



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

MEDIA RELEASE

Report calls on government to strengthen NSW's response to human trafficking

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

19 October 2017

An Upper House committee inquiring into human trafficking in NSW tabled its report in parliament today. The committee Chair, Hon Paul Green MLC stated 'Human trafficking is a modern form of slavery and is a transnational crime that preys on society's most vulnerable. Recent statistics indicate that over 4,000 people in Australia are victims of some form of slavery. The recommendations in this report strengthen NSW's response to human trafficking and call on the Australian Government to take further strategic action.'

Mr Green said, 'First and foremost this report recommends for the establishment of a Modern Slavery Act for Australia, similar to 2015 legislation in the United Kingdom. The committee also recommends that both Australia and New South Wales appoint independent Anti-Slavery Commissioners to facilitate a coordinated approach between levels of government.'

'Measures to eradicate slavery in the supply chains of our local and global businesses were also recommended, as governments need to provide a legislative framework for businesses to report on the ethical nature of their supply chains. In addition, governments themselves need to investigate their own supply chains and slave proof them.' Mr Green stated.

Mr Green also said, 'The committee was appalled by evidence regarding forced child marriages and the growth of child cybersex trafficking. Recommendations were made to criminalise forced child marriages in NSW to assist in drawing awareness to the crime and to introduce punitive measures at both state and federal levels to punish persons guilty of child cybersex trafficking'.

'We also believe that a more compassionate approach to supporting victims is required. For this reason the committee made a number of recommendations to develop a victim centred approach rather than focusing on the criminal justice process. In addition, greater education and awareness of modern slavery is needed among front-line workers such as police officers and health professionals as well as among the wider community.' Mr Green concluded.

The committee will hold a press conference in the Media Room on Level 6 at NSW Parliament at 1.00 pm today. The report and other inquiry documents are available on the committee's website: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/humantrafficking. The NSW Government must respond to the committee's recommendations within six months.

-ENDS-

For further information please contact Committee Chair, Hon Paul Green MLC, on 9230 3484