

The Research Director
Health and Community Services Committee
Queensland Parliament

24th June, 2013

To The Research Director:

We would like to make a submission to the Committee in relation to Outdoor Advertising.

We [REDACTED] have recently encountered the sex industry, *Honey B's*, advertising outside of our school. This is not the first time that strip clubs have advertised through billboards which can be viewed from within our school grounds. Other strip clubs such as *Love and Rockets* have regularly displayed billboards in this space. [REDACTED] male students are aged between 10-17 years old; the objectification and sexualisation of women are not messages that our young men need to be confronted with every day on their way to and from school. The main message that these billboards are sending to the large volume of children who frequent this area is that a woman's body is a commodity for male entertainment. One of our [REDACTED] children (aged 4 years old) asked his daddy why there was a picture of a woman's legs outside his workplace (Appendix A). He did not know how to respond.

Our initial complaint to the Advertising Standard Board over the most recent *Honey's B's* outdoor advertisement was dismissed. We consequently created two petitions - one which is currently being tabled in Federal Parliament through our local MP, Teresa Gambaro- and another petition through Change.org. In response to our online petition, the OMA's Senior Policy Advisor, Emma Luttrell, contacted us to advise that whilst the OMA do not have a placement policy, this particular billboard would be removed in this case. It is concerning that our initial complaints to the ASB were rejected, and the OMA took action only after media attention (Quest City North News- March 8, 2013) and rising public pressure. We are disappointed to learn that the ASB has allowed for the re-placement of this billboard in a position less than 8 kilometres from our school. We submit that the advertising of the sex industry and adult entertainment should not be allowed in public space. It is not enough of a measure to remove an isolated billboard from one school. Children are certainly exposed to billboards in the broader public space and the advertising of sex industries should be bound to the same restrictions of other advertising mediums (such as TV and film etc.).

Furthermore, subsequent complaints to the ASB regarding *Love and Rocket's* 'You deserve it' billboard which can be seen on the M1 (travelling northbound from the Gold Coast to Brisbane) was also recently dismissed. The motorway is a popular thoroughfare for countless families who commute from the Gold Coast and theme parks; the message of this billboard is highly inappropriate for its audience. These types of advertisements significantly undermine the moral and educational goals that our community upholds. The advertising of sex industries is only a component of the bigger picture. The sexually explicit advertising of various products in public space are just as concerning and damaging as the advertising of adult entertainment. Recent studies illustrate the serious concerns

surrounding the sexualisation of children in Australia and the negative impact this is having on self-esteem, body image, depression and anxiety and respectful relationships between boys and girls. The Australian Crime Commission has expressed concerns that exposure to sexualised imagery is now linked to child-to-child sexual assaults. This report reinforces escalating concerns among child protection advocates over an increase in sexually aggressive behaviour in children, as young people become exposed to sexual and pornographic images. Beyond the dangers posed to children, sexually explicit advertising has broader social impacts.

As a society, we need to understand that violence, and particularly sexual violence against women, doesn't happen in a vacuum. It is fed by the messages that society is consistently receiving about the role that women play. These advertisements often reinforce negative messages that devalue women. The advertising of strip clubs supports an industry which promotes live pornography and a form of prostitution. We challenge the legality of advertising adult-only entertainment in public spaces which in every other medium has restrictions.

We challenge the self-regulation by the ASB and OMA which has proven to be both inadequate and inconsistent. Outdoor advertising should logically be G rating as it is public space. We submit that the current model is not working and we call upon the Queensland Government to change the legislation surrounding outdoor advertising.

We ask to be kept informed as to the progress of this inquiry and advise that our submission is not representative of [REDACTED] but we act as individuals concerned about this serious issue.

Kind regards,

Tanya Mathias and Pip Douglas

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Appendix A

