

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

Harkins Criticizes Flawed House Democrat Budget



Tax Increases Target Middle and Lower Income Residents

HARTFORD- Representative John Harkins (R-120) and members of the House Republican caucus today opposed a House Democrat budget plan which was sold as a tax cut for 95% of residents, but in fact offered cuts to a small number, while increasing other taxes that will be paid by every man, woman and child in Connecticut.

With the state having a nearly \$900 million budget surplus, Democrats offered a plan that increases spending by 10.5%, or \$1.6 billion, and raises taxes by \$1 billion. Since the budget is out of balance, they will need to raise taxes even further down the road.

The budget also drops the sales tax exemption on clothing under \$50, and eliminates the once a year sales tax holiday on clothing under \$300 during the back-to-school shopping season.

Ironically, after spending two weeks lambasting a proposal by the House GOP to provide a Gas Tax Holiday, eliminating the 25 cent per gallon tax on gasoline from Memorial Day until Labor Day, the Democrats included it in their proposal.

“After taking more than two weeks to tell the people of Connecticut that our proposed Gas Tax Holiday was a ‘gimmick’ that wouldn’t help anyone, House Democrats realized they were wrong and included our proposal in their budget,” said Harkins. “It’s too bad they left in all the other tax increases, which make certain they offer relief to no one.”

House Republicans were defeated on party lines in an attempt to amend the budget, implementing the Gas Tax Holiday, and stripping the tax increases.

“Democrats want to raise taxes, and they won’t listen to any argument against it” said Harkins. “We can clearly have a budget that doesn’t increase taxes on anyone, while providing the Gas Tax Holiday to Connecticut motorists.”

Harkins predicted that since the Governor has pledged not to support these kinds of tax increases, and the package disagrees with a tax package passed by the Senate the previous evening that the bill was dead on arrival.

“Perhaps now we can begin working toward a meaningful budget for the people of Connecticut,” he added.

This session of the Connecticut General Assembly concludes at midnight on June 6th.