

House Republican Press Release

April 3, 2007
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Miller Says Traffic Safety Bills a Priority This Year



Legislator Spearheads Measures Aimed at Combating Traffic Deaths

HARTFORD- State Representative Larry Miller (R-122) has introduced a number of bills this session which are aimed at reversing the deadly trend on Connecticut highways and roads. Recent statistics released by the State Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) demonstrate that traffic fatalities are once again on the rise. In 2006, 325 people died in motor vehicle accidents in the state, a jump of almost 17 percent compared to 2005.

“It is a sobering report, but not entirely surprising,” said Representative Miller. “There continues to be a number of dangerous habits that many drivers have, and when you add in the fact that Connecticut roads are getting more congested everyday, it’s a recipe for disaster.” The report cited speeding and reckless driving as the leading cause of the fatal crashes.

Miller has introduced bills that will increase the penalty for negligent homicide with a motor vehicle, as well as increasing penalties for those illegally using hand-held cell phones while driving, exceeding the speed limit, and committing a vandalous act with a motor vehicle. Another bill introduced by Miller would make it illegal to text message on a cell phone while driving.

“This report appears to indicate that we need to enforce the laws we have on the books, while making penalties for offenses much stronger,” said Miller. “While some of these measures would seem to be common sense, I am daily astounded by the number of people I pass on the road, still talking on their hand-held phones, text messaging people, or otherwise engaging in distracted behavior.”

Miller also expressed hopes that new Department of Transportation Commissioner Ralph Carpenter would bring a fresh perspective to his role having served twenty-five years with the Department of Public Safety. “Commissioner Carpenter’s law enforcement perspective may be exactly the kind of outlook we need,” said Miller.

This session of the Connecticut General Assembly is scheduled to conclude at midnight, June 6th, 2007.