

House Republican Press Release

October 28, 2008
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Klarides Invites Suggestions on Reducing the State Budget Deficit



DERBY- Deputy House Minority Leader Themis Klarides urged voters and taxpayers to offer suggestions on how to reduce the state budget deficit which is currently estimated at \$300 million and growing, as result of the slowing economy.

Klarides said members of the public can forward suggestions for budget savings to his Capitol office at 1-800-842-1423 or go on the governor's website for an interactive budget forum, at www.ct.gov/governorrell.

Rep. Klarides has proposed to close the budget gap without tax increases or raiding the state's Rainy Day Fund, but rather by limiting unnecessary spending beginning with the legislature itself.

Gov. M Jodi Rell has proposed additional steps including:

- Cutting millions of contracts for outside consultants;
- Eliminating \$2 million that she has in discretionary funding;
- Offering a tax amnesty program for delinquents to bring in an additional \$40 million;
- Delaying scheduled capital projects and programs;
- Accessing \$157 million in federal money the state is due through a settlement involving Southbury Training School.

The governor has created a Web site that gives taxpayers to opportunity review the entire two-year state budget, follow the most up-to-date changes and make recommendations on how to make state government more efficient.

"We welcome scrutiny. We welcome ideas," Governor Rell said. "These are challenging times that require leadership and ingenuity. Now is not the time to fight over who gets credit. This is not my budget, nor the Legislature's. It belongs to the taxpayers of

Connecticut who have a right to be part of the process, and most importantly, the solution.

The interactive budget can be accessed by clicking on the “Budget Forum” link on the Governor’s Web site at: www.ct.gov/governorrell. One of the prime features is the “Submit Ideas” section that provides an online suggestion form for the public to share suggestions on anything from the overall budget to state services.

There are links to view the budgets of specific agencies and aid to cities and towns to as well as a link to view and download the entire 600-page document, which is divided into the following key areas:

- Tax
- Revenue
- Agency Budgets

A comprehensive overview of state revenue and expenditures for Fiscal Years 2007-09 is depicted in pie charts and graphics and also are spelled out in detail in text.

“The Web site is a wonderful educational tool. One quick look at the revenue chart, for example, taxpayers will know instantly that more than 42 percent of our revenue comes from personal income tax and 20 percent from sales tax. Those figures will really resonate with everyone as we hear forecasts on unemployment and consumer spending,” Governor Rell said.

The site also includes the specifics of Governor Rell’s Deficit Mitigation Plan intended to close a \$300 million budget shortfall and current and archived news releases on the economy and budget.

“Taxpayers deserve to know how and where their dollars are being spent and the state budget has always been open to scrutiny,” Governor Rell said. “This new Web site makes it much easier to access that information and, I hope, give the public a clearer understanding of what we are facing in these challenging economic times.”

Information on Connecticut House Republican initiatives can be found at:

www.housegop.ct.gov.