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**New Laws to Tackle Sentences**

The Northern Territory Government has introduced new laws into Parliament that will give judges in appeal courts greater powers to act on inadequate sentences.

Attorney-General, Delia Lawrie, said the Henderson Government today introduced the *Criminal Law Amendment (Sentencing Appeals) Bill* which will remove the principle of ‘sentencing double jeopardy’.

“The removal the principle of ‘sentencing double jeopardy’ will ensure that justice is better served in the Northern Territory,” Ms Lawrie said.

“Currently when an appeal court decides an appeal against a sentence it is required to take into account the fact that if they increase a sentence, the offender will be sentenced for a second time for the same offence.

“The Director of Public Prosecution has cited the principle of sentencing double jeopardy as ‘a special constraint’ and one of the reasons why he decided not to appeal a recent sentence handed down by the courts, believing it would not succeed.

“The Government believes the trauma and inconvenience of being sentenced twice needs to be weighed up against the overriding interest of the community in seeing offenders being appropriately punished.

“This amendment will ensure that when an appeal court finds that a sentence is manifestly inadequate, they will be able to increase the sentence without taking into consideration that the offender is being sentenced for a second time.

“This will ensure that justice and our community is better served.”

Ms Lawrie said the reform will bring the Territory in line with Western Australia, Victoria and South Australia where the principle of sentencing double jeopardy has been abolished.

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