

**Submission
No 153**

INQUIRY INTO THE REGULATION OF BROTHELS

Organisation: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED]
Position: Sex worker and sex workers' rights advocate
Date Received: 20/08/2015

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 20 August 2015 1:40 AM
To: ROBInquiry
Subject: Regulation of brothels

To whom it may concern,

As a sex worker, 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.

The decriminalisation of sex work is essential to recognising the human rights of sex workers in Australia. 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.

As an Irish sex worker, I have 22 years experience at every level within the industry. I have worked on street, in brothels both legal and illegal and as an independent escort. I can testify first hand to the dreadful consequences of the 1993 Act in the Republic of Ireland, which criminalised brothels, essentially making it illegal for women to work together for safety. Violence against sex workers went through the roof and our good working relationship with the police disappeared. Where once their main concern was keeping us safe, their biggest priority became catching our clients.

I strongly urge you to listen to the voices of those who will be affected - sex workers. We know what's best for us and we deserve labour rights and the right to work in safety.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]
Sex worker and sex workers' rights advocate

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