

House Republican Press Release

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STATE REP. HOVEY CALLS FOR ACROSS-THE-BOARD SPENDING CUTS TO ADDRESS \$300 MILLION DEFICIT



Appropriations Committee Member Says Spending Cuts Should Start In The Legislature Itself

State Rep. DebraLee Hovey (R-Monroe, Newtown) today proposed state spending cuts to help address a projected \$300 million budget deficit, highlighting government spending and projects in the state Capitol that taxpayers cannot afford. Rep. Hovey, who serves on the Legislature's Appropriations Committee, joined with fellow House and Senate Republican legislators in calling for the reductions.

Rep. Hovey noted that examples of Capitol projects and budget items - from \$1.7 million in printing costs, to expensive statues, \$255,000 in new signage and wasteful special legislative sessions - should be eliminated because of the deficit. She called for the Legislature to act immediately on a bipartisan basis to close a budget gap of slightly less than 2 percent in the state's \$18 billion budget-- and not wait for more hearings or studies. Other states have acted to close deficits and so must Connecticut, said Rep. Hovey.

"Dozens of families I've spoken with this year have told me they're hurting in this economy and cannot afford tax increases at this time," said Rep. Hovey. "Because the economy is likely to get worse before it improves, we should not be raiding any emergency funds now but instead, immediately start cutting back on spending and the Legislature should lead by example in this regard."

The Office of Legislative Management has requested a 7.9 percent spending increase for its operating budget. Rep. Hovey joined with Republican leaders in asking Democrat leaders to rescind their request and flat-fund the budget for 2009-11. Every state budget office and fiscal entity - Republican, Democrat or non-partisan - agrees that Connecticut faces mounting deficits. Whether the examples are symbolic or significant, Rep. Hovey said the public has a right to know about government spending and cited:

- A special legislative session last Dec. 5 that cost taxpayers \$1,000 per minute could have been replaced with a technical session at virtually no cost;
- 100 yards of European black marble is being replaced in the Legislative Office Building for \$200,000, even though there is no safety issue;
- \$255,000 in new signs throughout the building;

- Brand new Liquid Crystal Display screens have just been installed in hearing rooms replacing old televisions that Republicans said they never used in the first place;
- The state of Connecticut spends nearly \$300,000 on pagers despite technology that has rendered them obsolete.
- 65 separate local projects for House and Senate Democrats handed out by the Senate president and House Speaker for members totaling more than \$2.3 million compared to **zero** Republican projects.