



MEDIA RELEASE

**Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
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TOUGHER LAWS TO GUARD AGAINST SEX PREDATORS

Strengthen laws governing the ongoing imprisonment of high-risk sex offenders to better protect the community will this week be introduced into NSW Parliament, said Attorney General John Hatzistergos.

Mr Hatzistergos said the Crimes (Serious Sex Offenders) Act 2006, which relates to Continuing Detention Orders (CDOs) and Extended Supervision Orders (ESOs) for high-risk sex offenders, will be broadened to capture more offenders and ensure the continued success of the scheme.

"The laws target sex-offenders who refuse to rehabilitate in jail or who continue to be a serious threat to the community even after their custodial sentence expires," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"Since the laws were introduced, NSW has successfully applied to the Supreme Court of NSW to keep eight high-risk sex offenders behind bars or put on strict supervision orders if released.

"Tightening the laws will give the community an added layer of protection from sex offenders who have a high risk of re-offending."

Mr Hatzistergos said crimes including assault with intent to have sexual intercourse as well as persistent sexual abuse of a person aged 16 to 17 will now be added to the list of crimes that make an offender eligible for a CDO.

He said no offender convicted of these crimes has been let out of prison since CDOs were introduced.

"The lemma Government is being proactive to ensure that continuing detention orders and extended supervision orders can apply to all potential high-risk sex offenders."

Currently, some of the crimes on the list which can keep an offender in jail even after their sentence has expired are aggravated indecent assault; sexual assault and sexual assault with a child under 10.

Mr Hatzistergos said in addition, the Supreme Court will now be able to seek reports from registered psychologists when determining whether sex offenders should be subjected to further orders. Until now, the court only had the power to request reports from psychiatrists.

"An additional report from a psychologist could be useful, particularly in cases involving offenders with an intellectual disability. Psychologists are trained to assess cognitive functioning and may be able to provide a greater insight into an offender's thought processes."

Mr Hatzistergos said applications for CDOs and ESOs were carefully considered, given the serious deprivation of liberty involved.

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