

House Republican Press Release

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Legislature Approves Measure To Revise In-School Suspension Law *Measure Moves To Gov. Rell for Final Approval*



On Wednesday, May 7, the State Senate approved legislation co-authored by State Rep. DebraLee Hovey (R-Monroe, Newtown) that delays implantation of the state's 2007 In- School Suspension law for one year. House Bill 5826 now goes to Governor M. Jodi Rell for final approval.

Many education officials have expressed concerns over this legislation, particularly the additional cost associated with hiring staff to monitor students serving their suspensions on school property. The HB 5826 would move the implementation of the school suspension law from July 1, 2008 to July 1, 2009. The 2007 law was approved in response to a number of school systems abusing out-of-school suspension provisions, said Rep. Hovey, who serves as Ranking Member (House Republican Leader) of the Legislature's Education Committee.

Public Act 07-66 requires student suspensions to be held on school grounds. Exemptions can be granted if school administration determines that the student poses a danger to persons or property or is too disruptive of the educational process. An amendment prepared by Rep. Hovey would have targeted Connecticut school systems that abuse the use of out of school suspensions.

Under that proposal, schools that try to meet the educational needs of the majority of its students by keeping them in school during suspensions would be allowed to do so and use their judgment on the use of out of school suspensions. The amendment resulted in co-chairs of the Education Committee seeking a compromise that delays implementation of the law.

"I'm pleased my colleagues recognized the fact that the in school suspension law is in desperate need of revisions," said Rep. Hovey. "Our schools should be educating all children and it is impossible to address the student achievement gap if we take students most needing classroom attention from schools. I look forward to reworking this legislation in the future."