

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **Reps Hamzy, Burns Seek Bush's Support to Keep Bristol Social Security Office Open**



State representatives William A. Hamzy, R-78<sup>th</sup> District, and Ron Burns, R-77<sup>th</sup> District, have sent a letter to President George W. Bush asking him to direct the Social Security Administration to reconsider its decision to close Bristol's Social Security Office.

"Your intervention on behalf of our local office could be the deciding factor in determining whether Bristol's Social Security Office remains open and continues to serve [seniors in the Greater Bristol area]," the legislators wrote.

"As state legislators who represent the City of Bristol and the Town of Plymouth ... , we have been actively involved in the effort to prevent the closing of Bristol's Social Security office since last year's announcement that it would be closed and merged with the office in New Britain," Representatives Hamzy and Burns said in the letter.

"The local office serves a senior community that amounts to about 24 percent of the population in the Greater Bristol area. Bristol and Plymouth alone are home to several thousand retirees, many of whom are World War Two and Korean War veterans," the legislators wrote

"They are genuinely concerned about the implications of closing a facility that has served them well over the years – and rightly so. For seniors in their late 70's, 80's or 90's who do not drive and depend on Social Security as their sole source of income, having to arrange for transportation to New Britain will be difficult at best and a serious hardship at worst," the legislators said.

Noting that First District U.S. Rep. John Larson "met recently with Social Security Administrator Michael Astrue and urged him to keep the office open;" that U.S. Senators Joseph Lieberman and Christopher Dodd have taken legislative action in the Senate that could help keep the office open; and that Governor Rell also has asked for the president's help in keeping the local office open, Representatives Hamzy and Burns wrote: "We are united in a bi-partisan effort to keep the Bristol Social Security Office open so that it may continue to provide the vital services it has offered our elderly constituents for so many years."

"Mr. Astrue has apparently agreed to give the Bristol office a "brief extension" beyond the original November 2<sup>nd</sup> closing date. However, it continues to remain on the list of offices scheduled to be closed because of budgetary constraints," the legislators wrote.

"We implore you to stand with us and our seniors," they said in the letter.