

House Republican Press Release

March 17, 2008
Press Office: 860-240-8700

“THE FUTURE IS GREEN”



The United States is embracing environmental-friendly initiatives, and the House Republicans in the Connecticut General Assembly are also “going green.”

Alternative sources of energy are becoming more and more desirable as the cost of oil has rises. Alternative green energy comes from sources which are readily available and do not produce pollutants; for example, solar, wind and geo-thermal.

Do you know that Greenwich is eligible for funding under several existing programs to increase the efficiency of their electric use, promote the use of renewable energy, and encourage the installation of distributed generation (on-site generation technologies such as micro-turbines and fuel cells)? These grants are being considered by Town officials and their newly formed Environment Task Force.

Additional green initiatives and incentives proposed by House Republicans include:

- A long-term plan to bolster the fuel cell energy market by dedicating \$50 million in bonding each year over the next four years to create a Fuel Cell program where the state would: 1) contract with a Connecticut business to mass produce transit buses powered by fuel cells, 2) begin to transition to using fuel cells at Bradley International Airport to make it the first “Hydrogen-powered Green” facility in the world and 3) establish 2 or 3 hydrogen refueling hubs in the state.

Connecticut could be the leader in fuel cell technology. The state already has 20% of the world’s fuel cell producing workforce. The use of fuel cells would have a huge impact on Connecticut and its economy. Fuel cell technology promotes energy freedom and efficiency, is environmentally friendly because it is a clean fuel source, provides a health benefit to our citizens because fuel cells do not emit the poisonous emissions, has a positive impact on the state’s transportation system, and stimulates the economy and creates jobs.

- Another House Republican proposal would create incentives for schools and municipal buildings to use more environmentally friendly cleaning supplies. The initiative allows entities to exhaust current supplies. However, in order to qualify for future funding all additional supplies would have to conform to the new green

standards. Participating municipalities would receive an increase in their Education Cost sharing (ECS) grant of .25% or \$100,000, whichever is smaller.

The state is already required to do this in its buildings. Rolling this out to municipalities is the next logical step. If we want citizens to be more environmentally conscientious, government has to back up the talk with.

- Our final proposal would create a pilot program to provide tax credits for homeowners and builders who build or renovate based on Green Building Standards. A cap would be placed on both the amount of money available (\$5 million) and the size of the building. The proposal would give a credit (income tax or corporate tax) for 50% of the cost associated with green construction or renovation.

Connecticut can and should lead the way in energy efficient technology manufacturing, and renewable energy production. It's the right thing to do, and it will mean more industry, more exports, more jobs, more investment in our state. We'll be doing well by doing green!

Livvy R. Floren, State Representative, 149th District

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Claudia "Dolly" Powers, State Representative, 151st District