

## House Republican Press Release

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### THINGS TO COME....



*By State Representative John J. Ryan*

So our last column was much too prophetic on what happened in the Special Session; in the event you did not notice, as expected, the "temporary conveyance tax increase" was extended once again ( which I did not vote for...and would anyone like to take a guess on the odds in the future that this "temporary" increase becomes permanent ?), some gas tax/cash discount relief ( which could and should have been done sooner ) passed, and naturally the Democrat majority saw to it that the Republican alternative-budget proposals were never called once for a vote on the merits.

As long as we are doing so well prognosticating (again, this is not like trying to do something difficult, e.g. pick the Super Bowl champ), let's take a look at recent legislative news and this week's Veto Session, and take a look into the crystal ball, or better still, as our title suggests with reference to the 1936 classic film (Raymond Massey's best career performance?) which foretold all too well the beginning of WWII, what may lie in our future, legislatively:

- **Veto Session override:** as a regular column reader, you are aware that the Democrat legislative majority, until this spring's Special Election for State Senator Bill Finch's (now Bridgeport Mayor) seat, was a 'supermajority' in both chambers (meaning the Democrats had so many votes they could override a gubernatorial veto with a party line vote) yet they had little actual success at overriding vetoes of Governor Rell. So when early this week, Rell's veto of the minimum wage increase (and the related "tip bill" was overridden by the legislature, was it a sign that Rell's clout is weakening? Or.... given that the override very narrowly passed, and further, that the Democrats did not even make an effort to take a vote to challenge the other Rell vetoes, was this rare override just an aberration ? And is this any clue as to whether or not Rell is running again in 2010, or much ado about.....

- **Legislative 'retirements' :** I have made the point often in the past that the issue of term limits for legislators is a worthy abstract issue to debate, there is little need for such provisions in reality, because there is usually some "turnover" happening in Hartford every election cycle. This year there are no less than 17 legislators (nine Rs and eight Ds) who have opted not to seek re-election, and several of those ( The Speaker, Jim Amann, and Deputy Republican Leader Dolly Powers for two obvious examples ) had

accumulated considerable seniority, but there were also some that were not running again who had served less than 10 years. Is that a reflection that the General Assembly has been taking up more and more time, and that accordingly, more 'professional politicians' are coming aboard ? (Take a look at all of the legislative websites, and keep a list of how many House members now list their occupation as "legislator" – is that a good thing?)

**- Shifting philosophies? :** Several commentators on the doings in Hartford have noted that the make-up of the General Assembly has increasingly become more and more liberal in philosophy. If one would like some objective indication of that, one only has to look at some examples of legislation that has come forward, passed and been vetoed over the last few years that did not get out of committees in the recent past. Or one might point to the non-legislative job description of the current House Majority Leader (almost certain to be the next Speaker) Chris Donovan, which he lists in his bio as a "labor representative". Or one might note that Bill Dyson, now the dean in service in the House, not seeking re-election, long one of the most "progressive" members of the Democrat caucus is now one of the very few who will vote with the Republican caucus on any issue (as he did this week, in voting to sustain the Rell veto on the minimum wage). One lobbyist was heard to say that "Bill has not changed so much over the years, but the Democrat caucus sure has!" Or you could note the story on Dyson in last Saturday's Hartford Courant (easy to find online) where former Governor Rowland was quoted as saying " with the retirement of Bill Dyson and others over the last few years, the era of bipartisanship and civility in Hartford has now finally ended, which is unfortunate."

My prognostications, based on these tea leaf readings, and also looking at the new candidates now campaigning on the Democratic legislative slate, are that items such as the "insurance pooling bill" passed this year and vetoed this year (without an override effort), and an income tax increase, and an estate tax increase, and others, will all be back in the 2009 Session with new "enthusiasm" from the majority and more reason for concern for sending in more taxes and getting less in State services, for Fairfield County.

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](mailto:John.Ryan@housegop.ct.gov) or call my office toll-free at 1-800-842-1423.