

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Williams: Heightened Burglary Penalties, New Home Invasion Law, will Protect Families, Save Lives



Tough 'Three Strikes and You're Out' Law Still Needed in CT

Although legislation approved this week by the state legislature stiffening penalties for burglary, creating a new home invasion law, and closing loopholes in the state's parole and criminal justice systems will mean Connecticut families can rest easier at night, the state still needs a tough 'three strikes and you're out' law to protect law-abiding citizens from repeat violent offenders, state Representative Sean Williams said today.

Representative Williams, R-68th District, who voted for the anti-crime package approved by the state Senate Tuesday and by the state House early Wednesday morning, also supported a Republican proposal to create a meaningful 'three strikes' law that would have required dangerous repeat offenders who commit a third violent crime to be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of release.

The majority Democrats, who control both the state House and state Senate, rejected the Republican three strikes proposal.

"Although I supported the anti-crime package the General Assembly approved this week because I thought the tougher penalties for burglary and the new law that makes home invasion a crime were needed to give Connecticut families more protection from criminals who break into their homes, I still strongly believe we need a three strikes law that targets repeat dangerous offenders," Representative Williams said.

"Violent offenders who have been given the opportunity time and again to rehabilitate themselves but continue to prey on innocent, law-abiding citizens and their families do not deserve third, fourth and fifth chances," Representative Williams said. "They have made a conscious decision to live outside the law and proven they are incapable of being rehabilitated. When they commit a third violent crime, it is time to say 'enough is enough' and put them behind bars for life to prevent them from terrorizing, maiming or killing again."

"I was shocked and disappointed when the majority Democrats rejected our three strikes proposal," Representative Williams said. "Repeat violent offenders are hardened criminals who are almost certain to offend again if allowed back on the streets. Law-abiding Connecticut citizens and their families need the added protection a real three

strikes law provides. My Republican colleagues and I will continue our efforts to put this law on the books during the 2008 legislative session and beyond if necessary.”

The House Republican three strikes amendment would have required that after a third conviction for a dangerous felony, a violent criminal would be sentenced to a term of life imprisonment without the possibility of release, Representative Williams said.

The dangerous felonies would have included murder other than a capital felony, manslaughter, arson, kidnapping, robbery in the first or second degree, robbery involving an occupied motor vehicle, assault constituting a felony, sexual assault in the first or third degree, home invasion, burglary in the first or second degree, or stalking in the first degree, he said.

Highlights of the anti-crime package adopted by the state legislature this week include:

- Creating a new crime of home invasion.
- Requiring individuals convicted of second degree burglary or home invasion to serve at least 85 percent of their sentences.
- Altering the makeup, qualification requirements and appointment process for the state Board of Pardons and Paroles, and prohibiting parole hearings from being conducted unless the board’s chairperson certifies that all pertinent information has been provided to the board or is unavailable.
- Eliminating the parole administrative review procedure, making it more difficult for dangerous violent offenders to be released from prison prematurely.
- Requiring global positioning system monitoring of 300 additional parolees.

Requiring the Judicial Branch to post certain arrest warrant information on the internet.