

News Release Deputy Premier John Rau

Attorney-General
Minister for Justice Reform
Minister for Planning
Minister for Housing and Urban Development
Minister for Industrial Relations

Thursday, 8 May 2014

Convicted thugs must serve jail time

Dangerous and violent criminals sentenced to imprisonment must serve some time in prison under tough new laws.

Attorney General John Rau said he has introduced into Parliament new laws that limit the court's power to hand out fully suspended sentences for manslaughter and assaults that cause serious harm.

"This is about strengthening South Australia's sentencing laws to better protect the community from serious and violent offenders," he said.

"Under this new law, reckless thugs who receive a prison sentence of two years or more are no longer eligible to receive a fully suspended sentence.

"This provision will apply to offenders who are convicted of a manslaughter or causing serious harm.

"Until now these offenders each had the benefit of receiving a fully suspended sentence.

"Under these new laws, this won't happen."

The maximum penalty for a person who is found guilty of causing, or intending to cause, serious harm to another is 20 years imprisonment, and 25 years imprisonment for an aggravated offence. A person convicted of manslaughter can receive up to lifetime imprisonment

"The South Australian community expects that serious violent offenders serve time behind bars," Mr Rau said.

"What this law will do is ensure that these type of offenders actually serve some time in prison.

"This was a commitment we made during the recent election campaign and I was pleased to introduce this Bill in our first week back in Parliament."