

**Submission  
No 144**

## INQUIRY INTO THE REGULATION OF BROTHELS

Name: [REDACTED]  
Date Received: 19/08/2015

*Partially Confidential*

18/08/2015

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The Committee Manager  
Select Committee on the Regulation of Brothels  
Parliament House, Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to make a submission to the Inquiry into the Regulation of Brothels. I am a 25 year old Software Engineer and my partner is a sex worker living and working in Sydney.

I am writing to express my full support for maintaining the current model of sex industry regulation in NSW, which is, broadly speaking, decriminalisation. I recommend *no change* to any of the legislation which affects brothels and sex workers in NSW. Further, I absolutely oppose, in the strongest possible terms, *any form* of licensing of the sex industry, brothels and/or individual registration of sole operator sex workers.

Decriminalisation is recommended as the best practice model for the sex industry by many international human rights organisations. Most recently, on August 11 this year, Amnesty International adopted decriminalisation as their policy for worldwide sex industry legislation reform<sup>1</sup>.

NSW must be congratulated for introducing decriminalisation of the sex industry in 1995, the first of its kind in the world. We can see from the Amnesty decision 20 years later, that NSW truly is a world-leading, progressive, forward-thinking state that takes the human rights of its citizens and voters seriously.

Decriminalisation means my partner is able to choose when and how she works in the sex industry. It has meant that, on the one occasion (in the 13 years she has been a sex worker)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/08/sex-workers-rights-are-human-rights/>

she has needed police assistance, she was able to go to the police without fear of arrest, repercussions or prosecution. The police supported her and took her seriously and the matter was dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

Decriminalisation means my partner has been able to apply for a home loan as a self-employed business woman and have that accepted as a valid and valuable occupation.

Decriminalisation means my partner is able to access free sexual health clinics at times that suit her and in ways that are appropriate to her circumstances. Decriminalisation means she is not treated as a 'vector of disease' but rather, she is recognised as a member of the population that has lower rates of HIV and STIs than the general community<sup>2</sup>.

Statistically speaking, my partner the sex worker is less likely to have an STI than me, the Software Engineer.

Sex work is not and should never be a moral issue. A person's opinion on the sex industry is a private thing. What matters, is that sex workers are people who have human rights. And those human rights need to be protected.

Decriminalisation is recognised internationally, including by Amnesty International<sup>3</sup>, as the best way to recognise and protect the human rights of sex workers like my partner.

Licensing of part or all of the sex industry, I believe, is not a viable option for NSW. It is expensive and erodes the human rights of sex workers like my partner, who are just living their lives. Decriminalisation has worked and continues to work. It has supported my partner for the past 13 years and I hope that the NSW government continues to support her for however long she chooses to work in the sex industry.

I want to again commend the NSW whole of government approach of 1995 for introducing decriminalisation. And express my absolute support and gratitude for the government of 2015 for maintaining decriminalisation in NSW as it is.

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<sup>2</sup>

[http://www.afao.org.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/11198/Mandatory\\_Testing\\_for\\_HIV\\_and\\_STIs\\_among\\_Sex\\_Workers\\_-\\_A\\_Barrier\\_to\\_Prevention.pdf.pdf](http://www.afao.org.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/11198/Mandatory_Testing_for_HIV_and_STIs_among_Sex_Workers_-_A_Barrier_to_Prevention.pdf.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_D6J2psOv7Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_D6J2psOv7Y)

Sincerely,

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I have used a pseudonym for my submission because unfortunately, stigma and discrimination against sex workers still persists in our society. I have used a pseudonym to avoid any future potential impacts on my own career (as I'm sure you can appreciate IT can be a conservative industry), and also to protect the identity of my partner.