

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

### Harkins Votes for Criminal Justice Reforms



#### **Majority Party Rejects Tougher “Three Strikes” Provision Against Repeat Offenders**

HARTFORD- State Representative John Harkins (R-Stratford) today voted in favor of legislation to increase penalties for home invasions, saying it closed some loopholes in state anti-crime laws but failed to impose tougher penalties on repeat violent offenders, including repeat burglars.

The state legislature, meeting in special session nearly six months to the day after a Cheshire home invasion and triple murder shocked the state, adopted many of the provision recommended by the governor’s task force and supported by most legislators. The House of Representatives passed the measure at 2:30 in the morning today.

Provisions include:

- Creating a new crime of home invasion
- Requiring someone convicted of second degree burglary or home invasion to serve at least 85 percent of his or her sentence
- Altering the makeup of the state Board of Pardons and Parole
- Limiting parole relief by administrative review

The Democratic majority rejected Republican efforts in the Senate and House to enact a “three strikes” law that would send repeat violent felony offenders to jail for life.

“While there were a number of things that we could have included to make this bill stronger, I am comfortable that a good first step was taken this morning,” said Representative Harkins. “There is no question that a tough ‘Three Strikes’ portion would have improved the bill we passed last night, and I for one want to see us look at this further in the regular 2008 session.”

The bill now heads to Governor M. Jodi Rell for her signature.