

## From The House

### House Tackles Cyber-Crime

Following this month's global cyber attack that infected 200,000 computers across 150 countries, the Connecticut House of Representatives unanimously passed House Bill 7304 to increase penalties for cyber-criminals.

The legislation now heads to the state Senate for consideration. Under the bill, computer extortion by ransomware would be classified as a felony. Criminals use ransom ware to either encrypt a computer user's files and documents, or halt an entire computer system. A ransom would later be issued requiring those affected to pay to get their documents back or into their computer. On May 12, a ransomware worm targeted deficiencies in Microsoft Windows computers and forced hospitals and clinics across the world to cancel appointments and divert ambulances. Car factories, shops, schools, and delivery giant FedEx Corp. were also affected. As national leaders fear that a second cyber attack is coming, there are a number of precautions you can take to safeguard your computers:

- [Update the patches](#) that hold vulnerabilities in the Microsoft system.
- Avoid opening any suspicious attachments or links.
- Use a reputable security/anti-virus software.

While computer extortion has been increasing at an alarming rate, we have not been affected by it here in Connecticut. But rather than reacting to every crisis, we need to be proactive. This legislation, if approved, is just one of the measures we can take to crack down on cyber-criminals in the state.