

## House Republican Press Release

October 30, 2007  
Press Office: 860-240-8700

### Perillo and Debicella Praise Bonding Compromise



State Senator Dan Debicella (R-21) and State Representative Jason Perillo (R-113) today supported passage of a \$2.8 billion compromise bond package that calls for significantly less borrowing than an original bill vetoed by Governor M. Jodi Rell last month.

“Today was a win for fiscal responsibility in Connecticut,” said Senator Debicella. “I am proud that Governor Rell and I stood against the original bonding package, and that we have reached a bipartisan compromise that will save the taxpayers millions of dollars in interest expense per year.”

Senator Debicella said that over \$400 million was cut from the original bonding package, which was passed by the legislature in September, but vetoed by Governor Rell. Many of the cuts were reduction or elimination of “earmarks”, which are specific pet projects of legislators slipped into the bill.

Representative Perillo, casting his first vote since winning election on October 9th, said he was pleased that fiscal responsibility carried the day. “The State of Connecticut has over \$14 billion dollars in debt, and we need to be very careful in what we bond for—we cannot treat bonding as a credit card for the taxpayers,” Representative Perillo said. “Thanks to Governor Rell, we have a responsible bonding package.”

The two-year bonding package’s largest items are over \$1.3 billion for school construction, \$850 million for transportation, and \$180 million for clean water programs. The bonding package also contains a \$15 million program for preventing flooding, which Senator Debicella had proposed earlier this year.

However, none of the bonding money is finalized. Under state law, the legislature can only authorize bonding funding. The State Bond Commission must give final approval to issue the bonds, and the Governor controls the agenda for the Bond Commission.

Senator Debicella and Representative Perillo said the most important priority for Shelton would be to get \$2-3 million for infrastructure on Canal Street that is crucial to the next phase of downtown revitalization. “There are several areas that we might get the money from, including economic development bonding and urban act bonding,” said Representative Perillo. “Senator Debicella and I will be working with Mayor Lauretti and the Governor’s office to get this funding in front of the bond commission in the next few months.”

The bonding package also contains \$950 million over ten years for the Connecticut State University System. Senator DeBicella said that an impediment to his support for the original bond package was the lack of accountability imposed on the Connecticut State University system project.

“The bond package we passed today provides Governor Rell with the authority she needs to oversee financing the various improvement projects for the state university system, and it requires annual audits. Both of these important features were not present in the original bond package. No one ever disputed the need or desirability of launching a system-wide state university improvement project, just how it would be managed,” said Senator DeBicella, who is ranking member on the Higher Education Committee.