

House Republican Press Release

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LEGISLATURE APPROVES INITIATIVE COSPONSORED BY REP. O'NEILL TO ASSIST BRIDGEWATER, ROXBURY, WASHINGTON



On Monday, November 24, the Legislature approved a bill cosponsored by State Rep. Arthur O'Neill, R-Southbury, that validates a referendum the Region 12 school district held in December 2007. The legislation, which now goes to Governor M. Jodi Rell for final approval, was approved during a special session to approve reductions to the projected \$300 million state

deficit.

An initiative included in Senate Bill 1200, An Act Concerning Various Measures To Provide Relief For Municipalities, validates the referendum held by Bridgewater and Roxbury on to approve a \$1.5 million renovation project at Shepaug Valley Middle School and Shepaug Valley High School. The referendum was otherwise valid but school officials failed to publish proper local newspaper notice of the vote.

“It’s important that this referendum be validated to ensure Region 12 receives state reimbursement, so that taxpayers in the towns of Roxbury, Bridgewater and Washington are protected,” said Rep. O’Neill.

Rep. O’Neill also cosponsored an amendment to SB 1200 that would have removed an onerous state mandate on small towns that has resulted in several closing their municipal websites. In legislation that took effect earlier this year, towns that operate websites are required to upload meeting minutes, which has resulted in a significant cost to small town budgets and several additional area towns have considered closing their websites because of the corresponding budgetary impact, said Rep. O’Neill.

“Sadly, this initiative was defeated on a party-line vote,” said Rep. O’Neill. “Town websites provide a great deal of useful information and opportunities for people to do business with the town without having to travel to Town Hall. This is an example of legislation that would have benefited residents without costing any additional funds.”

Editor’s note:

Rep. O’Neill serves the towns of Bridgewater, Roxbury, Southbury and Washington in the General Assembly.