



A Better Way Foundation is a Connecticut non-profit organization that is dedicated to a sensible shift in drug policy from one of incarceration to substance abuse treatment and public health.

**James Butler - Clean Slate Committee Co-chair Testimony
Judiciary Committee**

- Raised SB 641: An Act Concerning Repeat Violent Offenders (oppose)
- Raised HB 5876 An Act Concerning Mandatory Life Sentences for Repeat Violent Offenders (oppose)
- Raised HB 5915 An Act Concerning Persistent Dangerous Felony Offenders (oppose)
- HB 5035 An Act Concerning Repeat Violent Offenders, Burglary and Pardons and Parole (oppose)

Recidivism is one of the largest contributors to overcrowding. The storyline is familiar; a person gets released from prison, but has no job; no skills; no money; and no place to live. That person resorts to crime and pretty soon is locked up again. Of the estimated 650,000 inmates released annually, two-thirds are re-arrested within three years and more than half end up behind bars again, according to the Department of Justice.

Because of the bureaucratic bungling in Connecticut, "The Parole Board did not receive the sentencing transcript that should have come from the prosecutor's office." Joshua Komisarjevsky or Steven Hayes failed a drug test while in the halfway house and was still granted parole. As a result, I am here today opposing the four three strike bills: SB 641, HB 5876, HB 5915, and HB 5035. The State of Connecticut is running a criminal factory, a biased bureaucracy and criminal justice system. In Connecticut the prison system is long on people and short on space.

While Governor M. Jodi Rell continues to give us Blacks and Hispanics, the in your face treatment, by showing she is going to make sure and reassure that White Connecticut is her only concerned for safety and well being, by suggesting such punitive laws like three-strikes. What about are safety and well being?

The three strikes law is a reckless law, in a biased State first, a biased Bureaucracy and Criminal Justice system. Data released as of January 29, 2008 and prepared by the Director of Connecticut Statistical Analysis center. Stated the prison population had reached 19,875 an all time high. Last June that figure stood at 18,939. Mr. Cox also states that prison populations could climb above 25,000 inmates by 2012. Under the lowest estimate prison populations would approach 20,000.

On January 30, 2008 in the Yale Daily News Chris Cooper a spokesman for Rell was quoted as saying that the Governor will not be proposing new prison construction.

There is no doubt in my mind that people of color; this means Blacks, Hispanic, and any other race in the State of Connecticut other than the Anglo-Saxon, will be looking at three strikes laws staring them smack dab in the face. The biased system of Connecticut will not show any consideration nor fairness with this law in order to fulfill the investment in the State of Connecticut's criminal factory.

On January 27, 2007 Mike Lawlor was quoted as saying that the Connecticut's prison can only hold 17,500 inmates. Now take into account Stephen Cox's Analysis as of January 29, 2008. Gee I think Rell said she wasn't going to build any more prisons!

In the Wall Street Journal with Gary Fields on December 21, 2005 Theresa Lantz was quoted as saying, "Strict adherence to tough sentencing laws became incredibly expensive without necessarily enhancing public safety." Three strikes will not only be for violent offenders. The intention of a biased system will also use it on nonviolent offenders who have records or lengthy records period.