

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to voice my concern and disapproval of the amendments regarding the anti-discrimination law in terms of sex workers and accommodation. The Bill in which the amendments are included is titled as follows: Youth Justice (Boot Camp Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012.

The proposed law is:

‘106C Accommodation for use in connection with work as sex worker

‘It is not unlawful for a person (an accommodation provider) to discriminate against another person (the other person) by—

(a) refusing to supply accommodation to the other person;

or

(b) evicting the other person from accommodation; or

(c) treating the other person unfavourably in any way in connection with accommodation;

if the accommodation provider reasonably believes the other person is using, or intends to use, the accommodation in connection with that person’s, or another person’s, work as a sex worker.’

I currently work as a somatic sex educator and conscious sexuality practitioner. I educate and facilitate conscious exploration of peoples sexuality through “hands on” experience. This means I am a sex worker. People come to me for company, sexual pleasure, self discovery, erotic personal transformation rituals, erotic exploration, sex education and sexual healing. I am tertiary educated, intelligent and passionate about my work. I freely choose this occupation although many other occupations are available to me. I do not consider my work to be “degrading” like Mr Bleijie says. It is a legal occupation that I conduct with integrity and that brings a high degree of mutual satisfaction between consenting adults. It is my passion and my purpose in this life. I am currently writing a book about my work and may become well known as a sex worker.

I currently live and work in Queensland and tour both within Queensland and in other states of Australia.

The proposed new law makes it legal to discriminate against me and refuse me accommodation without recourse. This means I cannot tour Queensland offering my sessions even though I am extremely discrete and respectful. My clients are typically also very discrete as they wish to remain anonymous.

I fear that the new laws are based in fear, prejudice and misconception and that sex work organisations and experts on different sex work models have not been adequately consulted.

The whole reason we have an anti discrimination law is to protect people like me from such misconception and prejudice. Change to this law would undo years of anti-discrimination progress that can ripple out into much broader-than-intended consequences.

The truth is that there are already laws in place that can deal with any sex worker or any other person who behaves inappropriately while staying in a hotel or motel. Eviction can be obtained through the nuisance laws if there is actually a problem. The anti-discrimination protects sex workers from being evicted due to prejudice.

The truth is there is consensual sex going on right now in your street and in every street. Straight sex, gay sex, paid sex, animal sex, honeymoon sex, tantric sex, loving sex, kinky sex and simple physical release. It is going on between all genders, legal ages, cultural backgrounds, religious backgrounds, marital statuses etc. There is sex going on in every hotel and motel. This does not offend or harm any of the other guests because it is discrete and private. This does not change when money changes hands. If there is a disturbance to the guests, then by all means use the nuisance laws to deal with it.

My legal business will be very significantly hampered if I cannot freely tour Queensland. I cannot work from brothels as what I do does not fit the brothel model at all. My services do not fit the brothel model at all. I also choose not to have a boss or have half my income taken by a brothel owner. My clients would not venture near a brothel. There are many others like me.

Therefore where am I left to legally work from? Would you like to me set up my massage table and bed? In a caravan or tent? I suspect spilling out onto the streets or being forced underground is not going to have the best results for sex workers or the local community. There are a vast number of studies that show an increase in crime, corruption and health and safety issues for sex workers and the whole community if sex work is pushed underground. With the whole world in an outcry against sex slavery and sex trafficking right now, it would be wise to take the time to really do the research on this topic before changing an laws and inadvertently causing conditions ripe for exploitation and power abuse. I urge you to consult with Scarlet Alliance, Respect and other sex work advocates before making your decision.

I also fear that the new laws could mean that someone like me could be evicted even if I am just on a holiday, because I am a known sex worker.

I fear exploitation from hotel/motel owners who could blackmail sex workers for a cut of their income or for sexual favors in exchange for not evicting them.

I fear that any promiscuous person could be accused of sex work and evicted without recourse. More "slut shaming" is not needed in our culture.

I fear that anyone the motel or hotel owner was prejudiced against could be evicted and accused of sex work if the hotel/motel owner held prejudice against them. Gay people, trans people, indigenous people, erotically dressed people, people of opposing religious or political beliefs. If we allow one form of discrimination, it opens the door to all of them.

I personally was evicted twice this year. Once after doing a single, discrete tantric session because I was seen taking my massage table into a room by house keeping. The other time is because the local brothel owner was trying to run her competition out of town and rang

me up, made a fake booking to find out my address, then called the hotel owner and got them all worked up about having a sex worker on their premises. She purposefully incited prejudice against me. I was doing nothing illegal either time but prejudice means people fear me and wish to evict me. I am asking for protection against this kind of bullying.

I am asking that you consider the broader consequences of this law. The question is NOT whether or not you support sex work. Sex work is here and it is here to stay. It is also already legal. The question is do you stand for discrimination or anti discrimination? Do legal occupations have the right to work safely without prejudice or not?

Artemisia Green

