

Criminal Code (Decriminalising Sex Work) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Committee Secretary
Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee
Parliament House
Brisbane Qld 4000

RE: Criminal Code (Decriminalising Sex Work) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to this process. It is very important to me personally, as a Queensland and sex worker, that the Queensland laws keep the most vulnerable members of our community safe. It is the moral obligation of the Queensland government to create legal infrastructure that increases access to justice, holds police accountable to ethical diligence and provides the opportunity for transparency in advertising. I have been involved in the campaign for decriminalisation for 4 years. I have worked as a dancer and am now providing full service sex work.

I support the bill to decriminalise sex work because I personally feel uncomfortable letting my non-sex worker friends know when I am travelling to and from a client. Also, these friends have their own lives and do not want to know whenever I'm working. I therefore feel it would affect my friendships and isolate me from them. If decriminalisation was seen through I would legally be able to text or have a group chat with workers to let them know I have arrived and am safe or have left safely a booking.

I would be unlikely to report any crime against me to the police. My first stop would be a peer support organisation like Respect Inc.. I am afraid if I were to present myself at a police station I would be discriminated against, stigmatised and likely charged. I'm not sure who police would be protecting me from if I were to be charged but I am aware it has happened to other workers. With street based work almost completely diminished the laws around soliciting don't really reflect today's issues. Regardless, sex work deserves to be recognised as legitimate work.

I believe with decriminalisation I would ,eventually, legally be able to hire a reputable security guard or driver. Strip clubs have controllers but private sex workers often have to pay a large amount of their "cut" to brothels who take advantage of the current legal system knowing sex workers can't independently hire help. Currently sex workers have to work in brothels and/or strip clubs who often take 40% to 60% which is ridiculous. This is also on top of a "floor fee" of \$50-\$150 which is payment to work within a club without guarantee of foot traffic or money back if nobody enters the venue. Sex workers have been taken advantage of and the wider community are clueless because the current code facilitates an environment of hostility from venue managers, clients and police.

Consent on the basis of payment is no longer valid if payment is not made. Therefore the violation of non-payment needs to be recognised as what it is. ASSAULT!

Finally, the fact that I have been actively communicating the urgency for reform for four years through protects and submissions such as this one is absolutely appalling.

I believe decriminalisation is the first step to reducing stigma for sex workers. Nobody should feel as though they cannot withdraw consent or consent is implied because sex work is paid work. Nobody should feel like a violent assault is part and parcel of their job and nobody should be deprived of having a safety network at work where they can report infringements of their rights at work.

I would like this submission to be submitted by #DecrimQLD and Respect Inc on my behalf and I am happy for this to be published on the Committee website.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours Sincerely

Lorraine Kelly