

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

Sawyer: House Passes Biennial Budget



House Republican 'No Tax Increase' Initiative Saves Taxpayers

HARTFORD – Representative Pamela Sawyer (R-Bolton) voted with House Republicans to approve a \$36 billion biennial state budget. The budget was later passed by the State Senate.

Rep. Sawyer noted that when the legislative session began, it appeared that a tax increase was imminent. Since the House Republican minority introduced a 'No Tax Increase' budget, and stuck to their guns through deliberations on the point, she said the GOP legislators changed the debate at the Capitol. The final budget contained no tax increases with the exception of the cigarette tax, which jumped from \$1.51 per pack to \$2.00 per pack.

Proposals the other party had pushed but were unable to keep in the final budget included an increase in the state income tax, an increase in the property tax credit from \$500 to \$1000, and elimination of the exemption of the sales tax for clothing under \$50. Sadly, the small gross receipts tax increase on gasoline could not be negotiated out of the budget.

Sawyer said that despite a roughly \$900 million budget surplus, the other party's supermajority wanted to raise taxes by \$1.6 billion. While this budget now contains no such tax increases, she said the towns in the 55th District will receive a \$2.3 million increase in state aid over the next two years.

Sawyer also observed that the budget which passed the House contained:

--An additional \$441 million over two years for local school aid, the largest increase in state history. There are also new measures requiring school districts to account for the funding and measure their students' achievement.

-- \$94 million in the first year and \$120.7 million in the second to boost reimbursement rates to doctors, hospitals, clinics, and dentists who serve needy patients on Medicaid. Physicians have not seen a rate increase in 18 years.

- Increases in funding for state parks, including \$1.7 million to hire additional park personnel.
- More money for programs that help the elderly, such as personal care assistants and Dial-a-Ride.
- Full funding for day programs provided to young adults with developmental disabilities who recently graduated from high school.
- A 3 percent increase for nursing homes and private, nonprofit agencies that provide everything from group homes for the mentally retarded to programs for the homeless.

The budget will now head to the Governor for her signature.