

House Republican Press Release

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LEGISLATORS PROMOTE FLEXIBLE STATE WORK FORCE HOURS; TEST TELECOMMUTING PLAN



INNOVATIONS TO YIELD 'GREENER, LEANER GOVERNMENT,' MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN GAS SAVINGS and CLEANER AIR

HARTFORD – Connecticut House Republicans underscored their support for more flexible work weeks for state employees by promoting their own office plan to allow for telecommuting. The proposal is aimed at saving taxpayer dollars, making workers more productive and getting commuters off clogged highways.

“We want to make Connecticut and its government *‘Leaner and Greener’* with a test program to allow staff to work from home under careful accountability one day a week,” said **Rep. Marilyn Giuliano of Old Saybrook**.

To highlight the telecommuting initiative, Rep. Giuliano joined in a Capitol press conference where staff member Lisa Roy and Brookfield state Rep. David Scribner participated by remote telephone hook up.

“Other states have turned thousands of lost commuting hours into productive work, saved workers millions in gas bills and reduced pollution and congestion,” Rep. Giuliano said.

Rep. Giuliano noted that other states and at least seven towns and cities in Connecticut have also gone to four-day work weeks to save money. *Telecommute Connecticut* estimates that employees who telecommute **save an estimated \$1,200 annually on gasoline**. She said flexible schedules will not work for all state agencies, but Connecticut needs to be creative. A 2007 national study by the Consumer Electronics Association estimated that telecommuting saves enough energy in the traditional workplace to power one million households for a year. The same study determined that **3.9 million telecommuters saved 840 million gallons of gas**.

A pilot telecommuting program is proposed for a test and evaluation over the next few months:

- House staff members could telecommute one day per week, ensuring that all their legislative responsibilities are covered;
- Staff would use laptop computers that are already available in order to communicate easily with the Legislative Office Building;
- Because the telecommuting would be staggered throughout the office, no disruption of service for constituents or members of the public would take place;

- Similar programs have been tried in other states such as Arizona where state workers have **converted 181,000 hours of commuting time into productive working hours and reduced air pollution by 175,000 pounds.**

Connecticut is one of 13 states that already allows for telecommuting for state workers when it is proved to be “cost effective.” However, only 140 state workers participated so far last year.

Rep. Giuliano serves the 23rd Assembly District of Lyme, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook and Westbrook in the state House of Representatives.