



Ray Williams MP

Member for Castle Hill

Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier and Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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TOUGH ANIMAL CRUELTY PENALTIES UNLEASHED IN CASTLE HILL

Member for Castle Hill Ray Williams MP has today welcomed the NSW Government's crusade against those who harm animals by increasing its penalties for animal cruelty.

Mr Williams said the changes would see an up-to eight-fold increase to current penalties under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (POCTA).

"There is not much more of a despicable act than harming, neglecting or interfering with our beloved animals," Mr Williams said.

"Minister for Agriculture Adam Marshall has announced that the NSW Government is set to dramatically ramp up punishments for animal cruelty offenders, and this is something I welcome.

"We know that most people in the Castle Hill region, and right across the State, do the right thing and look after their animals, but unfortunately there are some who don't. These are who these new penalties are targeted at.

"Once passed, these laws will be the toughest set of penalties in the country" Mr Williams said. "Anyone in Castle Hill caught doing the wrong thing will now face dramatically increased financial penalties and gaol time."

The proposed increases would introduce the following penalties:

- Cruelty – increased from \$5,500 fine (current) to \$44,000 and/or 12 months' imprisonment for individuals and \$220,000 for corporations for each individual act of cruelty;
- Aggravated Cruelty – increased from \$22,000 fine (current) to \$110,000 and/or 2 years' imprisonment for individuals and \$550,000 for corporations for each individual act;
- Fail to Provide Food & Shelter – Increased from \$5,500 fine (current) to \$16,500 and/or six months' imprisonment for individuals and \$82,500 for corporations for each individual act.

Mr Williams said the changes come off the back of the NSW Government's crackdown on illegal puppy factories announced last week.

"We will work with our enforcement agencies, the NSW Police, RSPCA and Animal Welfare League, to ensure these harsh new penalties are applied."

MEDIA: June Belkovskis 8882 9555