

House Republican Press Release

January 8, 2007
Press Office: 860-240-8700

REP. HETHERINGTON CO-SPONSORS BILL TO GET RID OF ROBO-CALLS



Would include Robo calls on Do Not Call List

HARTFORD— State Rep. John Hetherington has co-sponsored legislation would make political phone calls using automated messages for all or part of the transmission subject to the state's do-not call list.

Connecticut's Do Not Call Law was designed as means of limiting unwanted telephone solicitations to Connecticut residents. Due to its success and similar success in other states, the federal government began a National Do Not Call registry in 2003. This national registry is available to all consumers in all 50 states. Several states have also added political calls to their own do-not call registries.

In recent years, the proliferation of these automated calls in fiercely contested political races has seemed to increase at each passing election cycle. "My constituents should have the option not to be bothered by these annoying calls," said John Hetherington.

State Rep. Hetherington said, "In the last few months, residents have expressed their disgust with candidates using automated calls during elections. People should not have to be subjected to this glaring loop-hole in the law, which should not have existed in the original state Do Not Call List legislation.

"I look forward to working with my colleagues in Hartford to find a way to put a stop to these automated calls as quickly as possible," Hetherington added.

Enforcement tools for the state violating the existing state do-not call registry include cease and desist orders, injunctions, civil penalties up to \$5,000 for willful violations, and up to \$25,000 for violations of court injunctions. The Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) reports that most often, a simple warning and reminder letter from the agency puts an end to specific problems. Consumers may also file a criminal complaint against telemarketers whom they feel are harassing them.