

Dear Ms Trish Doyle,

As a member of your electorate and local community, as a sex worker, and as President of Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association, I am writing to urge your support for legislative measures to protect myself and my colleagues in NSW from discrimination, vilification and criminalisation.

I know that you are a wonderful ally to the LGBTQIA+ community (which has huge intersections with the sex industry), that you have interacted with my colleagues and friends Mish Pony (Scarlet Alliance CEO) and Joanna Megan (SWOP NSW CEO), and I watched with pride as you publicly supported one of my peers in 2021. I believe that these legislative proposals align with your values, but I wanted to ensure I added my voice.

The discrimination that NSW sex workers continue to face on a daily basis impedes our access to employment outside of the industry, education, housing, financial services, health services, safety and justice. As a faceout sex worker (meaning that I show my face in my advertising and online), I often fear for the wellbeing of myself and my family members. I have been discriminated against by medical professionals and financial institutions, and despite having an immense amount of pride for my work and my advocacy, it is something I keep hidden from anyone who may hold any power over my housing situation. There is a very real fear that housing or accommodation may be withheld from me if they were to find out, something which has happened to countless of my peers in this state.

We are also frequently subject to vilification - the harmful stereotypes employed against us by the media and anti-sex work organisations increase our risk of experiencing violence. In addition to the detrimental impacts on our physical well-being, the consequences for our mental and emotional well-being are devastating. Altogether, the lack of basic protections available to NSW sex workers infringe upon our access to basic human rights.

Whilst NSW has been widely recognised and applauded as a world leader following the almost complete decriminalisation of the sex industry during the 1990s, the truth is that this process will not be complete until there are comprehensive anti-discrimination protections for sex workers in place, and we have catching up to do. Decriminalisation benefits both sex workers and the general public, but the positive intentions of this regulatory model are routinely undermined by the absence of protection from discrimination and vilification for sex workers in this state. Other Australian jurisdictions including the Northern Territory and Victoria have already achieved anti-discrimination protections for sex workers, and we hope that NSW can follow suit and retain its reputation for taking a progressive, health and human rights-centred approach to sex industry legislation.

The other action required to complete the process of sex industry decriminalisation in NSW is repealing Part 3, ss14 to 21 of the Summary Offences Act 1988 (NSW). This outdated and rarely utilised legislation contradicts other more recent legislation and has dangerous implications for NSW sex workers and their families.

The advertising of my services is still listed in the Summary Offences Act as illegal, which makes running my otherwise entirely legal business in a legitimate way near impossible. My husband of 15 years was recently unemployed for 18 months partly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Summary Offences Act makes it illegal for us to be a single income household if mine is the only income as he is knowingly living "on the earnings of prostitution of another person". The penalty for this crime (of being unemployed) is up to 12 months in prison.

There are currently three ways in which you can show your support for sex workers and their families, friends and other allies within your electorate:

1. Support Alex Greenwich's Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill
2. Advocate for the following measures throughout the NSW Law Reform Commission Review of the Anti-Discrimination Act.
 - a. 'Sex work and sex worker' must be included as protected attributes. The definition used must incorporate all forms of sex work, including the full range of in person services, as well as non-contact, online and other emerging formats, and the provision of sexual services in return for non-monetary compensation.
 - b. Sex workers must be comprehensively protected from discrimination, including in the course of doing sex work. A new 30.06.24 attribute of 'sex work and sex worker' should include protection from discrimination in all the same areas available to other protected attributes. That is, employment, education, accommodation, registered clubs, and in the provision of goods and services, etc. As well as including presumed to be, previously been, currently 'doing', having characteristics appertaining generally or imputed to sex workers, as well as our relatives or associates.
 - c. No exceptions relating to sport, superannuation, insurance, or public health should apply to sex workers, or for religious, private educational or charitable bodies. Exceptions to anti discrimination protections currently possible under the Section 54 'Statutory Authority' should be limited, and application of discrimination law should be expanded to incorporate government bodies and authorities, including the police.
 - d. Sex workers must be able to protect their personal identity throughout the complaint process under the Act.
 - e. Sex work and sex workers must be protected from vilification.
3. Contact SWOP NSW for more information – policy@swop.org.au
- 4.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and for listening to the voices of sex workers. I am proud to have you as my Member.

Yours Sincerely, J
enna Love, Blaxland