

**Submission
No 109**

INQUIRY INTO THE REGULATION OF BROTHELS

Organisation: University of Wollongong

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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,

As a member of the community, I am writing to make a submission to the Inquiry into the Regulation of Brothels. Sex workers are the key stakeholders in the process of evaluating the regulation of brothels in NSW. I am worried that any attempt to re-criminalise and/or license aspects of sex work including brothels will negatively affect the health, well-being, and occupational safety of sex workers and make brothel compliance more difficult. Sex workers clearly state:

- The decriminalisation of sex work is essential to recognising the human rights of sex workers in Australia and has recently been endorsed by Amnesty International.
- Sex work has been decriminalised in NSW since 1995 and NSW is world-renowned as having a best practice model.
- The outcomes of decriminalisation in NSW have been:
 - Extremely low rates of STIs and HIV (recognised by Australia's National Strategies and the Kirby Institute Annual Surveillance Report);
 - Better access to health promotion (finding of the Law and Sex Worker Health Study, which compared the health impacts of legal frameworks across Victoria, NSW and WA);
 - No evidence of organised crime (recognised by the Land and Environment Court);
 - Better access to Occupational Health and Safety (WorkCover and SWOP worked with sex workers to create Health and Safety Guidelines for Brothels, which have been translated to Thai, Chinese and Korean);
 - Current evidence presented by the Lancet at AIDS 2014 found the decriminalisation of sex work would have the greatest impact on the HIV epidemic, reducing HIV by up to 46% in the next decade and resulting on cost saving thresholds of tens of millions of dollars globally.

Please ensure that sex workers continue to enjoy the rights and freedoms that other labourers in this country take for granted.

Yours Faithfully,

Nick Skilton