

# The Connecticut General Assembly



For IMMEDIATE Release  
Monday, September 29, 2008

Contact: Rep. Mike Lawlor  
(203) 314-6307

## **JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TO HOLD OVERSIGHT HEARING ON 2008 CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS**

*Progress Report on Implementation of Reforms to be Received at Hearing*

The co-chairmen of the legislature's Judiciary Committee, **State Senator Andrew J. McDonald** (D-Stamford) and **State Representative Mike Lawlor** (D-East Haven), announced today that on Thursday, October 16, the committee will hold an oversight hearing on the implementation of the criminal justice reforms that the legislature passed earlier this year.

They are convening this hearing with the purpose of receiving a progress report from the state agencies responsible for implementation of the crime prevention measures.

The two reform packages that were signed into law earlier this year consisted of a variety of modifications to the system including the formation of a new full-time parole board, stricter standards for parole reviews, the construction of secured housing for sex offenders, a tougher and more effective "three-strikes" law for repeat offenders, the creation of the crime of "home invasion," the increased use of GPS for offenders, and a number of other changes.

"Last year at this time, there was a tremendous amount of concern about crime and public safety, and the legislature acted swiftly by passing a comprehensive series of tough, new criminal justice measures," Sen. McDonald said. "This oversight hearing is being held to assess the implementation of the reforms to date. We also want to review the appropriations for these measures to ensure that the reforms continue to be adequately funded in these tough economic times."

"It has been months since the reforms have taken effect. We have heard conflicting reports about the extent to which they have been implemented. We want to hear directly from the responsible agency heads about the progress so far," Rep. Lawlor said. "In addition, the prison population continues to soar despite the governor's projections that the total number of inmates would have declined significantly at this point. This has serious implications for the current budget. Some estimates are putting the Department of Corrections budget shortfall at more than \$30 million. In the interest of public safety, these issues must be addressed."

Invited guests to testify will include representatives of the Office of Policy and Management, the Department of Corrections, the Board of Pardons and Paroles, the Judicial Branch, the Office of the Chief State's Attorney, and others.

Members of the Appropriations Committee are also being invited to attend the hearing, which will begin at 1:00 P.M. in Room 2C of the Legislative Office Building in Hartford.

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