



MEDIA RELEASE

**Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Justice
Minister for Industrial Relations**

Wednesday, November 26, 2008

NEW SEX CRIME LAWS INTRODUCED TO PARLIAMENT

New sex crime legislation which will create new offences and increase penalties will be introduced into NSW Parliament today, said NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos.

The new laws come out of a report into sexual offences and child pornography by the Sentencing Council, Chaired by former Justice James Wood.

The report made dozens of recommendations including doubling the maximum penalty for possessing child pornography to 10 years, while creating a new aggravated offence of having sex with a child under 10, which will carry a maximum sentence of life in prison.

“Since Mr Wood handed up his report last month, we have moved quickly to draft these laws and have them introduced to Parliament,” said Mr Hatzistergos.

“The laws will strengthen our ability to safeguard adults and children from sexual predators.”

The laws will create new offences to target sex crimes which take advantage of new developments in camera technology, such as “upskirting” where people are secretly filmed, as well as filming a person engaged in a private act without their consent.

The laws will also increase the penalties for prostituting a child aged under 14, up from 10 years to 14 years imprisonment.

‘Pseudo’ images, where pictures are manipulated or pixillated to make it more difficult to identify the children, will also be recognised as child pornography under the laws.

Offenders will also not be able to use their previous ‘good character’ as a mitigating factor in sentencing, where it is these very characteristics that have enabled them to win the trusts of family and victims to commit their crimes.

Media Contact: Simon Crittle 0400 477 924