

House Republican Press Release

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ENERGY BILL BRINGS SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM RELIEF FOR RATE PAYERS



The State House of Representatives and State Senate this weekend passed comprehensive, sweeping energy legislation designed to assist Connecticut residents with the threat of rising energy bills, announced **Rep. Linda Gentile** (D-Ansonia), **Rep. Themis Klarides** (R-Derby), and **Sen. Joe Crisco** (D-Woodbridge).

The bill's 129 sections and 165 pages lay out a much-needed master energy plan for Connecticut, incorporating some of the nation's most innovative ideas for promoting energy efficiency and new technologies.

House Bill 7432# calls for:

- Rebates and tax exemptions for consumers who invest in energy-efficient technology. These rebates or tax breaks would give consumers an incentive to replace old air conditioners, boilers, freezers or other appliances with new models that use the latest technology and less energy. For example, consumers can receive a \$500 credit when they purchase a new gas or oil furnace.
- Establishes a sales tax exemption on automobiles that average more than 40 mpg so consumers purchasing a \$30,000 dollar car will see a \$1,800 savings.
- Incentives to encourage Connecticut consumers to "go green." Including the ability to buy CFL's (compressed florescent light bulbs) and energy star products sales tax free.
- Redirecting conservation fees currently charged on all customers' monthly bills, back to the Connecticut Clean Energy and Conservation funds. These funds are freed up for programs focused on developing cutting edge conservation and clean energy programs.
- Bringing the option to install an "advanced meter" to all Connecticut consumers. Advanced meters allow households or businesses to pay for their power usage based on "Time of Use" pricing. Households that choose to run their appliances during off peek evening hours will finally be able to see real financial savings in their monthly bill.

Sen. Crisco remarked, “For years, this money was used to cover deficits in the budget and was not going towards what it was meant for. The Clean Energy and Conservation fund will now have access to these funds and can fulfill their mission to help all consumers make smart energy choices and conserve.”

Creative partnership for all Connecticut consumers:

Among the most exciting components of the energy bill is a provision for a Save More program modeled after California’s 20/20 program. Save More creates the opportunity for real and immediate relief from rising energy bills for all of Connecticut’s residents through a partnership between the utility company and the consumer.

“The more an individual conserves in July and August compared to 12 months earlier, the more they can save on their bill, so a family has the potential to save up to 20% off their energy bill during the summer months,” Rep. Gentile said. “It’s an incredibly creative way to get people engaged in conservation while directly helping them lower their monthly bill.”

The much debated long-term solutions to Connecticut’s energy future came in the form of a compromise between the House and Senate leaders, and also gaining bi-partisan support.

“The bill strikes a good balance between government oversight of energy production and private generation while creating alternative choices for those that desire to have more control over the future of their monthly energy bill,” Rep. Gentile continued.

“There are elements to this bill that will help ratepayers see savings very soon, coupled with important incentives aimed at achieving greater energy conservation,” Rep. Themis said. “High energy rates have a negative impact on our residents, business community, and overall quality of life and economy. This bill represents a critical first step in reversing the unfortunate trend in energy prices in Connecticut.”