

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

A VIEW FROM THE INSIDE State Representative Ruth Fahrbach



Bonding package seeks to balance needs, ability to pay

After several months of negotiating between the governor and the leadership in the legislature, the General Assembly approved a bonding package for various projects throughout the state, totaling \$2.9 billion.

Connecticut is already among the highest-indebted states in the nation, which must always be a consideration when voting on any proposed bonding bill. The ultimate goal of the legislature when putting together legislation for bonding should be to reduce new borrowing from excessive levels, while at the same time funding necessities such as school and infrastructure projects.

Some of the areas addressed in this bonding package include:

- Connecticut State University system \$950 million: The state has invested nearly a half-billion dollars into the CSU system over the last seven years. We believe we should continue with a significant commitment that should include a series of checks and balances to ensure efficiencies. This bonding bill includes authority for the governor to change the funding for this project (if necessary); strong oversight to ensure high quality of projects; detailed list of projects and related costs.
- Clean Water Fund \$180 million: This program provides funding to municipalities for upgrades to wastewater treatment facilities.
- Flood control \$53.5 million: Major floods over the course of the last few years caused significant damage to infrastructure and people's homes. This made funding for flood control a priority.
- Bridges \$150 million: With recent bridge disasters in states like Minnesota and some deteriorating bridges in Connecticut, this funding was critical.

In June, the legislature passed a \$36 billion budget for 2007-09. At that time, 11 cents of every dollar the state spends finances our state debt. By any measure, unnecessarily increasing Connecticut's debt service at this time would be a high-risk undertaking. Adding to the amount we currently spend on our debt also takes away from the revenues

we have to spend on current and future services offered to our residents.

To that end, we made the necessary adjustments to ensure that we had funding for projects that are needed, without “breaking the bank” by spending frivolously.

If you would like to review the entire bonding bill, log on to www.cga.ct.gov and search for SB 1502, or for a copy of the bill, call my office at 240-8700.

Rep Ruth Fahrbach represents the 61st District, including Suffield, and parts of Windsor and East Granby, in the General Assembly.