

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Ferrari: Democrats block GOP efforts to strengthen repeat offender law



HARTFORD – During a special legislative session on Thursday, Sept. 20, the House Republican caucus put forth a responsible initiative to help provide and ensure public safety for all Connecticut residents. In a most unfortunate turn of events, the Democratic majority rebuffed GOP efforts to bring a three strikes bill up for debate on the House floor.

Despite a recent 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 instead opted to call 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 the Democratic leadership will not bring this issue before the General Assembly. I know many of my colleagues from the other side of the aisle would be very interested in making changes to the status quo. If there ever was a non-partisan issue, this is it,” said Rep. Ferrari.

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

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.

“The General Assembly should always be willing and even eager to consider public safety issues. We are addressing safety issues regarding Route 44 in Avon, which we should be doing. Isn't how we handle violent criminals at least as important?” added Rep. Ferrari.