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MEDIA RELEASE

SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY WELCOMES VICTORIAN PREMIER'S IMMEDIATE PRIORITY ON RETAIL CRIME AND COMMITMENT ON WORKPLACE PROTECTION ORDERS

The Shopping Centre Council of Australia (SCCA) has welcomed the swift commitment by new Victorian Premier, Ben Carroll, to a Workplace Protection Order (WPO) scheme to better protect frontline workers in retail and other environments from abuse, assault and intimidation.

The Victorian Government will today introduce legislation into Parliament to create a WPO scheme, empowering organisations to apply to the Court to ban individuals who assault, abuse, intimidate or stalk retail, fast-food, hospitality and transport workers from returning to those workplaces for up to 12 months.

SCCA Chief Executive Angus Nardi said: "The shopping centre industry welcomes Premier Ben Carroll's swift priority and commitment to protect workers in retail and other environments", said Mr Nardi.

"WPOs can be an effective mechanism to keep high-harm and repeat offenders away from shopping centre and retail environments, with a clear signal that abusive, aggressive and violent behaviour will not be tolerated".

"We also welcome Premier Carroll's commitment that the Government will provide Victoria Police with the powers, fundings and support they need to fight crime", said Mr Nardi.

"Our industry continues to engage closely with Victoria Police on *Operation Pulse*, trialling PSOs in shopping centres and which has delivered significant community safety outcomes".

"We thank Victoria Police and Police Minister Anthony Carabine for their ongoing constructive engagement with our industry".

"We look forward to our continued engagement with the Victorian Government to help ensure community safety".

The SCCA is the national industry group for major shopping centre owner and operators.

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