

House Republican Press Release

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REPRESENTATIVE ROWE BACKS PLAN TO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE, ENERGY RELIEF TO MIDDLE CLASS TAXPAYERS



Hartford—State Rep. T.R. Rowe, R-Trumbull, today joined with fellow House Republican leaders in introducing a plan to ward off the effects of an economic downturn through immediate, targeted middle class tax relief. The proposal would help those struggling with the costs of heating their homes and health care coverage. It also includes a long term component to bolster the state's economy through investments in the fuel cell industry.

The proposal outlines a specific timetable of public hearings and various committee reviews that could produce a bipartisan comprehensive relief package, using roughly \$200 million of the state's \$263 million surplus by March 26.

"This tax credit plan is primarily targeted to help the middle class, which is bearing the greatest burden of the economic downturn and spiraling costs of living," said Rep. Rowe. "I think the plan is a modest step towards achieving that goal, and we need to do a better job of controlling spending and getting a better 'bang for our buck' up in Hartford."

Under the plan's health care relief component:

- Anyone who has out of pocket non-reimbursable medical expenses exceeding 4% of their adjusted gross income would be eligible for a tax credit against their state income tax up to the lesser of your tax liability or \$500.
- Eligibility will be limited to certain income levels – up to \$75,000 for an individual and up to \$150,000 for a family.
- Similar subsidies would be provided to dislocated workers who suddenly lack any coverage or who forced to pay higher COBRA payments for up to 18 months.

The proposal's energy relief component would:

- Provide a tax credit to help residents cover the cost of rising home energy costs. Energy includes — gas, oil, and electricity.

- Anyone who has home energy costs exceeding 4% of their adjusted gross income would be eligible for a tax credit against their state income tax up to the lesser of your tax liability or \$500.
- Eligibility will be limited to families of certain income levels – from \$20,000 up to \$75,000 for individuals and from \$50,000 up to \$150,000 for families.

Both benefits would be based on income eligibility requirements. Approximately 91% of all individuals and 84% of all families can take advantage of these tax credits.

Finally, the plan would:

- Dedicate \$50 million each year over the next four years in bonding to create a Fuel Cell program which promotes economic, energy and environmental freedom.
- Under this program the state would: 1) contract with a Connecticut business to mass produce transit buses powered by fuel cells, 2) begin to transition over to using fuel cells at Bradley International Airport to make Bradley the first “Green” International Airport in the world and 3) establish 2 or 3 hydrogen refueling hubs in the state.