

House Republican Press Release

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Representative Greene To Introduce Legislation To Address Illegal Use Of Handicapped Parking Spots



State Rep. Len Greene, R-105th, today said he will introduce legislation to address illegal use of handicapped parking spaces. Rep. Greene will introduce the legislation through the Legislature's Transportation Committee shortly after the General Assembly convenes its 2007 Session in January.

People illegally using handicapped parking spaces in Connecticut can currently be fined \$85. Additional surcharges on the fine could bring the total amount due to \$131. A vehicle violating the law for a third or subsequent time is subject to being towed and impounded by police.

Rep. Greene's proposal would pattern Connecticut's penalties after those already in place in Rhode Island, allowing fines of \$100 for a first offense; \$175 for a second offense; \$325 for a third offense and make a vehicle subject to towing for any offense. It may also include placing photo identification on handicapped parking permits.

Rep. Greene said that as an employee with HP Hood LLC, he visits supermarkets throughout the state and continually sees people who are clearly capable of using regular parking areas instead using handicapped spaces for convenience.

"Introducing this legislation would be an excellent start toward opening a dialog on how to put a stop to the misuse of handicapped parking spaces," said Rep. Greene. "While most citizens respect the law, more and more people are blatantly violating it. We must ensure these spaces are available to those who legitimately need them."

According to a 2002 report by the non-partisan Office of Legislative Research (OLR), qualifying disabilities for using a state issued handicapped parking permit in Connecticut include: limited use, or no use of both legs, use of portable oxygen and certain cardiac, muscular and respiratory conditions.