

**Submission
No 28**

INQUIRY INTO THE REGULATION OF BROTHELS

Name: [REDACTED]

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to make a submission to the Inquiry into the Regulation of Brothels.

I am a sex worker based in NSW and I hope that sex workers and organisations which represent me and the wider sex worker community (such as SWOP NSW and Scarlet Alliance) are seen as the go-to-submissions when considering this issue, since it is a sex work issue.

Decriminalisation is the best model for regulating sex work- and this should be clear to anyone who thinks about this issue seriously. Sex work is work and it deserves to be treated as other kinds of work are. This means not having police regulate our industry with special laws written in a criminal code- as this inevitably leads to corruption and abuse of power, and it creates obvious barriers for us in reporting crimes when we are the victim (for fear of being charged ourselves for victimless crimes associated with sex work- as is the case in states like Victoria)

When I worked in Victoria previously I didn't feel protected and I didn't feel part of society. I felt excluded because I knew people could target me as a sex worker and that I wouldn't be able to call the police. My mental health has its ups and downs, and for me what works is working from home- in my own space where I call the shots and I set my own hours. But in Victoria there was no feasible way for me to work from home, so instead I worked in ways which worked for me and in which I felt safer, but which also meant I was working in a criminalised way. In NSW I am able to work from home and also know that I can report a crime if something bad happens. Everyone knows this, so people realise that if they mess with sex workers they might be charged and face the consequences of it. If any section of the industry becomes criminalised there becomes this question, and some of us may become targeted.

My neighbours and I have always got along. I am a good neighbour because I have time to look after my home and look after myself. Running my business from home shouldn't require any different laws to the fact that my neighbours also run accounting businesses and massages privately from home. Trying to make us register will never work, sex work is still highly stigmatised, and furthermore there is no point to such a system. It would just cost governments money maintaining a register and would benefit no one. None of us want to draw attention in a bad way or have a bad amenities impact- it would affect our business too and our clients wouldn't want to come.

Please listen to sex workers and organisations which consult across our community such as SWOP and Scarlet Alliance. And if you are considering Swedish Model style laws please listen to the sex workers in Sweden (Rose Alliance) or if its licensing ("legalisation") please listen to Victorian and QLD sex workers (VIXEN and RESPECT)

From my experience Decriminalisation is the only way that works for sex workers. I have also heard that licensing models (such as QLD and VIC) fail not only sex workers and our health and safety but also governments and tax payers with their large drain on resources and expenditure. I implore the committee to listen to the experiences of Swedish sex workers from Swedish sex workers themselves. Having had the chance to meet several sex workers from Sweden and also read reports from Rose Alliance I can say that the Swedish Model sounds horrifying on every level for sex workers and our friends and families. I don't want to be isolated and disbelieved, I don't want to be "rescued" or hunted down by police and kicked out of my apartment, I don't want my landlord charged with pimping. I don't want to go back on welfare. I just want to look after myself and be a productive member of society,

I don't want to be treated as a victim or as a criminal, I want to be treated as a worker.

Please keep decriminalisation of sex work so I can be treated as a worker.

Thank you

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