

## House Republican Press Release

April 17, 2008  
Press Office: 860-240-8700

### HOUSE APPROVES BILL TO BENEFIT VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES



#### *Legislation Sponsored By Rep. Hovey Would Promote Volunteer Service From Career Firefighters*

On Thursday, April 17, the House of Representatives approved legislation co-sponsored by Rep. DebraLee Hovey (R-Monroe, Newtown) that would prohibit municipal firefighter contracts from banning paid firefighters from serving in volunteer fire companies. House Bill 5646, An Act Concerning Volunteer Service By Paid Emergency Personnel Or Paid Firefighters, now moves to the State Senate for consideration.

Many firefighters who hold paid positions for municipalities have expressed a desire to serve in volunteer fire companies in the towns where they reside. However, a number of municipal contracts prohibit this volunteerism, said Rep. Hovey.

HB 5646 would specifically prohibit municipal firefighter contracts from banning firefighters or paid emergency personnel from serving as active members of a volunteer fire department, during personal time, in the municipality where they live. It allows municipalities to ask the state Department of Labor to help resolve any issues arising from such municipal fire agreements.

“This legislation can help small towns like Monroe and Newtown that depend on the service of volunteer firefighters,” said Rep. Hovey. “These volunteers are a tremendous part of our communities who put their lives on the line to protect us. There are other qualified personnel who would gladly join their ranks if not prevented by current law, which HB 5646 would remedy.”