

## House Republican Press Release

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### **Rep. Hamzy: Fight to Enact ‘Three Strikes’ Bill Killed by Judiciary Committee Democrats Not Over**



#### *Republican Legislators will Force Votes on Bill by House, Senate, Later this Spring*

The effort to enact a measure to require life sentences for three-time repeat violent felony offenders is not over, despite a party-line vote on the Democrat-controlled Judiciary Committee today to kill the House Republican bill, state Representative William A. Hamzy said today.

The Judiciary Committee voted 25-16 to reject the proposal, which would impose mandatory life sentences on criminals convicted three times of violent crimes such as murder, rape or kidnapping. All Republicans on the committee voted for the Three Strikes bill (**House Bill 5915**).

“Despite strong support throughout Connecticut – and in Bristol and Plymouth - for legislation to get tough on repeat violent offenders, the state legislature’s Judiciary Committee, which is dominated by Democrat legislators, voted to kill our proposal to require life sentences for violent felony offenders who are convicted for a third time for crimes such as murder, rape or kidnapping,” said Representative Hamzy, R-78<sup>th</sup> District, a committee member who voted for the measure.

House Republican legislators first called for enactment of a ‘three strikes and you’re out law’ after two paroled burglars allegedly broke into Dr. William A. Petit Jr.’s home in Cheshire last summer, assaulted and severely injured Dr. Petit, and murdered his wife Jennifer Hawke-Petit, and their two daughters, Hayley and Michaela.

“The committee’s vote today must have been especially disappointing for relatives of Dr. Petit and his late wife and daughters,” Representative Hamzy said, adding that Dr. Petit’s sister, Johanna Petit Chapman, testified in favor of the bill at a Judiciary Committee public hearing earlier this month.

Petit Chapman told committee members the Petit and Hawke families support the enactment of a meaningful three strikes law.

“The majority Democrats put the people of Connecticut on notice during the special legislative session in January – and again today - that they oppose putting a tough three strikes law on the books,” Representative Hamzy said. “In the months immediately following the home invasion murders, they rebuffed our efforts to hold a special session to put a tough three strikes law and other anti-crime measures on the book.”

“My constituents in Bristol and Plymouth strongly support enactment of a three strikes law, as do thousands of other citizens throughout our state,” Representative Hamzy said. “We understand that there are hundreds of violent repeat offenders in Connecticut who are simply incapable of being rehabilitated - no matter how many times they are arrested, convicted and paroled. The only solution to the threat posed by violent repeat offenders is to put them in prison for life, where they cannot harm law-abiding citizens.”

“Our three strikes proposal is not going away,” Representative Hamzy said. “I fully expect that we will visit this issue again through floor votes in the state House and state Senate later this spring. If the majority party chooses to vote it down again, the people of Connecticut, many of whom are represented by Democrat legislators at the Connecticut General Assembly, will have another opportunity to see just how much – or how little - their state senators and state representatives care about protecting them from the dangerous criminals in our midst.”

Representative Hamzy said 91.7 percent of his Plymouth constituents and 90.9 percent of his Bristol constituents who responded to a survey he mailed to them recently support enactment of a meaningful three strikes law.