

House Republican Press Release

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REP. HOVEY VOTES TO MOVE ALTERNATIVE' BUDGET PROPOSAL FORWARD



Hartford—On Monday, May 5, State Rep. DebraLee Hovey (R-Monroe, Newtown) voted in favor of moving a budget plan forward that would address a significant, growing state deficit by reducing spending by \$163 million for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. State Comptroller Nancy Wyman recently projected a \$67 million deficit for the current fiscal year that ends June 30.

Democrat legislators have stated they intend to leave the existing budget plan for the next fiscal year in place despite the deficit and in a parliamentary vote taken strictly along party lines, the budget plan to lower spending was defeated.

The centerpiece of the Republican budget proposal would offer up to 11,600 eligible state workers an early retirement incentive program, or ERIP. Similar measures were enacted in 2002 and 1992 when the state faced serious fiscal issues. It would also save state motorists \$50 million this summer by cutting the state gasoline tax and rolling back the scheduled gross receipts tax increases in the peak summer driving months of July and August.

In addition, it would allow individuals to use their Medicaid benefits to cover long-term health care, allowing people to receive long-term health care at home rather than in a nursing home.

“There is clearly something very wrong when the state has a serious deficit—that will only grow in the coming months, that the Legislature is going to do nothing about it before we conclude business for the year,” said Rep. Hovey. “In the near future, the same legislators who refuse to make adjustments to this budget will be suggesting a solution of tax hikes for people who live in the most heavily taxed state in the nation. I know my constituents in Monroe and Newtown are struggling, as are people throughout the state, and find it offensive that they will not even hold a debate on a plan to prevent higher taxes and to give people a small break on the price of gasoline during the summer.”