

House Republican Press Release

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

Reps Hamzy, Burns: Elderly Tax Relief Measures will Make CT More Affordable for Seniors



Many Seniors Who Give Back, Volunteer for Their Towns, No Longer Can Afford to Live In CT

Thousands of civic minded seniors who move out of Connecticut every year because of the high cost of living could be encouraged to remain in our state if the General Assembly enacts three bills to provide tax relief to the elderly, state Representatives William A. Hamzy and Ron Burns said today.

The measures were unveiled at a news conference Thursday at the state capitol by House Republican Leader Lawrence F. Cafero Jr., R-Norwalk, and state Representative Al Adinolfi, R-Cheshire, the House Ranking Member (Republican Leader) on the General Assembly's Select Committee on Aging. Representative Hamzy, who also participated in the news conference, is a member of the committee.

The bills 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**), Representatives Hamzy and Burns said.

“Senior citizens serve on local boards and commissions as well as civic and charitable organizations in our towns. They play an important role in the life of our communities, contributing many volunteer hours and making them better places to live,” said Representative Hamzy, R-78th District, who introduced the bills. “Unfortunately, Connecticut is one of only four states that taxes pensions as earned income, and is one of only five states that offers no exemption on veterans’ pension income. When you take into consideration local property taxes that go up almost every year, skyrocketing electricity and natural gas prices, it’s no wonder thousands of seniors are abandoning Connecticut every year for low tax states in the south and southwest. Our proposals would encourage seniors in Bristol, Plymouth, and elsewhere in the state to continue living in Connecticut.”

“Retirees whose sole source of income is their pension and Social Security benefits are having an increasingly difficult time coping with the high cost of living in Connecticut,”

said Representative Burns, R-77th District, who cosponsored the bills. “Our seniors contributed to their pension funds through their working lives. During that time, they also paid income tax on their earnings. Seniors who worked hard all their lives should be able to enjoy what they worked for during their retirement years. The legislation we are supporting will help ensure a secure retirement for Bristol’s seniors. It’s our way of thanking them for their service to our community.”