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## Legislation to Ban AI Child Abuse Apps Set for Parliament

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Australia is set to introduce new legislation in 2025 that will criminalise the possession, creation, and distribution of artificial intelligence (AI) tools specifically designed to generate child sexual abuse material (CSAM). The move comes in response to a significant rise in AI-generated exploitation, which experts warn is making child abuse easier to carry out and more difficult to detect. The proposed law aims to close gaps in existing legislation that have left AI-related harms largely unaddressed, despite rapid technological developments in recent years.

Under the new legislation, individuals found in possession of AI software intended to produce CSAM could face criminal charges, regardless of whether they have used the tools to create images. Authorities argue that these tools have no legitimate purpose and are being used by offenders to create material that mimics real abuse, often based on real children's photos or likenesses. This material can be distributed anonymously online or created and consumed entirely offline, complicating efforts by law enforcement to track offenders using traditional digital surveillance methods.

The proposed law is being introduced alongside increasing pressure from child protection advocates, who have long called for stronger safeguards against emerging technologies that enable exploitation. The rapid development of AI tools that can generate lifelike images has already led to several criminal cases in Australia. Law enforcement agencies have reported a surge in incidents involving the use of AI to produce fake child abuse images, with some offenders caught in possession of hundreds of generated files. These cases have highlighted the urgent need for updated legal frameworks capable of addressing new forms of abuse facilitated by advanced software.

In addition to criminalising the tools themselves, the legislation may also introduce obligations for technology companies to implement stronger protections. Experts have suggested that platforms hosting user-generated content should be required to screen for and block AI-generated abuse material, as well as restrict access to services capable of producing it. The law is expected to bring Australia's approach closer to that of countries like the United Kingdom, where similar measures have already been enacted.

If passed, the legislation will represent a major step in strengthening Australia's child protection laws and combating the growing misuse of AI in online exploitation. Its effectiveness, however, will depend on coordinated enforcement and international cooperation, given the global nature of these technologies.