

House Republican Press Release

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VOTING IN DISGUISE!



By State Representative John J. Ryan

A noted philosopher (I think it was Rodney Dangerfield) once said that it was appropriate that Election Day was a week after Halloween, because they are the two scariest events on the calendar. But while we joke about such things, and bemoan that election campaigning starts

earlier, and earlier, and (some of us, anyway) wonder if elective office will ever regain some of the public service flavor it used to hold, the truth is that voting is important, and not enough of us take it seriously.

The most depressing statistic that I am regularly confronted with is that in a local election year (meaning **THIS** year) the majority of voters can't be bothered getting to the polls. While it is highly commendable that in the Presidential election years, close to 90 % of Darien voters "get out there", we FLUNK in the "off year" elections. Go look it up.....the statistics are appalling. For a highly-educated area like ours, there is absolutely no excuse for the stupid excuses that "I just didn't have the time" or the silly notion that "I only vote in important elections".

YOUR VOTE IN LOCAL ELECTIONS HAS FAR MORE "WEIGHT"! – This does not require brilliant statistical analysis to discern this. You may be one of only thousands of total voters in a local election, as opposed to millions in a Presidential election. Have you seen the stories of elections decided by a one or two vote margin in various places? It is not hard to figure out that you have proportionately, a much bigger stake in the outcome.

IT'S NOT IMPORTANT? – Give me a break. Try telling a veteran just back from service in a less-friendly part of the world, where the residents would give anything to have some input into their daily affairs , that getting to the polls "isn't that important" to you.

THE ISSUES, PROBLEMS, CANDIDATES, ARE ALL RIGHT UNDER YOUR NOSE!! – We All love to debate the merits/flaws of Presidential candidates, but let's be real here, how many of us will ever even meet a "Presidential Candidate X", much less have any input with one in a lifetime ? The people running for your local elective boards are your neighbors; the issues involved are ones that affect you personally every day: your roads, your schools, your own tax billYou can't be bothered?

THIS IS NOT NUCLEAR PHYSICS HERE – While it is true that government (like the rest of our daily existence) will only continue to get more complicated, common sense is especially useful in local issues, where you can be the judge of topics that have an impact right in your own neighborhood.

DO SOME HOMEWORK! – I say this often, but I continue to be astounded that nearly all of us with go to great deal of trouble to research a malady afflicting a family member, the statistics on our favorite fantasy sport league, or factors relating to the proper college selection for your child, but if we do bother to vote, we do so based solely on a catchy political ad! Ignore the “fluff” and look into the issues, talk to folks who are more involved that you are, get some input.

USE YOUR INSTINCTS – We don’t give ourselves much credit, because most of us can sniff out a total phony if we pay attention. Does Candidate X “care deeply”, but never accomplish anything? Does Candidate Y take credit for anything and everything within range? Does Candidate Z, on closer examination have anything beyond more promises and political jargon? Real government work is often non-glitzzy, and if you are hearing hype and hoopla from a candidate, your guess that there is not much else there may be right on target.

Finally, everyone complains about government, especially when it comes to your own hometown. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO EXCUSE for not taking a small amount of time and effort to be involved. If you are not part of the process, then you are part of the problem.

As always please feel free to contact me with your concerns and issues. As your state representative, it is my job, and my priority to represent you and to make sure that your needs and concerns are addressed at the capitol. You can write to me at Room 4200, Legislative Office Building, and Hartford, CT 06106-1591, send me e-mail at John.Ryan@housegop.ct.gov or call my office toll-free at 1-800-842-1423.