

House Republican Press Release

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GREENWICH DELEGATION: APPLAUDS ALTERNATIVE REPUBLICAN BUDGET CUTS GAS TAXES, BUSINESS TAXES, OFFERS EARLY STATE WORKER RETIREMENT



HARTFORD – State Representatives Livvy R. Floren, R-149th District, Lile R. Gibbons, R-150th District and Claudia “Dolly” Powers, R- 151st District expressed support for an alternative Republican budget offered today that would cut state gas taxes, eliminate a business tax and downsize government by offering thousands of state employees an early retirement plan (ERIP) that will reduce spending by \$163 million next year.

Rep. Floren said, "Our alternative Republican budget reflects the fact that our caucus has listened to the needs of the people of Connecticut and has crafted a fiscally responsible plan to meet those critical needs in these uncertain economic times."

With just 10 days remaining in the legislative session House and Senate Republicans put forth a balanced tax and spending plan that will not raise taxes, streamlines government and will avoid potentially huge budget deficits in the coming years.

Rep. Gibbons said, "While we can't control the price of oil in the barrel, we can cut state taxes on gasoline at the pump and help the pocketbook of every Connecticut car driver. Our constituents have also been clamoring for relief from the business entity tax and the cliff in the estate tax. This budget eliminates or phases out both--essential in keeping long-time Connecticut residents in Connecticut."

Democratic leaders have said they are content to maintain the current 2008-09 budget. The pro-active Republican alternative would:

- Cut gas prices by 10 cents with a summer moratorium on state taxes.
- Eliminate the \$250 Business Entity Tax that all businesses pay just for opening their door.
- Phase out the "cliff" in the Estate Tax which will help keep more people in Connecticut.
- Offer up to 11,600 eligible state workers an early retirement incentive program, or ERIP.

Rep. Powers added, "Once again House Republicans lead the way to protect and defend our constituents. We welcome Senate Republicans and the other caucuses to join us."

The ERIP offered in 2003 in the midst of the last state fiscal crisis saw more than 4,000 workers retire and cut the state payroll by more than \$155 million. Republicans stresses that no state worker would lose his or her job because of the ERIP. The incentive plan will be a matter of personal choice and that the enrollment period could begin immediately.