

## House Republican Press Release

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### REP. SCRIBNER BACKS CALL FOR OPEN CONTAINER LAW



*Republican Leader of Transportation Committee  
Says Law Would Bring Millions in Transportation  
Aid to State*

HARTFORD- State Rep. David Scribner (R-Brookfield, Bethel) today announced support for the immediate passage of legislation prohibiting open containers of alcohol in vehicles when the legislature meets in its next special session. Rep. Scribner, who serves as both Ranking Member (House Republican Leader) on the Legislature's Transportation Committee and Transportation Bonding Subcommittee, noted that Connecticut is currently losing out on significant federal funds by not having such legislation in place. The Legislature is expected to hold a special session on bonding issues, including transportation bonding projects, within several weeks.

State Senator William Nickerson (R-Greenwich) has long been a vocal advocate for banning open containers of alcohol in vehicles and State Rep. John Frey (R-Ridgefield) recently called for the passage of such legislation during the upcoming special session. Since 2000, Connecticut has had to divert \$45.95 million in federal funds away from highway maintenance programs and into "lower priority safety programs" such as drunken-driving prevention because it has failed to enact a law prohibiting open containers of alcohol in vehicles.

Rep. Scribner noted that during the 2007 legislative session, several bills to enact such a law died during the committee process.

"This is a law that is overdue and should be addressed during the upcoming special session," said Rep. Scribner, who also serves as the State Team Leader to Address Underage Drinking. "An open container of alcohol in a vehicle can clearly lead to an intoxicated motorist and passage of this law is just common sense. However, the fact that

we continue to lose out on millions of dollars in federal transportation funding means we can no longer afford to wait to enact this legislation.”

Rep. Scribner noted that following the recent Minnesota bridge collapse, many people have called for increased funding for transportation infrastructure improvements in Connecticut. Approving a ban on open containers of alcohol in vehicles would help the state obtain funds for such projects without increasing taxes, he said.