

From: [REDACTED]
To: [EPSC EPSC](#)
Subject: Sex Industry Bill 2019
Date: Monday, 7 October 2019 10:43:53 AM

Dear Economic Policy Scrutiny Committee

Decriminalisation of the Sex Industry will not enhance worker safety. Instead it will normalise the practice, normalise the exploitation of vulnerable people, and encourage (probably more) human trafficking of vulnerable people, particularly women.

From the Explanatory Statement:

"provisions enshrining the right of workers to refuse to undertake sex work to ensure that consent is required for the provision of sex work at all times"

Really? Are you kidding? The types of people who end up in prostitution are commonly vulnerable and/or homeless and probably feel they have no other options. Do you really think they are going to refuse and risk their job?

"directs industry to specifically consider safe sex practices"

Again really? So it's self-regulated?

From the Bill:

"a police officer may not exercise powers or perform functions as an authorised officer under the Public and Environmental Health Act 2011 in relation to sex work."

Section 18 states that an operator of a sex service business must hold a suitability certificate to run a sex service business.

"The Commissioner may issue a suitability certificate if the Commissioner is satisfied that the applicant and any other person required to hold the suitability certificate under section 18(2):

- (a) are suitable persons to operate a sex services business; and*
- (b) meet any requirements prescribed by regulation."*

What makes you a suitable person to exploit another person?

So the Police would no longer be able to investigate and apart from the fact that a person or persons operating a sex service business just have to pass the requirements to hold a suitability certificate how does this really make the industry any better? Will there be any regular follow up inspections of the legalised brothels? or regular reviews of the suitability of the business owner/s? The current Bill seems to rely on reports of breaches before the Commissioner will investigate and potentially revoke the certificate.

I get that prostitution is going on anyway and the Government is attempting to make it safer but this proposed legislation seems to largely rely on workers being **willing to come forward** and report instances of breaches of the legislation - *after they occur*. Even if sex workers are no longer considered criminals under this proposed legislation, there's a certain amount of hesitancy in any industry to be a "whistleblower" in reporting instances of bad behaviour in the workplace for fear of loss of job and reputation.

The bottom line however is no matter how many "safety provisions" the proposed legislation may contain, prostitution can only be viewed as **commercialised exploitation of vulnerable people** and normalises the practice. We should be trying to reduce the practice as much as possible, not normalise it or encourage it's growth as an industry.

Yours sincerely
Jenny Holland