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**MEDIA RELEASE**

***Inquiry into law reform issues regarding synthetic drugs***

Growing community concern around the use of synthetic drugs designed to replicate the effects of illicit drugs has prompted the Legislative Assembly Committee on Legal Affairs to conduct an inquiry into the issue. The Committee is particularly concerned about whether current drug laws adequately cover synthetic cannabinoid products.

Synthetic cannabinoid products are designed to mimic the effects of the illegal drug cannabis and commonly go by names such as Kronic, Northern Lights, Spice, Kaos and Voodoo. These substances are sold over the internet and in specialty stores.

The Chair of the Committee, Mr Dominic Perrottet MP, said 'reports indicate that products containing synthetic cannabinoids are of increasing concern to the community.'

Mr Perrottet further commented that 'difficulties lie in effectively prohibiting these types of substances.'

Under current laws, drugs can continually be listed as prohibited, however the chemicals used in synthetic cannabinoid products can be changed so that manufacturers can reproduce modified versions that circumvent existing laws.

'We're hoping to have input from legal and law enforcement representatives, drug experts, NGOs, health groups, and the broader community to acquire ideas on how we can strengthen current laws,' Mr Perrottet said.

Other Australian jurisdictions, including Victoria and Queensland, are also considering ways to regulate the use of these substances.

The Committee is currently inviting submissions to the Inquiry. Submissions can be emailed to [legalaffairs@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:legalaffairs@parliament.nsw.gov.au), lodged via the Committee's website at <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/legalaffairs> or mailed to: The Chair, Committee on Legal Affairs, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

The closing date for submissions is Thursday 5 April 2012

*For further comments please contact Mr Dominic Perrottet MP on (02) 9634 7474*