

House Republican Press Release

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REP. O'NEILL VOTES IN FAVOR OF TOUGHER REPEAT FELON LAWS



MAJORITY PARTY DEFEATS 'THREE STRIKES' BILL IN COMMITTEE

HARTFORD –As Ranking Member (House Republican Leader) of the Legislature's Judiciary Committee, State Rep. Arthur J. O'Neill, R-Southbury, today led debate in favor of legislation that would strengthen the state's

"Three Strikes" Law and voted for the bill in committee. The proposal was defeated 25-16 in a largely party-line vote.

The bill defeated would have amended the Persistent Dangerous Felony Offender Statutes by requiring that persons convicted of three dangerous felonies serve life in prison without the possibility of release.

It would also have required prosecutors to pursue a third conviction under persistent dangerous felony offender provisions for repeat violent offenders who can be sentenced to life in prison without eligibility for parole or publicly state why they are not doing so. Many times, prosecutors can use the current persistent dangerous felony offender provisions but fail to do so, said Rep. O'Neill.

"I am disappointed that today the Judiciary Committee failed to pass a real three strikes law that would have protected the people of Connecticut from dangerous repeat felons," said Rep. O'Neill. "Opponents of this legislation, like Goldilocks, alternately complain the proposal is too harsh and too kind to violent criminals. But unlike Goldilocks, they cannot seem to find a version that is 'just right.'"

During a January Special Session, Rep. O'Neill also voted in favor of legislation that: Appropriates money for sex offender reentry services in Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven; Creates a new crime of home invasion; Makes someone convicted of second degree burglary or home invasion ineligible for parole until he or she has served 85 percent of their sentence; Makes major changes to the parole process, including reconfiguration of the Board of Pardons and Paroles and placing new limits on eligibility of parole and furloughs and establishes global positioning system (GPS) monitoring of additional parolees and requires additional staffing for monitoring.