

**Submission  
No 76**

## **INQUIRY INTO THE REGULATION OF BROTHELS**

**Name:** [REDACTED]

**Date Received:** 19/08/2015

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18 August 2015

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

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. I've been doing sex work in Australia for almost five years now. I've worked at strip clubs in Brisbane, a peep show in Melbourne, brothels in Brisbane and most recently as a sole operator in Queensland. My experience of working in two states where sex work is heavily regulated has made it glaringly obvious to me that decriminalisation is by far the best model for sex workers to work under.

Here's why:

1. In Queensland and Victoria I am subjected to mandatory three-monthly health checks in order to work in a licensed brothel. Thanks to a lack of sex worker-friendly health clinics, my friends and I often experience discrimination from the doctors doing these checks. I know workers who have been 'outed' (had their sex worker-status revealed) non-consensually by a doctor in front of everyone at reception, who have been refused by doctors who don't like workers, who have been treated with disgust and disdain, and who have had their certificates withheld from them until the test results come back, even though you do not need your results to get a valid certificate. Decriminalisation would mean we are in charge of our own bodies and our own health instead of being forced to test by the state, and forced to out ourselves by being required to have a sexual health certificate. Sex workers have lower STI rates than the general population because our bodies are our business and we are invested in looking after them.
2. In Queensland it is **ILLEGAL** for me to work with a friend who is also a sex worker. Despite the fact that this would help ensure my safety. Until recently it was illegal for me to even contact a friend who doesn't work, and let them know that I was still okay (alive!) following a booking. These kind of laws inhibit our ability to protect ourselves and put us at risk. Decriminalisation would mean that I could work out of the same dwelling as my friends and we could look out for each other. I would feel much safer at work if I could do this.
3. In Queensland, street-based sex work is criminalised. However, street-based workers deserve police protection like anyone else. There will always be workers who prefer to work on the street, for whatever reason: e.g. lack of access to a workspace. Decriminalisation would mean that these workers are still protected and don't have to worry about being charged if they experience violence from a client.
4. In 2013 the Queensland Attorney-General, Jarrod Bleijie, changed legislation to **ALLOW** moteliers, hotel-owners and landlords to **DISCRIMINATE** against people they believe to be sex workers, and to refuse them accommodation. The attorney-general changed the law to **ENABLE DISCRIMINATION** against sex workers. This kind of action makes sex

