

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Hamzy: Gov. Rell's Budget Proposal Addresses Many Concerns Raised at Budget Forum



Preserves Education Aid, Grants to Towns at Current Levels, Delays Implementation of Costly State Mandates

The two-year budget unveiled by Governor M. Jodi Rell Wednesday addresses many of the concerns about the state budget crisis raised by residents and local elected officials who attended a forum on the issue hosted by state Representative

William A. Hamzy on Monday, February 2nd.

Among the most pressing concerns were unfunded state mandates, which force towns and cities to offer certain services, but include no financial assistance to help cover the cost of providing them; possible cuts in state educational assistance to local school districts and to annual state grants to towns; and possible tax increases on families, individuals and employers, said Representative Hamzy, R-78th District

“Chief elected officials from Bristol and Plymouth who attended the forum were emphatic about the need for relief from unfunded state mandates, especially at a time when local property tax and real estate conveyance tax revenues are lagging behind previous years,” Representative Hamzy said.

“Governor Rell’s budget addresses those concerns by calling for the repeal or modification of hundreds of mandates that have been foisted on cities and towns over the years. It also calls for delaying for two years the implementation of costly new mandates that require towns to treat 16- and 17-year old offenders as juveniles and to have suspended students serve their suspensions in schools. The governor’s budget also would require a two-thirds vote of the state legislature before new mandates could be imposed on towns.”

“The governor’s proposal preserves aid to local school districts and annual grants to towns and cities at their current level, which should help local elected officials put together municipal budgets without having to increase property taxes,” Representative Hamzy said. “Although Bristol and Plymouth’s school boards were hoping to receive more education aid than they did last year and may be forced to trim some areas of their budgets, they will not be faced with the prospect of major teacher layoffs.”

“Because Governor Rell’s budget does not cut annual grants to towns and cities, our local elected officials should be able to avoid increasing property taxes to fund local services,” Representative Hamzy said.

“The governor’s ‘No Tax Increase’ budget will help put the state on the road to economic recovery and will set a firm foundation for future prosperity and job creation. It will allow families and individuals to keep more of their hard-earned dollars and enable them to spend it as they see fit,” Representative Hamzy said.

“If people have more discretionary income to spend, it encourages business expansion and job creation and stimulates overall economic growth. If the state legislature approves Governor Rell’s budget without major changes, it will help bring us out of the recession sooner and lay the groundwork for a healthier and more competitive economy in the years ahead. It is a budget I can support,” Representative Hamzy said.