

Press Release

March 10, 2009

**HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIP LEGISLATION PASSES  
INSURANCE COMMITTEE  
SPEAKER DONOVAN SAYS BILL WILL HELP TOWNS, SMALL  
BUSINESSES, NON-PROFITS; LAMENTS LACK OF REPUBLICAN  
SUPPORT**

House Speaker Christopher G. Donovan (D-Meriden) applauded the Insurance and Real Estate Committee's passage of legislation establishing the Connecticut Healthcare Partnership ([HB 6582](#)).

The legislation would allow municipalities, small businesses and non-profits to voluntarily join the state employee health plan, creating a large pool of insured lives with increased bargaining power and lower costs.

"The healthcare partnership proposal would save state dollars and provide the economic relief our towns, small businesses and non-profit providers have been asking for." Speaker Donovan said. "Despite being the economic foundation of Connecticut's economy, small businesses in particular are struggling to provide affordable healthcare to their employees. This bill will help them stretch their dollars further and succeed in the face of financial challenges."

The bill passed the committee on a party line vote of [14-5](#).

"At a time when community providers are struggling to provide essential services, the Healthcare Partnership proposal could help address growing costs and improve our ability to provide core services to Connecticut's most vulnerable citizens," said Alyssa Goduti, vice president for Public Policy at the Connecticut Community Providers Association.

Speaker Donovan added, "I am disappointed to see the Republicans again this year working to deny the taxpayers of this state access to the high quality health insurance that they enjoy as legislators."

Doubly disappointing, Speaker Donovan said, is the fact that the Republicans voted against the advice of their own expert. Governor M. Jodi Rell invited David Osborne, expert in budgeting and improving government performance, to speak with legislators several weeks ago. Osborne advocated for the creation of a statewide healthcare purchasing pool as a mechanism for containing costs and stimulating competition for better benefits at lower prices.

Speaker Donovan thanked Senator Joseph Crisco and Representative Steve Fontana, Insurance and Real Estate Committee co-chairs, for their leadership on the legislation.

Speaker Donovan championed a similar bill a year ago, where it passed both the House and Senate but was vetoed by Governor Rell. At the time, the Governor indicated her willingness to have further discussions on the legislation. Since mid-January, the Speaker and Lieutenant Governor Michael Fedele have been meeting regularly to discuss health care initiatives, including the Connecticut Healthcare Partnership.