

House Republican Press Release

February 12, 2007
Press Office: 860-240-8700

General Assembly to Hold Public Hearing on Klarides / Rowe Bill to “Green” Schools, Protect School Children



HARTFORD- On Tuesday, February 13, the General Assembly’s Education Committee will hear testimony on an initiative to protect local schoolchildren introduced by State Representatives T.R. Rowe, R-Trumbull, and Themis Klarides, R-Derby. The committee’s public hearing begins at 12 p.m. in the Legislative Office

Building in Hartford and will hear testimony on House Bill 7096, An Act Concerning Pesticide Applications At Schools And The Use Of Environmentally Sensitive Cleaning And Maintenance Products In Schools.

Health authorities have indicated that exposure to certain toxic cleaning chemicals used in school buildings can lead to serious health ailments. A concept introduced by Reps. Rowe and Klarides that is included in HB 7096 would prohibit the use of any cleaning product containing a toxic substance inside an elementary school building. Measures are currently in place in New York and New Jersey via an executive order from their respective governors. Governor M. Jodi Rell has approved a similar order, which affects state agencies and institutions of higher education. HB 7096 would place comparable restrictions into our state statutes and extend these protections to elementary and secondary schoolchildren.

According to data from the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, traditional cleaning products can contain harmful chemicals that can cause cancer, reproductive disorders, major organ damage, and permanent eye damage. Other common health problems associated with cleaning chemicals include asthma and other respiratory ailments, headaches, dizziness, and fatigue.

“I’m pleased the Education Committee will receive testimony on this legislation,” said Rep. Rowe.

“Toxic cleaning chemicals have serious health effects on the majority of the population and perhaps most of all on children. Because they are equally effective and at times even represent a cost savings, it simply makes sense to use non-toxic or ‘green’ products in our schools to protect our children.”

"We must do everything we can to make certain that our schools are the safest they can be for our children," said Klarides. "This legislation will go a long way in our effort to do that. While toxic chemicals offer health risks to everyone, children are all the more vulnerable to illnesses and side effects brought on by their use. We need our schools to be a happy and healthy environment for children to learn and develop."