

House Republican Press Release

March 1, 2007
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Rep. Greene Cosponsors Measures to Encourage Retirees to Continue Living in CT



Legislation Would Make CT More Affordable to Seniors on Fixed Incomes

Three bills cosponsored by state Representative Leonard C. Greene that would make Connecticut more affordable to retirees would encourage more Connecticut seniors to continue living here rather than moving to low tax states in the south and southwest.

The measures, which were offered by the House Republican caucus, would phase out the personal income tax on pension and Social Security income for seniors aged 62 and older (House Bill 5541); expand the number of elderly people eligible for local property tax relief by lowering the current age when seniors qualify for the benefit from 70 to 65 and increasing the income eligibility levels by \$10,000 for both individuals and married couples (H. B. 5542); and allow seniors 65 years of age and older who do volunteer work in their communities to receive a property tax abatement of up to \$750 (H. B. 5712), said Representative Greene, R-105th District, who cosponsored the bills.

“Connecticut residents shoulder one of the heaviest tax burdens in the United States – and retirees on fixed incomes are especially hard hit,” Representative Greene said. “One of the main reasons is that Connecticut is one of only four states that treat pension benefits as earned income subject to the state income tax. That means that seniors who worked for 40 to 50 years before retiring and contributed to their pension funds during those years in anticipation of a secure retirement now find their pension income significantly reduced because the state insists on taking its share. At a time when gasoline prices remain high and electricity and natural gas rates are skyrocketing, retirees who live on their pension and Social Security income are having an especially hard time making ends meet.”

“Many retirees are involved with civic organizations or serve on municipal boards and commissions in Ansonia, Beacon Falls and Seymour - and in other towns in our state. However, several thousand seniors move out of Connecticut every year and head for states in the south and southwest where taxes and the cost of living are lower – and pension income is not taxed. Economic necessity should not be forcing our parents and grandparents to choose between their extended families and a better life in a low-tax state. Connecticut needs to join the other 46 states that do more than we do to support our seniors. The General Assembly can do its part by enacting our bills,” Representative Greene said.