

House Republican Press Release

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REPRESENTATIVE SCRIBNER: SESSION THAT ENDS WITHOUT STATE BUDGET FAILS CITIZENS



HARTFORD- State Representative David A. Scribner (R-Brookfield, Bethel) today said the General Assembly's inability to adopt a state budget prior to adjourning the 2007 session at midnight on June 7 is a major failure for the citizens of Connecticut. The legislative session opened on January 3.

Rep. Scribner noted the state currently has a \$918 million surplus and \$1 billion in the Rainy Day Fund, which is used to cushion the impact of fiscal crisis on taxpayers. With those figures, adopting a biennial budget -- the Legislature's top priority -- should be simple, said Scribner.

"To have five months time and not be able to even present a budget for a vote is astounding," said Rep. Scribner. "The worst part of this mess is that towns and cities depend on the legislature to provide state funding figures for their own local budgets by this time. In some cases, those funds may be able to provide tax reductions or negate increases in local taxes but we are effectively not any closer to having a state budget today than when the session convened in January."

Rep. Scribner said majority party leaders were simply unable to bring forward type of state budget that they had envisioned early in the session and that Republican legislators effectively framed the budget debate. Both Democrat leaders and Governor M. Jodi Rell had proposed budgets during the session that included increases in the state income tax.

On April 24, Rep. Scribner joined House Republicans in proposing a "No Tax Increase Alternative Budget." A subsequent Quinnipiac University Poll showed that the House Republican' budget was overwhelmingly favored by state residents over the two previous proposals and Gov. Rell also agreed that with the latest revenue estimates, it is not necessary to increase taxes.

Rep. Scribner noted the lack of a budget is indicative of a legislative session that began with much promise but ended without addressing many of the issues that had been highlighted as pressing needs.

"We did approve bills regarding energy costs and healthcare but they were so watered down that they really will not have a serious impact," said Rep. Scribner. "The worst

example is the eminent domain legislation that was approved will not even stop a town from taking your property and handing it to a private developer, which was the case in New London. Preventing such incidents was supposed to be the whole point of making a new law.”