

House Republican Press Release

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Klarides: House Republicans Offer Deeper Cuts to Ease Deficit; Democrats Add More Spending In Fiscal Crisis



HARTFORD – Deputy House Republican Leader Themis Klarides (R-114) along with House Republicans today voted to reduce the state’s mounting deficit by more than \$185 million, \$54 million more than Democrats who added an additional \$250,000 in last-minute spending that will only add to the state’s fiscal crisis.

Republican lawmakers also proposed cutting their own legislative pay by 5 percent, delay an \$87 million union contract until a budget is in place, and provide mandate relief to towns and cities struggling to put their own budgets in place. Democrats rejected all proposals.

Klarides noted that the additional \$250,000 provision for health care costs showed the Democrats are not yet serious about dealing with the state’s projected \$6 billion deficit over the next two years.

For the second time in six weeks lawmakers approved measures to temporarily reduce the deficit but Republicans warned that the budget hole will spike again soon because of falling revenues. Republicans have repeatedly said the Democrats’ cuts do not go far enough and budget is still in the red.

The Republicans proposed:

- Cutting their own pay by 5 percent for all 187 lawmakers;
- Delaying an \$87 million salary increase package for corrections officers until a budget is in place this spring, otherwise the contract goes into effect within 30 days;
- Restoring \$54 million in cuts Democrats eliminated from Gov. Rell’s budget
- Eliminating \$274,000 in additional health care costs for workers in the Capitol;
- Delaying or eliminating local mandates such as costly in-school suspension and treating some serious juvenile offenders as adults to save at least \$95 million.

Klarides said Democrats are still unwilling to even reduce their own budgets within the legislature and are prepared to allow the union contracts to become law without having anyway to pay for it.

“How can you tell the people of Connecticut that you expect them to tighten their belts when you can’t suck in your own fiscal gut?” asked Klarides. “Last night we had an opportunity to make additional and meaningful adjustments to the budget and set an example concerning sacrifices that are certain to come. Democrats chose not to demonstrate leadership and passed on the opportunity.”