



## **Media release**

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### **Young people who graffiti say crack down approach wont work**

Anti – graffiti legislation being proposed by the Victorian Government simply won't work according to young graffiti artists interviewed by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.

"We have consulted with young people who graffiti and they have stated clearly that tougher penalties will not be an effective deterrent. They have also told us that most young people grow out of marking graffiti within a relatively short time,' said Georgie Ferrari, CEO, Youth Affairs Council of Victoria. 'Given that we know this, it would seem that introducing harsh new punitive measures is not the way forward on this issue, ' Ms Ferrari said.

'As much as Government may wish to reduce the incidence of graffiti, it is our view that finding a solution doesn't warrant breaching people's fundamental rights. Moreover, the results from our focus group tell us that these approaches wont be successful in reducing graffiti' said Ms Ferrari.

Young people who graffiti participated in an anonymous focus group hosted by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, and supported by Crime and Violence Prevention, Department of Justice. The focus group revealed that heavier penalties and the creation of new offences wouldn't stop graffiti, but may in fact encourage it by raising the bar in terms of risk involved in the activity.

The Council understands that the State government is pushing through the legislation for the autumn sitting of parliament despite serious community concern and calls for it to be abandoned. The Council has had a request for a meeting with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and Corrections rejected.

'It is disappointing that Minister Cameron will not meet with YACVic, Youthlaw and VCOSS to further discuss our serious concerns about this draft legislation and to be informed by the research we have conducted' said Ms Ferrari. This is particularly so given the Government's stated commitment to actively listening to the community.

'It would seem that expediency is more important than informed policy making when it comes to responding to graffiti.'

**For further comment contact:** Georgie Ferrari, CEO, Youth Affairs Council of Victoria on 9267 3799 or 0411 484 428.  
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