

I am responding to the questions below on behalf of SPACE International (Survivors of Prostitution-Abuse Calling for Enlightenment) We are an organisation of one dozen women from seven nations, including the UK. All of us have been prostituted in our respective countries and are calling for the Nordic Model of criminalising the buyers of sex and providing exit strategies for women, while also decriminalising them.

We know from the experiences of our own lives and from everything we have witnessed that while the call for decriminalisation very often comes from a well intentioned place, it is also dangerously misguided. You have obviously listened to what those who are politically opposed to our efforts have to say, and as women who have lived the experience under discussion, we are hoping you will also listen to us.

Regards,

Rachel Moran

1/ Do you support the general aim of the proposed Bill? Please indicate

No, we do not support the general aim of the proposed Bill. This Bill seeks to decriminalise all parties in the sex trade, which has been proven to be a dangerous and damaging strategy in the territories where it has been implemented.

2. Do you agree that the New Zealand Prostitution Reform Act is a model for Scotland to follow?

We absolutely do not agree that the New Zealand Prostitution Reform Act is a model for Scotland, or any country, to follow. Our conclusions are based, in part, on testimony from women who both currently prostituting in New Zealand and those who have been prostituted there since the Act was implemented in 2003. These women tell us that the total decriminalisation model has massively inflated the market, significantly increased trafficking from Asian countries, increased the number of underage girls present in the brothels, increased the activities of pimps and increased the sense of entitlement by sex buying men to whatever 'services' they desire, diminishing the bargaining power of the women and putting them under the constant stress of having to provide access to their bodies in ways they do not want but cannot negotiate their way out of.

3. What (if any) would be the main advantages of the legislation proposed?

What (if any) would be the disadvantages?

There are no advantages to sending the message to men that women and girls are commodities to be bought. The disadvantages to a society that sends this message, however, are severe and very difficult to reverse.

4. Do you agree that current laws against soliciting and kerb-crawling should be repealed?

We believe that all people in prostitution should be decriminalised in all circumstances.

5. Do you agree that small groups of up to four sex workers should be legally entitled to work collectively from the same indoor premises?

We do not believe that an entitlement to be used as a sexual commodity should be codified into law, but equally, as stated above, we believe that all people in prostitution should be decriminalised in all circumstances. The issue of women in brothel prostitution is problematic for police because the decriminalisation of such premises is simply a gift to pimps and police find third-party involvement very difficult to prove. We believe the best strategy here is to decriminalise prostituted women in these, as in all circumstances, and robustly criminalise those who exploit them, whether for financial or sexual gain.

6. Do you agree that the licensing regime already in place for sexual entertainment venues should be extended to cover indoor premises where more than four sex workers are employed?

No, we do not believe that the sexual exploitation of women should be considered a matter of 'sexual entertainment' or that licensing regimes should be altered to copper-fasten the oppression and dehumanisation of women in this way. The consequences of such licensing have been apparent in Europe and elsewhere for decades and it is our clear view that any nation that regards women as equal citizens under the law will not impose these regimes on us.

7. Do you agree that the laws on living on the earnings of prostitution and procuring should be repealed and that there is a need for more stringent and robust laws against coercion in the sex industry modelled on the New Zealand Prostitution Reform Act?

We believe that nothing we do should be modelled on the disastrous New Zealand Prostitution Reform Act. Also, the idea that there are robust laws that protect against coercion in the New Zealand sex trade is frankly laughable. Prostitution is abusive in and of itself and coercive by its nature, and women in the New Zealand sex trade are currently mobilising with a view to repealing these laws.

8. Do you agree that there should be a statutory right for sex workers to refuse to provide, or refuse to continue to provide, sexual services?

We believe that such a law would necessitate the acceptance of prostitution as a legitimate form of labour, which we know it is not.

9. Do you agree that there should be a statutory obligation on brothel operators to ensure safer sex supplies are made available on their premises?

We believe that 'brothel operators' i.e. pimps, should be imprisoned for their exploitative activities rather than guided in how to carry them out by the state.

10. What is your assessment of the likely financial implications (if any) of the proposed

Bill to you or your organisation? What (if any) other significant financial implications are likely to arise?

SPACE International will not be affected in any financial sense by this proposed bill, though we appreciate the inclusion of this question given the very high degree of financial vested interests from those who have already been involved in your consultative process.