

## House Republican Press Release

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### **REP. SCRIBNER JOINS REPUBLICAN LEADERS IN CALLING FOR SPECIAL SESSION TO STRENGTHEN CONNECTICUT'S PERSISTENT OFFENDER LAWS, THREE STRIKES POLICY AND PAROLE PROCESS**



HARTFORD- State Rep. David Scribner (R-Brookfield, Bethel) today joined Legislative Republican leaders in calling for legislative reforms aimed at toughening jail sentences on Connecticut's most serious repeat offenders.

Republican leaders again called on Senate President Don Williams and House Speaker Jim Amann to convene a special session of the General Assembly no later than October 23 to strengthen Connecticut's persistent offender laws, reclassify burglary of a residence as a violent crime, fix the state's parole processes, and enact a true Three Strikes policy – one that eliminates judicial discretion and requires life imprisonment for a third serious felony conviction.

“What we have seen in recent regular sessions is that some of the most serious legislation is done in the final days—that would put us at May 2008 before any reforms are passed if we do not hold a special session,” said Rep. Scribner. “There is no doubt that we have to reform jail sentences and the parole system to protect people from career criminals and we cannot afford to wait well into next year to do so.”

Republicans cited Tuesday's state Supreme Court decision, which found part of Connecticut's current persistent offender law to be unconstitutional, as further evidence that the state's laws pertaining to career criminals need to change now.

Tuesday's Supreme Court decision ordered that the jury, not the judge, decide if Arnold Bell, a lifetime criminal most recently convicted of assault for shooting a New Haven police officer, be required to serve a longer sentence. The decision demonstrates Connecticut routinely grants light sentences and early parole to career criminals who repeatedly commit serious felonies.