



# Robyn Preston MP

## Member for Hawkesbury

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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Friday, 13 November 2020

### TOUGH ANIMAL CRUELTY PENALTIES UNLEASHED IN HAWKESBURY

Member for Hawkesbury, Robyn Preston MP, has today welcomed the NSW Government's crusade against those who harm animals by increasing its penalties for animal cruelty.

Ms Preston said the changes would see an up-to eight-fold increase to current penalties under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* (POCTA).

"There is not much more of a despicable act than harming, neglecting or interfering with our beloved animals," Ms Preston said.

"Minister for Agriculture Adam Marshall has announced that the NSW Government is set to dramatically ramp up punishments for animal cruelty offenders, and this is something I welcome.

"We know that most people in the Hawkesbury region, and right across the State, do the right thing and look after their animals, but unfortunately there are some who don't. These are who these new penalties are targeted at.

"Once passed, these laws will be the toughest set of penalties in the country."

"Anyone in Hawkesbury caught doing the wrong thing will now face dramatically increased financial penalties and gaol time."

The proposed increases would introduce the following penalties:

- *Cruelty* – increased from \$5,500 fine (current) to \$44,000 and/or 12 months' imprisonment for individuals and \$220,000 for corporations for each individual act of cruelty;
- *Aggravated Cruelty* – increased from \$22,000 fine (current) to \$110,000 and/or 2 years' imprisonment for individuals and \$550,000 for corporations for each individual act;
- *Fail to Provide Food & Shelter* – Increased from \$5,500 fine (current) to \$16,500 and/or six months' imprisonment for individuals and \$82,500 for corporations for each individual act.

Ms Preston said the changes come off the back of the NSW Government's crackdown on illegal puppy factories announced last week.

"We will work with our enforcement agencies, the NSW Police, RSPCA and Animal Welfare League, to ensure these harsh new penalties are applied."