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LIFE SENTENCES FOR EVIL CHILD GANG RECRUITERS

Victorians are rightly appalled by reports of organised crime figures who use children – some intellectually disabled – to carry out crimes like arson and carjacking.

Hiring children to carry out your dirty work for profit is evil.

Legislation introduced into the Victorian Parliament today will create a new aggravated offence of recruiting a child to commit a serious crime.

Perpetrators will face life in prison.

The offence applies whether the crime is carried out by the child or not.

How it works

Recruiting a child to carry out a crime is already an offence, and 64 charges have been laid.

Last year, Labor increased the maximum penalty from 10 to 15 years in prison for this existing offence.

The new aggravated offence takes it further – introducing a maximum life sentence if you recruit children to commit one of 71 specified serious crimes, including arson, carjacking and home invasion.

Maximum penalties set the benchmark for the seriousness of an offence.

When maximums increase, sentencing averages as a whole are more likely to increase.

To make both the existing and new offence easier to prosecute, the legislation also removes the requirement for the offender to know the child is underage.

Victoria Police's Operation Eclipse has seen more than 65 arrests and 370 charges laid in connection to recent arson attacks.

We've given Victoria Police \$5 million to boost tech in the State Command and Coordination Centre.

And with Adult Time for Violent Crime, all age groups know the chance of jail is stronger and sentences are longer.

Jess Wilson's Liberals have a plan to cut \$40 billion from frontline services.

They will cut the Violence Reduction Unit and cut Victoria Police like they did the last time they were in power.

Only Labor has new solutions to make life safer.

Quote attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"Organised crime bosses who recruit kids to torch venues and invade homes deserve no sympathy. They are preying on children and putting Victorians at risk."

Quote attributable to Attorney-General Sonya Kilkenny

"These laws send a clear message – those who recruit children to commit crime will face the full force of the law."

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Quote attributable to Minister for Police Anthony Carbines

“Organised crime groups are recruiting children to do their dirty work – we will not stand by and watch this happen.”