



STATE OF CONNECTICUT



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

John A. Danaher III
Commissioner

Lieutenant Edwin S. Henion
Chief of Staff

March 12, 2008

Rep. Michael P. Lawlor, Co-Chairman
Sen. Andrew J. McDonald, Co-Chairman
Judiciary Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

**HB 5035 AN ACT CONCERNING REPEAT VIOLENT OFFENDERS, BURGLARY
AND PARDONS AND PAROLE**

The Department of Public Safety supports this bill.

This bill presents, in section one, a well defined three strikes law that should be part of the public safety policy of the State of Connecticut. The applicability is limited to individuals who have been convicted three times of the most violent and dangerous crimes: murder, manslaughter, arson, kidnapping, robbery in the first or second degree, robbery involving an occupied motor vehicle, assault constituting a felony, sexual assault constituting a felony, home invasion, burglary in the first or second degree, stalking in the first degree or any felony involving the use of a deadly weapon. Three convictions of the most violent and dangerous crimes is not a mere problem of recidivism. A criminal who falls within these strict criteria should be imprisoned for life as a matter of public safety.

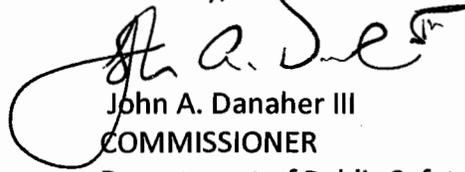
This bill also provides appropriate increased penalties for those individuals who are convicted of burglary and those who aid and abet these criminal acts. We have come to a heightened consciousness of the violence and potential violence inherent in burglary when another person is present in the dwelling. Connecticut statutes should reflect the seriousness of these crimes and it is appropriate that section 53a-101 be amended to include in the definition of burglary in the first degree any unlawful entry with intent to commit a crime while a person other than a participant in the crime is present in the dwelling.

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The bill also provides a mechanism in which law enforcement officials are notified prior to a parole hearing. This would provide an opportunity to make comment and provide facts and details that may assist parole board members. Criminal justice is most effective when all components of the system are communicating and working together to make the most informed decision possible in the interest of public safety.

The Department of Public safety also supports the limitations and statutory clarifications as to when an absolute pardon may be granted.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Danaher III". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a distinct "III" at the end.

John A. Danaher III

COMMISSIONER

Department of Public Safety