

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

Here's some Homework, Read up...



By State Representative John J. Ryan

Super Bowl Sunday is only weeks away, the Presidential campaigning for that election ten months away is now unending (and don't worry, the odds of seeing a 'live' Presidential candidate in our State before the primary on Feb. 5 are about the same odds as seeing an ivory-billed woodpecker) and the Opening Day of this year's General Assembly is also fast approaching.

I hope that you exercised your IT abilities and looked up some of the new State laws that we referenced in our last column; remember they, and all of the other legislative doings can be referenced at www.cga.ct.gov ! So, on the topic of being able to follow the doings of Connecticut's government on-line, I have mentioned previously that an easy (and non-partisan) informative read is Governor Rell's website (at www.ct.gov/governorrell), and if you have checked it this month, you know that some of the leading news items currently are:

- FERC Decision "A Travesty" (see entry on 1.11.08): I hope that you have followed the issue of the proposed Broadwater liquefied gas facility that would be situated on a platform in Long Island Sound; unfortunately the State of Connecticut does not have direct involvement in the permit/approval process for the proposal which is pending before FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission). While there is no question that the Northeast has major energy/power supply issues, environmental groups have been justifiably calling attention to this proposal that would seem to pose a variety of serious and obvious problems. Will New York also get into action opposing the plan? Stay tuned

- Rell proposes sweeping reforms to Criminal Justice System (see entry 1.08.08): The horrific home invasion burglary murders in Cheshire have prompted calls for reform, and action is supposed to be taken in Special Session soon. The Governor announced this "series of sweeping proposals" that are starting to gain some bi-partisan support; some of the components are a tougher home invasion law, increased penalties for night-time burglaries and burglaries with firearms, an upgraded "persistent offender law", a workable "Three Strikes Law" for repeat violent offenders, a series of improvements to the Board of Pardons and Paroles, and expanded victims' rights. I am always dubious about things actually getting successfully accomplished in Special Sessions, but there

seems to be so much momentum for action that this proposal was the subject of favorable editorial comment not only in last Friday's (Stamford) Advocate and this week's Fairfield County Business Journal, but an article in this Sunday's NY Times!

- Rell advances Brownfield Redevelopment agenda (see entry 1.09.08): Brownfield redevelopment is not only an important environmental issue it is a vital economic development strategy. The State is now undertaking a national search for an executive director for the Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development. In addition, an agreement has recently been reached by all the state agencies involved in this topic to facilitate progress on these topics.

- Keeping Merritt Parkway/Route 7 Interchange planning process moving (see entry 1.03.08): One more traffic congestion problem in our area is the long-delayed upgrade of the Merritt Parkway/Route 7 interchange.....see the news release for the latest developments on this topic which has not moved forward quickly in recent years !

There are many other news items and issues that bear watching as the General Assembly Session will begin to get in gear. And since the on-going Hollywood writers' strike is limiting the production of sitcoms, "comedy shows" and the likes of (Great Caesar's Ghost! Can Western civilization possibly hope to survive?), maybe you will have some time to follow what is really happening in your State government?

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.