

# OFFICIAL

Legislative Council

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## PETITION

**Number: 674**

**Sponsored by: David Limbrick**

**Directed to: Attorney-General**

**Tabled on: Tuesday, 3 February 2026**

### **Grievance:**

The petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council that violent crime, particularly criminal offences involving the use of weapons such as knives and machetes have become a pressing and critical issue in Victoria. Many residents do not feel safe in their homes or being out and about everyday. This is especially the case for vulnerable Victorians such as elderly people.

The purchase and use of pepper spray by adults, 18 years and over, with no criminal convictions should be legalised to allow individuals the ability to protect themselves, by non-lethal means, should they face a violent confrontation where they are threatened with a weapon. This is the case in Western Australia, and soon to be introduced in the Northern Territory as well.

**The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council call on the Government to legalise the purchase and use of pepper spray, by adults with no criminal convictions, for personal protection by non-lethal means should they face a violent confrontation and are threatened with a weapon.**

### **Reply:**

All Victorians have a right to feel safe within their home and community.

In Victoria, pepper spray, or oleoresin capsicum spray, is classed as a prohibited weapon under the *Control of Weapons Act 1990*. Prohibited weapons are weapons that are considered inappropriate for general possession and use, without either an exemption issued by the Governor in Council, or an approval issued by the Chief Commissioner of Police. The purposes for which an exemption, or an approval can be issued, does not include self-defence.

Victoria's weapons laws make it an offence to carry or possess a weapon for the purpose of self-defence. Arming oneself in anticipation of an attack only increases the number of weapons in the community and heightens the risk of situations escalating into serious violence.

Ultimately, allowing individuals to carry or possess weapons for self-defence must be carefully balanced against the broader public interest in keeping weapons out of our streets and homes. The current laws strike the appropriate balance by prioritising the safety of the entire community. I understand the community's desire to protect their homes and property. However, there are lawful and effective measures available to Victorians to improve home security, including alarm systems and security cameras.

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I note your concerns regarding the use of knives and machetes in crimes across Victoria. As you are aware, from 1 September 2025, machetes became prohibited weapons under Victoria's *Control of Weapons Act 1990*. This means that owning, carrying, using, buying, and selling a machete in Victoria is an offence unless a person holds an exemption or valid approval. Possession of a machete or other prohibited weapon without exemption or valid approval can lead to up to 2 years in prison, or a fine of more than \$47,000.

These reforms are aimed at reducing the circulation of machetes, deterring their use in home invasions and other violent crimes, and strengthening community safety across Victoria.



**The Hon. Sonya Kilkenny MP  
Attorney-General**

1/3/2025