

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

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How, at a time like this: <https://www.kirby.unsw.edu.au/news/sexually-transmissible-infections-are-rise-australia-syphilis-rates-tripling-over-decade#:~:text=Chlamydia%20was%20the%20most%20frequently,less%20than%20half%20being%20diagnosed.>, can the Queensland government be considering the complete deregulation of prostitution in this State? I concur with the observations of the Australian Christian Lobby: This is a dark day for Queensland women. The Attorney General's claim that women will now be protected from the violence associated with the sex industry doesn't hold water. The reality is much different. Twenty-three years after Germany fully legalised prostitution, the 'brothel of Europe', as they are known, is considering a ban on prostitution. "Germany's experience shows that we can't appease pimps, crime bosses, drug dealers, and people traffickers by legalising their racket. We certainly don't want Queensland to become 'the brothel of Australia'". Queensland's housing affordability, and cost of living crisis, together with decriminalising the sex industry sets up the perfect storm for youth exploitation and crime to explode in Queensland. I urge Queensland MPs to consider how they would react if their neighbour decided to open a brothel in the suburban house next door or down the street from where they live with their family, including impressionable children? This proposed law is an outrageous imposition on ordinary Queenslanders looking to live their lives in wholeness (integrity), peace and safety. Finally, why don't the Queensland Government and the Queensland Law Reform Commission properly inform themselves of the best approaches to prostitution now being implemented elsewhere in the world? I refer to the Nordic Model which offers an alternative to legalisation and total decriminalisation. It is a differentiated model of asymmetric decriminalisation where the selling of 'sexual services' is decriminalised but the buying of 'sexual services' is criminalised. The fundamental innovation of the Nordic Model is that it targets demand. The Model recognises that it is the demand for 'sexual services' that promotes the expansion of the sex industry and sex trafficking. Furthermore, it acknowledges that buyers are largely men and that their demand is primarily for buying women and girls. The Nordic Model aims to make the buying of sex socially unacceptable and takes an abolitionist approach to trafficking. This approach does not accept that booming markets for prostitution and sex trafficking are desirable or inevitable. Instead, the Nordic Model advocates social and cultural change. Within this model, prostitution and sex trafficking are understood as harmful to prostituted and trafficked persons, as well as barriers to social justice. Criminalising the purchase of sex is seen as an important part of efforts to end violence against women and to achieve gender equality. I urge Queensland MPs to consider young people's futures and the good of this state, and reject the Criminal Code (Decriminalising Sex Work) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill in its entirety.