

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Harkins Reacts to Governor's Proposed Budget



HARTFORD –State Representative John Harkins (R-120) today said that Governor M. Jodi Rell's State of the State Address, delivered on the Opening Day of the 2008 session of the General Assembly, set the right tone for the deliberation over the next three months.

The governor's budget proposal for fiscal year 2009 avoids tax increases, provides business tax relief and remains under the state's constitutional spending cap, said Harkins, who serves on the legislature's Finance, Education, Judiciary and Public Health committees.

"We all share some very legitimate concerns about where the economy may go in the next year or so," said Harkins. "The projections for the state's estimated budget surplus have already been scaled back. As the governor pointed out, many states are experiencing budget deficits. I agree with Governor Rell that the key to getting through the next year is fiscal restraint."

Harkins also noted that Governor Rell's call for a repeal of the business entity tax was a positive step toward helping the state's economy, and Republicans and Democrats seem to be in agreement about eliminating that this session.

Other proposals offered by Governor Rell include:

- A proposal to reorganize the state Department of Transportation to enable it to better focus on transportation programs and projects that are priorities for the citizens of Connecticut.
- A measure to collect DNA samples from people charged with Class A and Class B felonies to help apprehend violent criminals.
- A tax credit for 'green' building construction and an exemption from the estate tax for working farms.
- Funding to meet the unmet needs of returning veterans and tuition waivers at state colleges for children and spouses of persons killed in action.
- Hiring an additional 100 state troopers over the next five years for traffic enforcement to crack down on unsafe drivers.
- Providing \$5 million for nanotechnology, an industry that draws on Connecticut's strengths in the fields of biology and chemistry and has the potential to create thousands of jobs.

- Enacting a true 'three strikes and you're out' law for violent felony offenders.
- Increased inspection of nursing homes and day care centers.