

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

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Submitted by: Tamika Hicks
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Committee Secretary
Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee
George Street
Parliament House
Brisbane Qld 4000
HBBMC@parliament.qld.gov.au

Please accept this submission in support of the Criminal Code (Decriminalising Sex Work) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I congratulate the Miles Government for acting on this important reform. This Bill finds the right balance to protect the health, safety and rights of sex workers, and the rights of the broader community.

My name is Tamika Hicks, I'm the Vice President of the Broadwater Branch of the ALP and live on the Gold Coast in Arundel.

The *Decriminalising Sex Work Bill* will end the treatment of sex work as a criminal activity, instead sex work would be treated as work and sex workers will be able to work together. A decriminalised framework is established in line with the recommendations of the independent Queensland Law Reform Commission (QLRC) eighteen month review.

Having moved up from Melbourne over 2 years ago and being part of the advocacy to decriminalise sex work in Victoria, I am proud that Queensland Labor has followed suit to protect workers. We must treat all workers as equals, with equal rights.

The Bill will protect workers by:

- repeal sex work specific criminal offences such as those relating to working alone or with others, in the Criminal Code, Prostitution Act 1999 and Prostitution Regulation 2014;
- result in sex work being regulated using existing systems, regulations and laws;
- remove the current licensing system and licensing authority that only regulates 17 brothels;
 - repeal sex work specific criminal offences that are located in the Prostitution Act and Prostitution Regulation;
- implement the QLRC's recommendation to update discrimination protections in the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (AD Act);
- ensure fair treatment by local governments;
- introduce a legislated review requirement to assess the implementation of decriminalisation of sex work in Queensland; and

- implement consequential amendments to reflect the decriminalisation of the sex work industry and removal of the brothel licensing system.

General criminal laws that apply to everyone will still apply to the sex industry. The QLRC recommendations also set out that Sex Work Workplace Health & Safety (WHS) guidelines would be developed, including provision and use of condoms.

This reform will bring Queensland into line with other jurisdictions that have already decriminalised sex work. There should be no delay in commencement by 1 July, 2024.

I give permission to have my submission published online.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours sincerely

Tamika Hicks

Early Childhood Educator, Activist and Consultant



Arundel, Queensland 4214

I acknowledge the Kombumerri families of the Yugambeh Language Region as the traditional custodians of the land upon which I live, work and learn.