



MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Industrial Relations

Thursday, May 14, 2009

FIVE KILOMETRE PRO BONO WALK TO MARK LAW WEEK

Attorney General John Hatzistergos will tomorrow (Friday) take part in a five kilometre fundraising walk as part of activities to mark Law Week.

Mr Hatzistergos will be joined on *Law Walk for Justice* by Federal Attorney General Robert McClelland to raise money and awareness for pro-bono work.

“Pro-bono work is an important tradition as it is the legal profession’s way of giving back to the community and helping vulnerable people,” he said.

The walk is a national event raising funds for the Public Interest Law Clearing House. Walks will occur simultaneously in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne on Friday, May 15. The Sydney walk will start and end at the Archibald Fountain in Hyde Park, leaving at 7:00am.

Funds raised will be used by the Clearing House to improve access to justice by facilitating pro bono legal services and undertaking law reform, policy work and legal education.

Mr Hatzistergos said pro-bono work was provided in NSW by organisations including Legal Aid, LawAccess and community legal centres.

Mr Hatzistergos said he was pleased by the announcement on the weekend by the Commonwealth Attorney-General one-off funding to be provided in 08/09 for these legal assistance programs in NSW. These includes:

- \$4.4 million to Legal Aid NSW to assist with funding pressures;
- \$1 million to Community Legal Centres most in need located throughout NSW, and
- \$1.1 million to the Aboriginal Legal Service of NSW and the ACT.

“During these difficult economic times, this announcement is a step in the right direction for disadvantaged members of the NSW community,” said Mr Hatzistergos.

Mr Hatzistergos said pro-bono work was also promoted by the Law Society and Bar Association each maintain a pro-bono referral service, as does the Public Interest Law Clearing House and the NSW Legal Assistance Forum.

In additional, the Attorney General’s Department recently convened the first meeting of key stakeholders to explore what government can do to better coordinate the provision of pro bono services in NSW.

Registration for the pro bono walk is \$10 per walker or \$80 per team of 10 walkers. All walkers are also encouraged to seek sponsors using our sponsorship form. To enter, download a form from www.pilchnsw.org.au

Other Law Week activities across the State are listed at www.lawweek.org.au.