

MEDIA RELEASE

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Labor jury sentencing plan won't work

The Victorian Labor Opposition's plan to give juries a greater say in sentencing will not make the community safer.

Responding to yesterday's announcement by Opposition Leader, Daniel Andrews, of a plan to trial jury recommendations in sentencing, Jesuit Social Services CEO Julie Edwards said, "This proposal is another example of the race to the bottom in law and order policy that has been run by both sides of Victorian politics in recent years. Like so many policies in this area, it is reactionary, and will not make our community a safer place."

Noting the impact that this reform would have on Victoria's criminal justice system, Ms Edwards said, "Victoria's courts are already under immense pressure as a result of recent reforms to sentencing. Mr Andrews' plan will further complicate the sentencing process."

"Each case that comes before criminal courts is unique and we already have a sound justice system that draws on the expertise and discretion of Victoria's judiciary to deal with each case on its merits."

Referring to Sentencing Advisory Council research into community views on sentencing, Ms Edwards noted, "This research has shown that the majority of Victorians are confident that judges impose appropriate sentences in most cases. Furthermore, community views on sentencing are diverse and influenced by factors such as personal experience, values and levels of understanding of crime and how it is reported in the media."

"There is a need for leadership to address the real causes of crime and to implement solutions that make our community a safer place."

Jesuit Social Services is a not-for-profit organisation which works to build a just society by advocating for social change and promoting the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged young people, families and communities.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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