

## House Republican Press Release

February 1, 2007  
Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **Rep. Williams: Pass Conservation Legislation Now to Lower Energy Costs for Consumers**



#### *Legislature Should Act Quickly on Measures Likely to Gain Bipartisan Support*

With energy prices in Connecticut at record-high levels, the state legislature needs to act quickly on conservation measures that will help lower costs for consumers, state Representative Sean Williams, R-68<sup>th</sup> District, said today.

“There is broad bipartisan agreement on several conservation measures that could pass the state House and Senate tomorrow if they were put to a vote as individual bills,” said Representative Williams, R-68<sup>th</sup> District, the House Ranking Member (Republican Leader) on the General Assembly’s Energy and Technology Committee.

“CL&P and United Illuminating customers are tightening their belts to find a way to pay their monthly utility bills, which for some ratepayers could mean electricity bills that go up by as much as 50 percent,” Representative Williams said. “Several measures that we’ve discussed over the past year could provide both short- and long-term relief to Connecticut’s rate-shocked consumers. I believe we should act on them within the next few weeks.”

Some of those proposals include:

#### Tax Exemptions for Energy Efficient Products

- Making permanent a previously-enacted exemption from the state sales tax on home energy conservation improvements, including the installation of programmable thermostats, insulation, windows and doors that meet energy star standards, window film, and weather stripping.

“Those exemptions are scheduled to expire June 30, 2007,” Representative Williams said. “They need to be extended to encourage consumers to continue making their homes more energy-efficient. If more homeowners make energy conservation improvements, it will lower their monthly utility bills and reduce overall energy consumption in Connecticut.”

- Exempting compact fluorescent light bulbs from the state sales tax.

“Compact fluorescent light bulbs use two-thirds less electricity than conventional incandescent bulbs,” Representative Williams said. “Exempting them from the sales tax will encourage more consumers to purchase them – perhaps for the first time. When they see the savings reflected in their electricity bills, more people will continue to choose

them.”

#### Common Sense Conservation Measures

- Providing \$500 rebates for the replacement of older gas, propane, and oil furnaces, and boilers that are not energy efficient.
- Creating incentives for homeowners to replace old air conditioners with energy efficient ones.
- Establishing Green Building Standards for state buildings. Requiring them to be energy efficient will save taxpayer dollars by reducing power demands from state-owned buildings.
- Enacting incentives to encourage Connecticut companies to install alternative power generation facilities (such as distributed generation systems) on their properties.

“Providing incentives to the private sector to invest in distributed generation systems makes sense. Wider use of distributed generation systems will provide reliable power supplies to companies that are heavy energy users and significantly reduce overall power demands in Connecticut,” Representative Williams said. “When the demand for electricity generated by our state’s inefficient centralized power plants decreases, it will help hold down energy costs for ratepayers throughout Connecticut.”