

Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry

Ref: 11.1.11.c

**Youth Justice (Boot Camp Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012,  
2) Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 to introduce new exemptions in relation to  
accommodation used in connection with work as a sex worker**

With regard to the proposed *Youth Justice (Boot Camp Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012*, I would like to express my opposition to the proposed amendment to *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*, specifically the introduction of new exemptions in relation to accommodation used in connection with work as a sex worker. The prefix to the *Anti-Discrimination Act* states that it is "... to promote equality of opportunity for everyone by protecting them from unfair discrimination..." and I feel that these proposed exemptions belie that purpose.

I'm vehemently opposed to these exemptions on many grounds as I firmly believe it will further marginalise the sex worker community; reinforce the barriers that already exist with relation to sex workers seeking justice; and it will undermine the health & safety of sex workers.

I'm a male sex worker & I frequently travel interstate to work in my chosen profession. I operate with utmost discretion at all times, for the benefit of myself, my clients and always in consideration of my neighbours. I regard myself as just another person staying in the hotel – I could go so far as to say that I'm a more preferable guest at the hotel, as the last thing I want is to draw attention to myself and ruffle the feathers of the moteliers and the local community. On each and every instance, I stayed in quiet, discrete accommodation and left promptly without creating a disturbance. I behave with such discretion because it's not only my anonymity, but I'm keeping in mind all others who could face adverse consequences from discriminatory reactions – as I've known other workers in my community have faced.

When I mention marginalisation, I'm referring to the negative impact the sex worker community already faces as a result of discrimination. The arbitrary power of refusing accommodation to someone on the basis of a belief – no matter how reasonable – is promoting discriminatory behaviour to sex workers, giving people who may already harbour ill feelings towards sex workers the power to express their opinions in a truly detrimental way. Legislation that permits the denial of services to any person is an act of discrimination, a violation of human rights.

Further, the inclusion of the suspicion element gives power to the hotel operator to justify their discriminatory attitudes without a basis. Even if a person – sex worker, or not – were to try and seek justice for being denied accommodation, it would be a case of too-little, too-late: a person has already been left vulnerable because they were forced to remedy their situation before they could seek justice. If this amendment were to pass, what justice could a sex worker seek if the hotel operator were permitted by law to actively discriminate?

Moreover, the health & safety of sex workers is undermined by these amendments as it leaves sex workers open to corruption and isolation. Sex workers travelling around rural areas, forced out of their accommodation are placed in an extremely vulnerable position, especially at night. There is also the added risk of hotel operators using their power to charge sex workers an extortionate amount to stay at their hotel including through threats of blackmail.

I view these proposed amendments as setting a negative impact on the sex worker community and hope you consider my reasoning against the proposed changes.

Beau Adder-Stone

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