

## House Republican Press Release

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### **REPRESENTATIVE HOVEY INTRODUCES BILLS FOR 2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**



Hartford—With the start of the Legislature’s 2008 session, State Rep. DebraLee Hovey (R-Monroe Newtown) has introduced bills that include measures to address education, enact new protection from child predators and enforce graduated drivers license restrictions.

In 2007, the General Assembly approved several initiatives to impose more strict penalties on sexual predators. More can clearly be done in this area to protect children, said Rep. Hovey. She has introduced new legislation that would require authorities take into account the level of children living in a neighborhood before allowing a convicted sex offender to move there; require sex offenders who were acquitted of a crime due to a mental illness to register for life with the state police, require registered sex offenders to report to local law enforcement each Halloween day and prohibit registered sex offenders from working at election polling locations.

“We know there are certain sex offenders, particularly pedophiles, who cannot or will not be rehabilitated,” said Rep. Hovey. “It is the state’s responsibility to do all it can to protect children from them.”

Another bill would address certain predatory lending problems by prohibiting unsolicited lending by credit card companies to young adults, aged 22 and under. This legislation would take away the enticement that draws young adults into serious credit and debt problems, said Rep. Hovey.

Rep. Hovey, who serves as Ranking Member (House Republican Leader) of the Legislature’s Education Committee, has also introduced legislation to implement a pilot program to increase suburban enrollment in the state’s magnet schools. The program would help Connecticut address the landmark Sheff vs. O’Neill lawsuit, which required the state to provide schoolchildren with equal educational opportunities.

“The Sheff vs. O’Neill lawsuit has cost the state a tremendous amount in legal fees but has yet to produce any real change,” said Rep. Hovey. “Before we implement the court ruling with any major overhaul, this kind of program would allow for improved racial integration in our schools, while giving parents a choice of where their children attend

school and help kids from various communities and backgrounds learn more about each other.”

In 2003, the state placed several key restrictions on new 16 and 17-year-old drivers, including curfews and passenger limitations. Those restrictions were extended to those holding learners permits by 2007 legislation but a problem remains with enforcing these laws, said Rep. Hovey.

“Police officers cannot easily see who is a probationary teen driver,” said Rep. Hovey. “By requiring that identification stickers be placed in the windows of their cars, we would greatly increase the ability to enforce these laws and protect public safety.”

Additional legislation introduced would focus efforts on education for young women on cervical cancer screening and prevention. In January, Rep. Hovey addressed European Parliament officials at a conference in Brussels, Belgium as part of an ongoing campaign to promote cervical cancer awareness.

Another bill would allow towns to increase the income eligibility for the property tax break they can provide to Veterans from \$39,000 to \$60,000.

Finally, Rep. Hovey has introduced legislation to protect animals in rescue operations from unsafe conditions. It would subject people who own more than 15 dogs or cats to random inspections from the Department of Agriculture.

“While the majority of people who run animal rescue operations are competent, caring individuals, there continue to be some that are operated by animal ‘hoarders,’” said Rep. Hovey. “Unsanitary conditions at rescue operations not only create an unhealthy situation for the animals, but for humans living nearby as well. This bill would ensure that animal rescues in Connecticut maintain safe, secure conditions.”