florescent Light Bulbs. These bulbs are proven to use two-thirds less energy than an iridescent light bulb.

### **Energy Assistance Programs**

Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP); Maintain increase in benefits adopted for last winter.

Operation Fuel; Permit utilities to expand Operation Fuel by encouraging individuals to donate in amounts more than \$1.00 that the current system allows.

Extend Winter Shut-Off Moratorium from April 15th to May 1st. Many winters linger past the 15th of April deadline, and giving individuals the piece of mind that their electricity will not be shut off is vital.

### **Conservation Measures**

Expedite siting of distributed generation. Distributed Generation is when individual power users build their own power generating facility for their property. This allows companies to produce their own power cheaper than the utilities are selling it for and reduces peak demand, which drives prices high.

Provide funding to replace money taken from the Conservation and Load Management Fund (CLMF). The CLMF has been raided by \$26 million each of the last three years. This fund provides grants for businesses to have energy audits and then enact the recommendations.

Provide \$500 rebates for the replacement of older gas, propane, and oil furnaces and boilers that are not energy efficient.

Energy Star requirements on Air Conditioners. Provide grants for residents to replace their old air conditioners with energy efficient ones.

Green Building Standards for state buildings. Require that all buildings built with state funds are energy efficient to save taxpayers dollars, by using less energy.

*Rep. Caron serves the 44<sup>th</sup> Assembly District of Killingly, Plainfield and Sterling in the state House of Representatives.*

