

House Republican Press Release

September 20, 2007  
Press Office: 860-240-8700

**DEMOCRATS REJECT TOUGHER REPEAT FELON LAWS IN  
WAKE OF CHESHIRE TRAGEDY**



*REFUSE REPUBLICANS EFFORTS TO  
TIGHTEN 'THREE STRIKES' PROPOSAL  
DESPITE HIGH COURT RULING*

HARTFORD – Despite a Connecticut Supreme Court ruling striking down portions of the state’s persistent felon laws, and growing public outrage over the brutal, tragic murders of a Cheshire family by two paroled felons in July, Democrats today rejected House Republican attempts to toughen the laws and correct unconstitutional flaws.

Instead, the Democrats called two special legislative sessions to pass a state contracting bill and borrow \$3.1 billion more for major capital projects and so-called earmarked items for individual districts.

“It is unfortunate that despite the public outrage over this tragedy in Cheshire, and the Supreme Court ruling just weeks ago, the Democratic majority instead chose to address the contracting issue that 99 percent of the state knows nothing about and really does not care about,” House Republican Leader Rep. Lawrence F. Cafero Jr. of Norwalk said. The murders of three members of the Petit family on July 23 have focused attention on the holes in the criminal justice system that allowed repeat criminals to be eligible for parole.

Republicans want to classify burglary as a violent offense and fall under the Three Strikes statutes that could send future felons to life in prison.

Cafero said that at the very least, the technical flaws in the current laws outline by the Supreme Court should be addressed immediately and fixed as the high court suggested.

“We continue to hear that the Democrats are in agreement with us in many areas of the persistent felon statutes. The public is demanding action and we have a road map from the court to make the changes. We should act now,” Cafero said.

He noted that 45,000 people have signed a petition in support of the tougher laws since the murders.