

House Republican Press Release

May 25, 2007
Press Office: 860-240-8700

DEMOCRATS BLOCK ATTEMPTS TO LOWER GAS PRICES



Legislation Backed By Rep. O'Neill Would Cut Gas Tax for Summer Months

HARTFORD – On Wednesday, May 23, Majority party leaders in the State House of Representatives blocked legislation supported by State Rep. Arthur O'Neill, R-Southbury, that would have placed a moratorium on the state gasoline tax from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Removing the 25 cent per gallon tax is designed to give motorists relief at the pumps for the peak summer driving season. Republicans proposed the plan May 14, noting it can easily be paid for out of the state's \$846 million budget surplus.

Republicans in the House of Representatives prepared an amendment to a bill scheduled to be debated during the May 23 legislative session. Rather than call the bill for debate, Democrat leaders used a procedural maneuver (passing temporarily) to shelve the proposal. The following day, Democrat leaders ruled against bringing a similar amendment to legislation before the House of Representatives.

It is estimated that the tax cuts would save drivers about \$40 million per month, or a little more than \$120 million for the duration of the summer driving period. Governor M. Jodi Rell also supported the idea. She has repeatedly said that if the legislature does not go along, she and her fellow Republicans will use gas tax proposal in the budget negotiations that have just begun. The gas tax moratorium would not divert any funds from any transportation program.

“It is disappointing that the Democrats would kill or delay a bill that has almost unanimous support rather than allow a vote on this critical issue,” said Rep. O'Neill. “We will continue to raise this issue because it is vital to the needs of the people we represent.”