# NEW YORKERSTAR EQUALITY MODEL

**ADVOCACY TOOLKIT** 

## THE EQUALITY MODEL

## AKA THE SEX TRADE SURVIVORS JUSTICE AND EQUALITY ACT

REDUCES THE NUMBER OF
PEOPLE WHO ARE
TRAFFICKED OR
EXPLOITED

PROVIDES SUPPORT SERVICES FOR SURVIVORS

REDUCES THE DEMAND FOR PAID SEX

INCREASES UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER EQUALITY











## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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COALITION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN (CATW)

**CONNECTING COMMUNITIES IN ACTION** 

**COVENANT HOUSE NEW YORK** 

**EQUALITY NOW** 

**GRAHAM WINDHAM** 

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NEW YORK STATE ANTI-TRAFFICKING COALITION

NOT ON MY WATCH, INC.

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ROCHESTER REGIONAL COALITION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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SOUTHERN TIER HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**WOMEN'S JUSTICE NOW** 

WORLD WITHOUT EXPLOITATION

Resources and content in this toolkit were put together by NYFEM Steering Committee members, CATW, Sanctuary for Families, and NOW-NYC:

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This Advocacy Toolkit would not be possible without the vision and expertise of survivor leaders in New York and around the world.



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## **HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT**

How do you become an effective advocate for a cause you believe in, such as ending commercial sexual exploitation and supporting survivors? How do you change the minds of the public, of lawmakers, of your neighbor?

This toolkit is a good place to start. These resources will help you discuss all aspects of the Equality Model with clarity and conviction in a variety of contexts.

In any conversation regarding policy, it's important to be well-versed in compelling facts and statistics. It also helps to have a sense of the larger narrative at play: in this case, it's about the sex trade. Many people assume the sex trade (which includes street prostitution, illicit "massage parlors," strip clubs, escort agencies, and sugar dating) does not affect them. In advocating for the Equality Model, it is our goal to help people see the larger picture - to not view prostitution as comprised of individuals making individual choices, but rather a system that thrives on the exploitation of the most marginalized.

Once you start seeing the sex trade's effects - on survivors' mental and physical health, on the way men view and treat women, on our fundamental human rights - you can never unsee them. Once you open someone's eyes, you can ask them to help find the solution.

The solution is the Equality Model: a legal framework based on safeguarding human rights and informed by sex trade survivors. It's worth fighting for. loin us!



## **LANGUAGE 101**

## **Terms to Avoid**

#### Sex work/ Sex worker

- Sex is not work and work is not sex. The term "sex work" coined by a movement that lobbies to legalize or decriminalize the system of prostitution normalizes the sex trade and mainstreams its inherent violence.
- The International Labour Organization states that "decent work involves opportunities that are productive and deliver a fair income, security in the workplace, and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration...". The vast majority of those in the sex trade do not have these opportunities.

#### **Prostitute**

This word has historically been used to degrade women in prostitution. It is also used to denote criminality - in many penal codes, "prostitute" is the identifier of someone committing a listed crime; however, the codes don't identify people as "murderer," "thief," "carjacker," etc.

#### Sex slave

This term sensationalizes and eroticizes the sexual exploitation of another human being. It falsely suggests the sex buyer or trafficker is an "owner" rather than a rapist or exploiter.

## **Sex industry**

Like the term "sex work," this term normalizes the sex trade and paints it as a legitimate line of business (like the music industry, food industry, film industry, etc.).

### Teen/child prostitute

This disregards national and international laws, which state that any person under the age of 18 who is bought and sold in the sex trade is by definition a sex trafficked child. That legal status does not disappear when she turns 18.

#### Client/Date

- Using the term "client" suggests that purchasing sexual acts is like any other business transaction. It trivializes and normalizes the power, control, and violence exercised by sex buyers.
- "Date" implies that both parties have equal power and that the interaction between them is free of coercion (economic, physical, bribery/threats etc.)

## **LANGUAGE 101**

## Instead, we say:

### Prostituted person/ person in prostitution

A term to refer to someone being sold and bought by sex buyers through prostitution.

#### **Survivor**

For the purpose of this toolkit, "survivor" refers to individuals who have lived experience in prostitution.

#### **Abolition**

In this context, "abolition" refers to eradicating the system of prostitution which is rooted in patriarchy and misogyny; a living legacy of colonialism, racism and myriad forms of discrimination. If our goal is to secure equality for women and girls, we must abolish it.

## The system of prostitution/ The sex trade

Preferred umbrella term when referring to all forms of prostitution including escort services, illegal "massage parlors," pornography, strip clubs, sugar dating, street prostitution, etc. It is a global multi-billion-dollar enterprise, upheld by sex buyers who fuel it.

### **Commercial sexual exploitation**

A term used to refer to the act of profiting from the buying and selling of human beings in the sex trade for the benefit of this global multi-billion-dollar enterprise.

## Sex buyer

Preferred term when referring to someone who purchases a sexual act.

## **LEGISLATIVE MODELS ON PROSTITUTION**

Most countries legislate prostitution at the national level; in the U.S. laws regarding prostitution are adjudicated at the state level.

**Full criminalization:** Prostitution is criminalized for everyone involved, including those who sell sex, those who buy sex, and those who facilitate prostitution and sell others for sex (i.e. pimps). This is the current legal model in almost all of the U.S., Egypt, Romania, the UAE, among others.

**Legalization:** Prostitution is a fully legal, licensed, and regulated industry. The state profits from the sale and sexual exploitation of people in prostitution. Legalization is in effect in Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and several counties in Nevada.

**Full decriminalization:** The state removes all laws regarding prostitution, leaving it to local jurisdictions to oversee. This is the model in New Zealand and several states in Australia.

In both **fully decriminalized** and **legalized** environments, all aspects of prostitution are legal, including the purchase, sale, and promotion of sexual acts. The state defines and legitimizes prostitution as work and regulates it through labor laws. Law enforcement loses the ability to investigate and prosecute traffickers. The market for prostitution expands, increasing sex trafficking and sex tourism.

The Equality Model: This Model ends the arrests and incarceration of all individuals bought and sold in the sex trade, and offers them essential medical, mental health, housing, and legal services. Sex buying, pimping, brothel-owning remain illegal. This is the legislative framework in Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Northern Ireland, France, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, Israel, and the state of Maine in the U.S.

# OVERVIEW OF THE EQUALITY MODEL BILL

(<u>S. 2005 KRUEGER / A. 1465 HUNTER</u>)
SEX TRADE SURVIVORS JUSTICE & EQUALITY ACT

#### Strengthens Laws to Prevent and Address Sex Trafficking

- Eliminates a loophole in New York State law that prevents sex buyers, like Jeffrey Epstein, from being charged with promotion of prostitution when they traffic people to themselves.
- Strengthens protections for children against sexual exploitation by eliminating an ignorance defense afforded to those who buy sex from children under 11 (1st degree), 15 (2nd degree), or in a school zone.
- Laws that hold accountable pimps, sex traffickers, and other profiteers remain unchanged.

#### **Advances Justice for Survivors**

- Ends the arrests and incarceration of people bought and sold in prostitution.
- Automatically expunges all past charges for engaging in prostitution.
- Prevents people in the sex trade from being charged as an accomplice to promoting or compelling
  prostitution when they are helping others in prostitution like them, are not profiting from prostitution, and
  are being exploited by a third party.
- Clears the criminal records of trafficking survivors for crimes committed while they were under the control of their exploiter.

#### **Expands Legal Protections & Access to Social Services for Survivors**

- Develops and expands lifesaving programs for survivors, including health/mental health services, temporary and permanent housing placement, legal and immigration services, employment placement, education and job training, and safe harbor programs for sexually exploited children.
- Enables a broader pool of people to access social services from organizations combating gender violence by aligning New York's definition of human trafficking with the federal definition.
- Extends the legal protections and comprehensive services afforded to minors apprehended for prostitution under New York's Safe Harbor law, to cover young adults up to age 24.
- Expands a regionally, racially, and sexually diverse State task force with representation from people in the sex trade and advocates, to ensure access and administration of social services to people in prostitution across New York.
- Fines imposed on sex buyers will be directed to a Victims of Sexual Exploitation Fund to support essential social services.

## OVERVIEW OF THE 'FULL DECRIM' BILL

S2513 SALAZAR / A3251 SOUFFRANT FORREST CECILIA'S ACT FOR RIGHTS IN THE SEX TRADES

Both bills propose to end the arrest and incarceration of people selling sex, but **Cecilia's Act for Rights in the Sex Trades** will also have the following consequences:

### Decriminalizes people who buy sex

• This sends a message that buying sex is a "victimless" crime, and normalizes it to an extent that we will see an exponential growth in the market for commercial sex.

## Makes it harder to investigate & prosecute cases of pimping and sex trafficking

• There will be less investigations of commercial sex establishments because they will be legal, removing opportunities to detect children and sex trafficking victims in these environments.

## Maintains an "ignorance defense" for anyone patronizing in a school zone

• This makes it easier for sex buyers to get away with purchasing sexual acts from a minor.

## Allows brothels & other commercial sex establishments to operate anywhere in New York

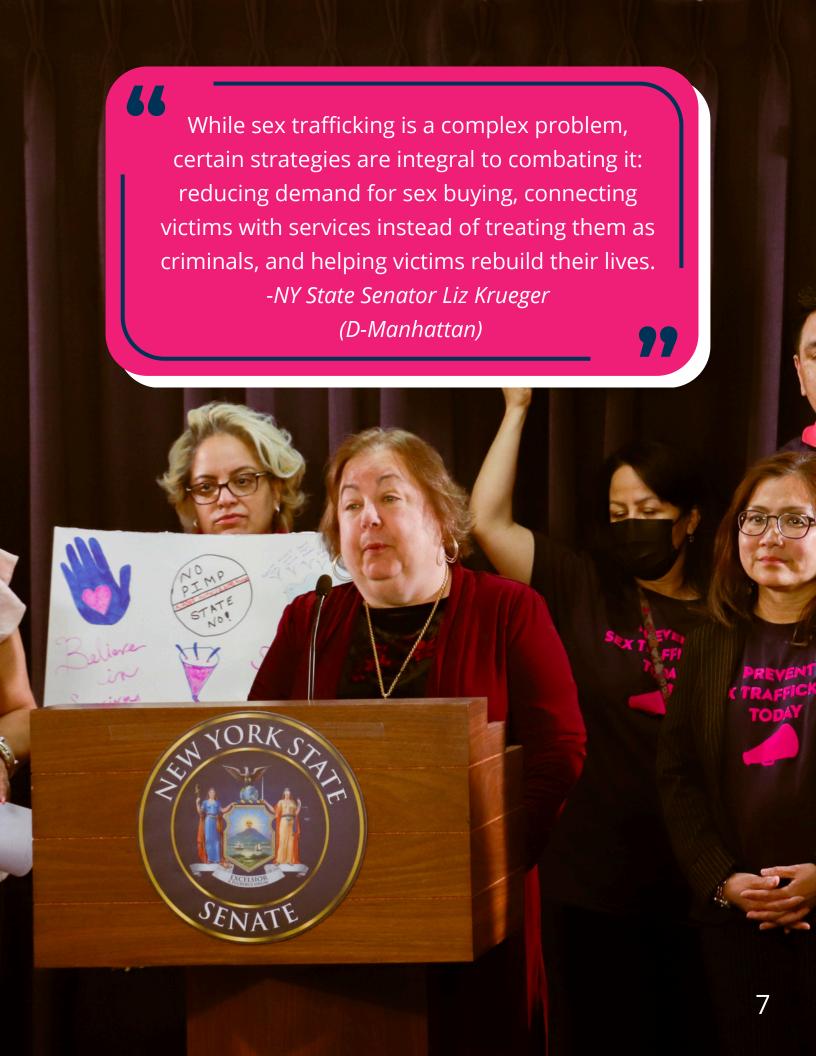
 This will turn New York State into a sex tourism hotspot. Brothels and commercial sex establishments will be allowed to operate alongside our every day lives - next to grocery stores, coffee shops, restaurants, on our routes to school and work.

## Clears criminal convictions for people convicted of sex buying

• Sex buyers will be able to act with impunity for the violence and harm they cause people in prostitution.

## Clears criminal convictions for people convicted of pimping

• Under full decriminalization, pimps can rebrand themselves as "managers" and brothel owners as "business owners."



# KEY MESSAGES & TALKING POINTS

This section will equip you with key talking points you can use when educating others or advocating on behalf of NYFEM.

- Understand the mechanics of sex trafficking and how it connects to prostitution
- Learn about the lifelong trauma sex trade survivors carry
- Get familiar with the types of services the Equality Model offers survivors

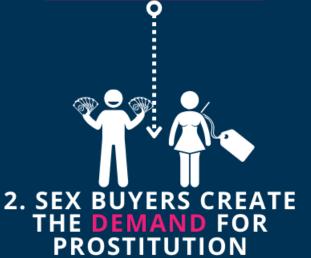
## HOW SEX TRAFF

A PROFITABLE BUSINESS MODEL:

## 1.HUMANS ARE THE "SUPPLY"

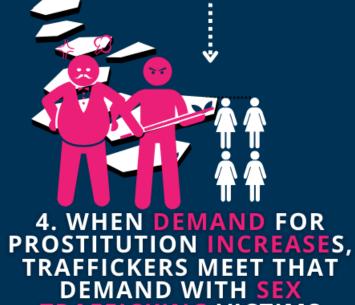


The supply consists primarily of a large group of people who belong to marginalized populations, typically-society's most vulnerable women, girls, trans and gender non-conforming youth, young adults aging out of foster care or with histories of childhood sexual abuse and trauma, and undocumented immigrants—disproportionately of color, often trafficked into the sex trade.



Demand is a consumer's willingness to buy a product. In the sex trade, sex buyers' willingness to buy sexual acts from people in prostitution creates demand and fuels the sex trade.

99% of sex buyers are men. High-frequency buyers in the U.S. typically earn a salary of \$100K+ annually.



Traffickers know that to grow a business they must meet sex buyers' demands. To meet the increased demand for paid sexual acts, pimps and sex traffickers provide the human "supply" to sex buyers reaping massive profits.

TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Traffickers use manipulation, coercion, force, and deception to push vulnerable people like homeless teens, immigrant women and foster care youth into the sex\_trade.

## **ICKING WORKS**

SUPPLY, DEMAND AND THE INCENTIVE FOR PROFIT

# 3. THE GREATER THE NUMBER OF SEX BUYERS, THE LARGER THE SEX TRADE

When prostitution is legal or decriminalized, the demand for paid sexual acts increases. When the state normalizes sex buying, men who would otherwise be deterred from purchasing sexual acts – for ethical or legal reasons – are encouraged to become sex buyers.



### 5. SEX BUYERS DON'T CARE

THEY JUST WANT TO PURCHASE SEXUAL ACTS

Sex buyers do not care if the person they buy is sex trafficked. Regardless of the circumstances, sex buyers rarely face consequences for the psychological, sexual or physical harm they cause on the human beings they purchase.



## 6. END DEMAND, END SEX TRAFFICKING



Without sex buyers, there would be no prostitution market where pimps and sex traffickers bring women and children to meet that demand.

Hold sex buyers accountable, end demand, prevent sex trafficking, and shrink the sex trade.

## VIOLENCE AND HARM IN PROSTITUTION

YOU CAN'T REGULATE OR DEREGULATE TRAUMA AWAY



## HIGH LEVELS OF VIOLENT ENCOUNTERS

In a study of Prostitution in 9 countries with 854 respondents, 64% had been threatened with a weapon, 73% had been physically assaulted, and 57% had been raped.

Of the 57% (483 people) who had been raped in prostitution, 59% (286 people) had been raped in prostitution 6 or more times.



## PROSTITUTION CREATES LIFELONG PSYCHOLOGICAL SCARS

The psychological and physical trauma that people in prostitution go through has caused many to develop PTSD.

68% of those surveyed met the criteria for such a diagnosis.



## THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE ARE TARGETED

Women and girls, especially of color, members of Black and Brown communities, the LGBTQ+ population, run away and foster youth, individuals experiencing homelessness, and undocumented immigrants are particularly at risk.



72% of detected trafficking victims worldwide are women and girls, who are primarily trafficked for sexual exploitation. The end point of sex trafficking is the sex trade, especially prostitution. And it is sex buyers' demand for prostitution that drives the sex trade and fuels sex trafficking. No buyer, no business, no trafficking.



Whether it's indoors in brothels, massage parlors, online or on the streets, the safety of a person in prostitution can't be guaranteed. There is no way to conduct a full background check based on a phone number, a dummy email account, fake name or brief encounter on the curb.

The *only* solution that holds perpetrators of this long-term harm and trauma accountable and ensures people in prostitution are decriminalized and given access to much-needed, specialized, comprehensive services is the *Equality Model* — a holistic legal approach that reduces sex trafficking and promotes gender equality.

Sources:

## MEDICAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF PROSTITUTION

The consequences of being repeatedly bought and sold to strangers for sex results in an array of medical issues, including:

- Malnourishment
- Pregnancy-related issues
- Old and new injuries from sexual and physical assault — burns, broken bones, stab wounds
- Dental trauma

- Traumatic brain injury
- Anogenital injury (rectal prolapse/ vaginal injuries)
- Internal injuries
- · Sexually transmitted infections and untreated chronic medical conditions

Pimps and traffickers, brothel owners and other third-party profiteers, and sex buyers subject people in prostitution to intersecting forms of violence: rape ,and sexual assault; emotional, economic and physical abuse; food and sleep deprivation; and acts of torture. The result is cumulative, psychological and physical trauma with lifelong impact.

People in prostitution report high rates of psychiatric disorders including depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, eating disorders, sexual dysfunction, substance use, suicidal ideation or attempts, self-harm, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and dissociative disorders.

Additionally, pimps and traffickers often control a victim's access to medical care. They may allow the person under their control to seek care when the injuries or illnesses are particularly severe or if their ability to make money is inhibited. However, exploiters intentionally keep their victims isolated and often prohibit critical, preventative or follow up care.<sup>3</sup>

Survivors of prostitution and sex trafficking testify that the traumatic scars of this physical and psychological harm experienced at the hands of pimps and traffickers, brothel owners, and sex buyers are lifelong.6

The sex trade cannot be made less harmful — these effects cannot be regulated or deregulated away.

<sup>3</sup> MacKinnon C., "Prostitution and civil rights. In Women's lives, men's laws," Harvard University Press. 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Ross C, Farley M, Schwartz H. "Dissociation among women in prostitution," Journal of Trauma Practice, 2008. 5 Muftic LR, Finn MA, "Health outcomes among women trafficked for sex in the United States: a closer look," J Interpers Violence, 2013.

# SURVIVORS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORT SERVICES...

"It is important for people to understand that exiting 'the life' is not like it is portrayed in movies like Taken, which have done us an injustice by thinking that you just kick open a door and carry a trafficked victim to freedom and the trafficked victim then just lives out the rest of their life. The reality is that this scenario happens in very few cases. **Exiting 'the life' is a huge process.**"

-Megan Lundstrom

"It needs to start with housing. Housing is so important. If we can get survivors into housing and keep them safe, everything else will come together. They will be stable enough to work on their education, work on trauma therapy and so much more."

-Laura Mullen

"It is really important for service provisions to start meeting people where they are. **As low of a barrier as possible.** If you design service provisions for the most marginalized, everyone else will fall into that."

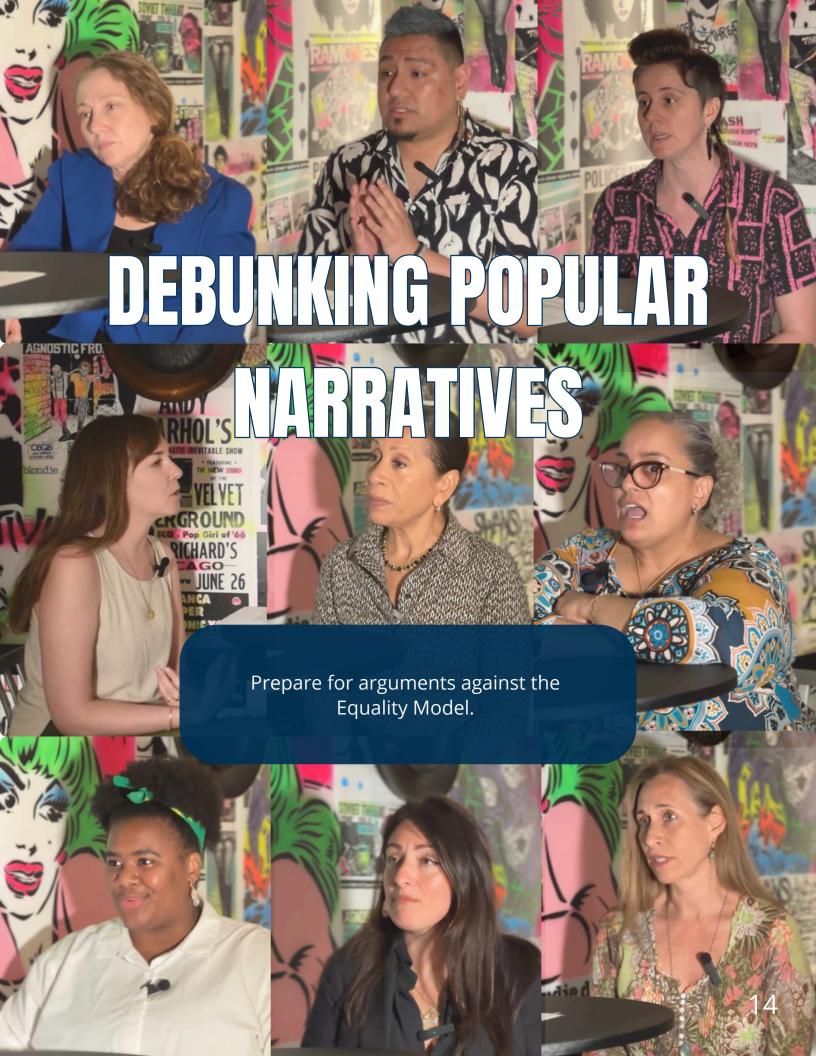
-Nicole Bell

"For most of us – especially those of us trafficked as children – when we exit the life, we are leaving behind everything we knew. We couldn't develop in a healthy way because of all the trauma we experienced. So, getting thrown into the world, it leaves us completely vulnerable. I feel **the state should offer more services**, specifically for sex trafficking survivors."

-Nicole Potes Alvarado

"The legislation protects everyone bought and sold in the sex trade, regardless of how they identify. The bill offers legal aid, medical & psychological services, housing, exit strategies, and employment opportunities."

-Cristian Eduardo





#### "Sex work' is work."

The term "sex work" categorizes prostitution as labor, which we fundamentally reject.

#### Ask yourself:

What other "job" involves direct contact with bodily fluids (i.e. sweat, saliva, semen, blood, feces), making compliance with Occupational Health and Safety Standards impossible?

What other "job" comes with such health risks as STIs, cystitis, unwanted pregnancies, vagina, pelvic and anal injuries?

What other "job" comes with such high rates of sexual and physical violence? Mortality rates for women in prostitution are 40-50 times the national average. 62% report being raped, 73% report being physically assaulted.

"Sex work is work" is a marketing slogan, not a description of what being in the sex trade is actually like.

## The Equality Model will force the sex trade underground and make it more dangerous.

Prostitution will always be violent and dangerous - there is no way to reduce its harms or make it safe. Proponents of decriminalizing the sex trade say that if everything's legal, then people in prostitution can screen sex buyers and do background checks. But there is no way to reliably screen sex buyers, or to predict a person's capacity for violence.

Pimps, traffickers, and sex buyers routinely subject people in prostitution to violence, rape, and sexual assault. The result of that violence is lifelong psychological and physical trauma. The sex trade cannot be made less harmful, its effects cannot be regulated or deregulated away.

### Prostitution is the oldest profession.

It is, in fact, the oldest oppression. Historically, prostitution did not exist in many indigenous societies until after they were colonized by European societies.

Prostitution was introduced to the North American continent with the European invasion, a lasting legacy of colonization.

#### "My body my choice."

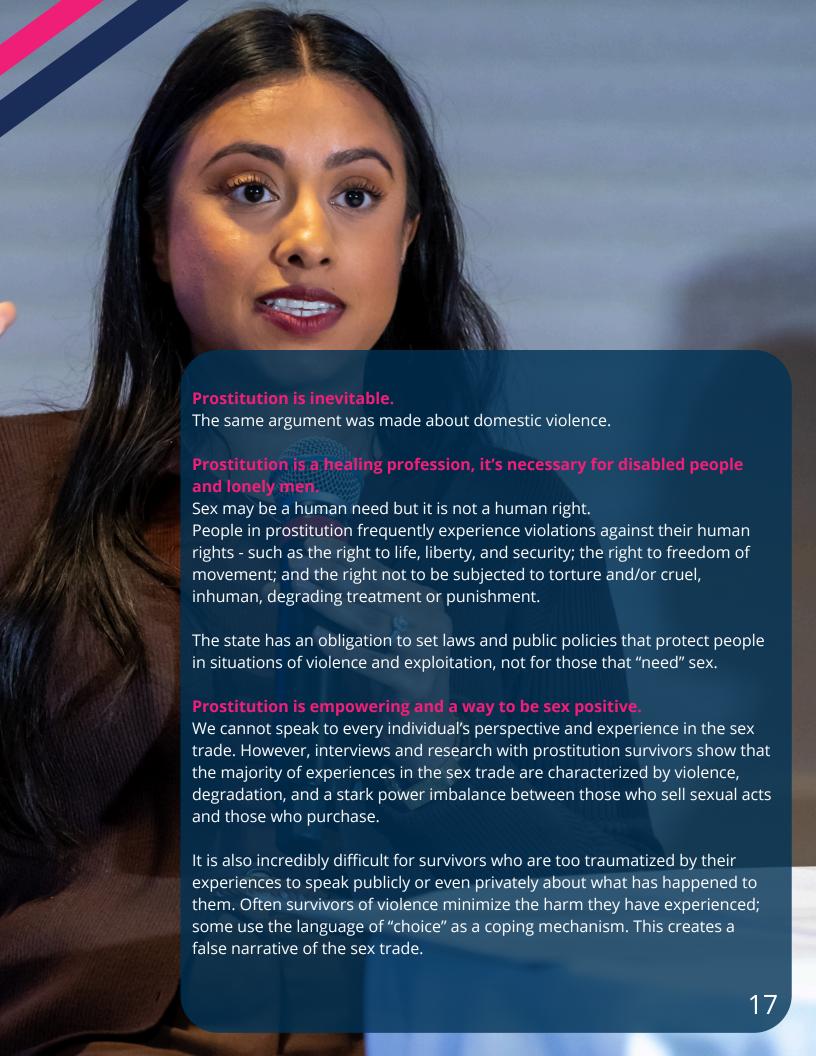
Sex positive feminism has heavily influenced the widespread reframing of prostitution as being about consent, women's bodily autonomy, and sexual empowerment.

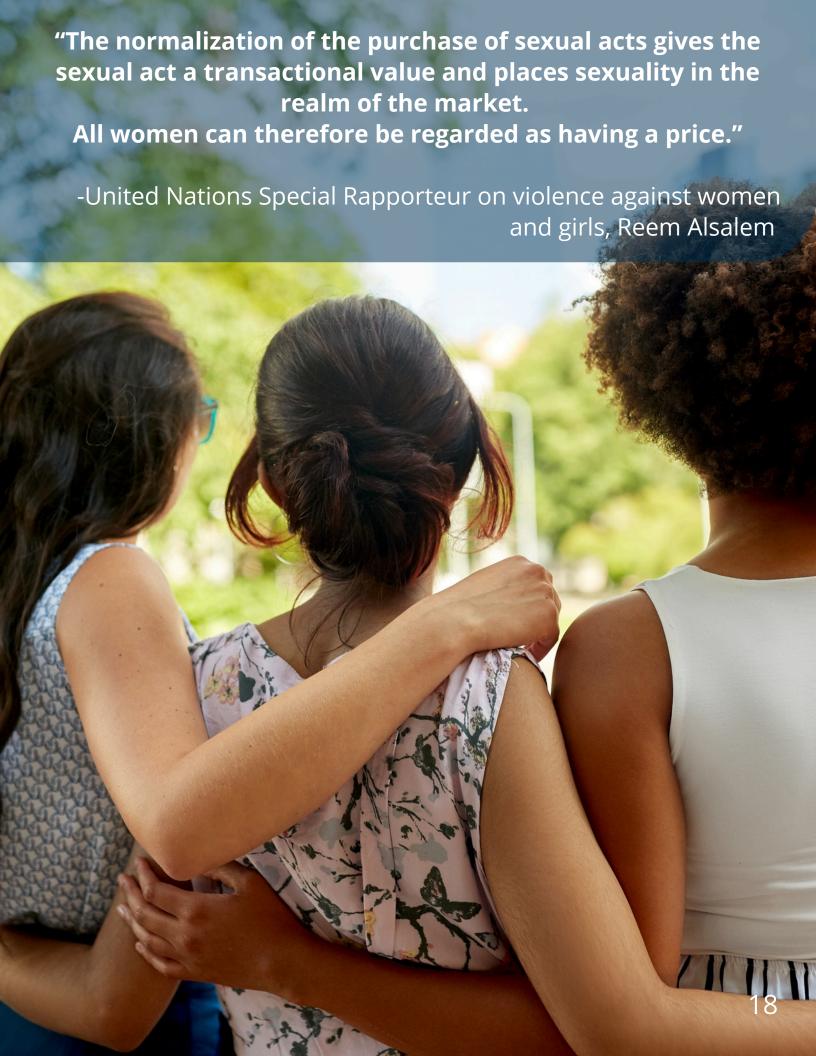
However, we must look at the context behind the "choice" to sell sexual acts. In any interaction between a sex buyer and a prostituted person, the sex buyer has the power to provide or deny a livelihood. For the vast majority of people in prostitution, it is their lack of choices, not empowerment that leads them to sell sexual acts.

### I've never been violated or experienced violence in "sex work."

Every individual's experience is different, but the vast majority of sex trade survivors have suffered extreme levels of physical and sexual violence, degradation, and mental trauma at the hands sex buyers and other exploiters. We must create legislation that reflects the experiences of the majority, not a lucky few.









## Rates of sexual assault and rape will increase under the Equality Model.

Rape is less about the desire for sex and more about power and violence. Traffickers, pimps, and sex buyers exert their violence in the sex trade, seeing those in prostitution as disposable and less valuable. Where a sex trade exists, there will be violence against those in prostitution. The Equality Model creates protections for those in prostitution and enhances services for them, while continuing to hold exploiters accountable for the violence they cause.



The system of prostitution relies on a status quo where certain groups are marginalized - socially, culturally, economically - and therefore have limited opportunities for sustainable employment and community.

There is no safe community or employment to be found in the sex trade; a staggering number of transwomen are murdered each year by sex buyers.

A system that offers up human beings for consumption and disposal is not worth protecting or fighting for. Instead, we need to fight for laws and policies that create affordable housing, universal healthcare, and safe, fulfilling employment opportunities.

The Equality Model is one way to protect the human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals and expand services offering safe, sustainable opportunities.

## People who support the Equality Model are SWERFs /TERFs.

SWERF stands for "Sex Worker-Exclusionary Radical Feminist," often used by the opposing side to distract from having meaningful conversations about the structural oppressions that lead to the system of prostitution.

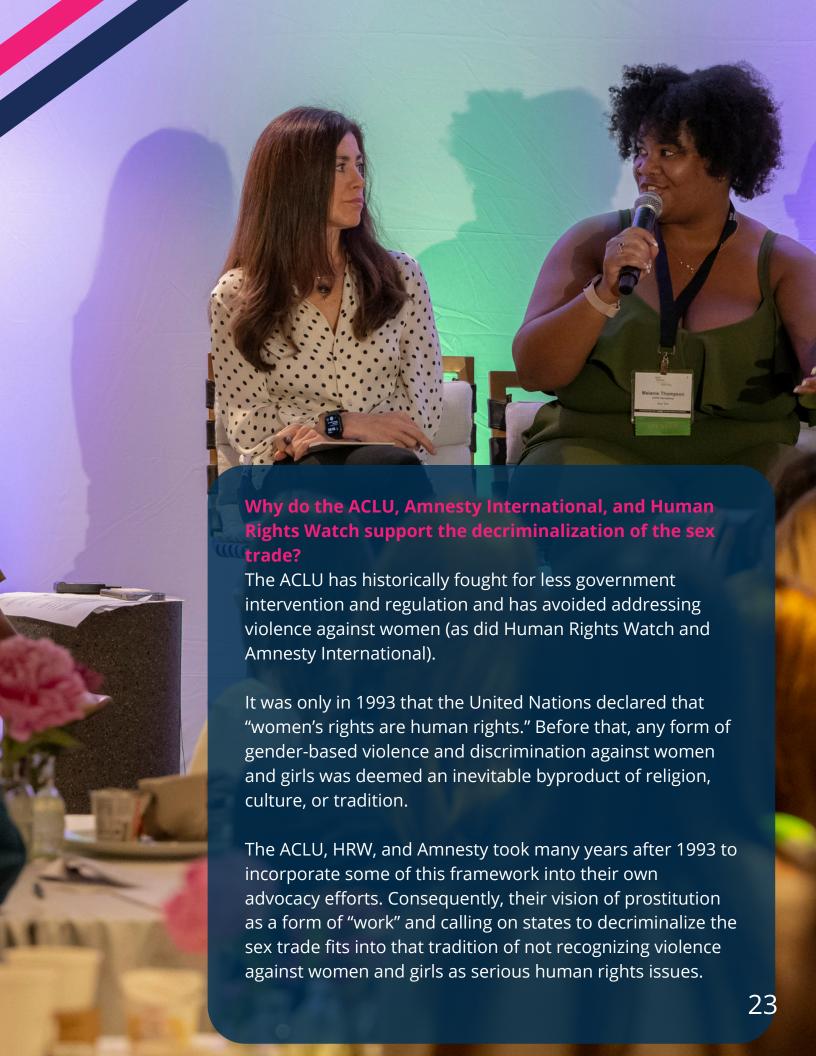
New Yorkers for the Equality Model is made up of a diverse group of survivors, advocates, and anti-trafficking organizations who believe in every human's right to live free from violence and discrimination.



"In reality, when we say 'let's open the door for prostitution,' what we're really saying is 'let's continue oppressing the LGBTQ+ community.' Queer liberation means being able to be seen beyond my body, that I don't have a price tag. It means erasing prostitution as a profession for my community."

-Cristian Eduardo, survivor leader





# STATISTICS & RESEARCH

Learn the facts and studies that support the Equality Model framework and demonstrate the failure of legalization and decriminalization policies.

 $\sigma$ 

## WHO IS EXPLOITED?

- 91% of sex trafficking victims are women and girls.
- Of the more than 10,000 cases reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, nearly 40% were Black women and girls—the highest of any racial group.<sup>2</sup>
- 40% of sex trafficking victims in the U.S. identify as Native American, despite being only 3% of the population.<sup>3</sup>
- A 2016 study from New York City found the average age of entry into the sex trade was 15 years old.
- 84% of women in prostitution are under some form of third party control, pimped, or trafficked. <sup>5</sup>
- At least 85% of sex trade survivors had prior child welfare involvement (child abuse and neglect allegations/investigations) and/or foster care placement.<sup>6</sup>
- LGBTQ+ youth are twice as likely to be sex trafficked compared to their non-LGBTQ+ peers.<sup>7</sup>

"Are you saying that Black lives matter, but it's OK for privileged white men to buy them?"

-Audrey Morrissey, sex trade survivor

- 1 UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, 2022, p33.
- 2 Polaris, Analysis of 2021 Data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline.
- 3 National Criminal Justice Training Center, Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls National Statistics, 2022.
- 4 Connor, Brendan M., In Loco Aequitatis: The Dangers of 'Safe Harbor' Laws for Youth in the Sex Trades, p.55, 2016.
- 5 Farley, Melissa, Kenneth Franzblau, and M. Alexis Kennedy, "Online Prostitution and Trafficking," Albany Law Review, 77 (3), 1039–94, 2014.
- 6 Gragg, F., Petta, I., Bernstein, H., Eisen, K. and Quinn, L., ii, 2007.
- 7 National Center for Youth Law, Understanding the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of LGBTQIA2S+ Youth, 2023.

## PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH TRAUMAS

- Sex trafficked children are the most at-risk for the lifelong medical and psychological harms pimps and traffickers, and sex buyers inflict in prostitution.
- Of 475 people in prostitution interviewed across five countries (South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, U.S. and Zambia), 67% met diagnostic criteria for PTSD.
   Symptoms include anxiety, depression, insomnia, irritability, flashbacks, emotional numbing and hyper-alertness. <sup>2</sup>
- 62% of women in prostitution report being raped and 73% report being physically assaulted.
- In one study, trans youth who experienced prostitution were more than 4 times as likely to have HIV as those without such a history.
- Mortality rates for women in prostitution are 40 to 50 times the national average.
- Out of all known victims of fatal anti-transgender violence in the U.S. from 2013 to 2018, 32% were reportedly in the sex trade. 6

3 Ibid.

<sup>1</sup> Greenbaum, J. & Crawford-Jakubiak, J. E. (2015). "Child Sex Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Health Care Needs of Victims," American Academy of Pediatrics. Vol. 135

<sup>2</sup> Farley, Melissa, Kulaksizoglu, Işin, Kiremire, Merab, Sezgin, Ufuk., "Prostitution in Five Countries: Violence and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder," 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Wilson, E. C., Garofalo, R., Harris, R. D., Herrick, A., Martinez, M., Martinez, J., Belzer, M., & The Transgender Advisory Committee and the Adolescent Medicine Trials Network for HIV/AIDS Interventions, "Transgender female youth and sex work: HIV risk and a comparison of life factors related to engagement in sex work," AIDS and Behavior, 13(5), 902–913, 2009.

5 Farley et al.

<sup>6 &</sup>quot;A National Epidemic: Fatal Anti-Transgender Violence in American in 2018," Human Rights Watch.

## WHO BUYS SEX?

- The majority of sex buyers are men. For instance, in France, 99% of sex buyers are men. 1
- 20.6% of men have bought sex at least once in their lifetimes.<sup>2</sup>
- High-frequency buyers in the U.S. typically earn a salary of \$100K+ annually.
- Nearly half of sex buyers have paid for sex with women they knew to be under the control of a pimp or trafficker.<sup>4</sup>

43%

of sex buyers stated that if men pay for sex, the woman should do anything they ask.

"Flushing: Asian p\*\*\*y central. That's my go-to spot. You can take your pick and they take you upstairs... you can see the different body types and faces. And actually get to pick who you want."

-sex buyer from Flushing, NY

<sup>1</sup> Havoscope, "Prostitution: Prices and Statistics of the Global Sex Trade," 18 June 2015.

<sup>2 &</sup>quot;Who Buys Sex? Understanding an Disrupting Illicit Market Demand," Demand Abolition, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4 &</sup>quot;What We Know About Sex Trafficking, Prostitution, and Sexual Exploitation in the U.S." World Without Exploitation, 2020.

## THE PIMPS AND TRAFFICKERS

- A 2014 study found that men were more likely to become pimps if they grew up in a neighborhood or environment where there were high levels of prostitution or if they had a family member in the sex trade. 1
- 95% of pimps use coercion and/or threats of violence. 45% of traffickers used violence on their victims.<sup>2</sup>
- Pimps report that they scout for new people at major traffic hubs, like the Port Authority bus terminal in NYC. <sup>3</sup>

New York is the **fourth** highest state for reported cases of sexual exploitation and labor trafficking in the U.S.<sup>4</sup>

"Most hoes have low self esteem. A pimp looks for that weakness, and if it isn't on the surface, he brings that motherf\*cker out of them. It doesn't matter what hoes' weaknesses are, so long as they have them. Then he uses those weaknesses to his advantage."

-Ken Ivy, former pimp, author of *Pimpology: The 48 Laws of the Game* 

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Estimating the Size and Structure of the Underground Commercial Sex Economy in Eight Major US Cities," Urban Institute, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Denton, E., "The Nature and Extent of Gang Involvement in Sex Trafficking in San Diego County," 2016.

<sup>3 &</sup>quot;Estimating the Size and Structure of the Underground Commercial Sex Economy in Eight Major US Cities," Urban Institute, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2024.

# FAILURES OF FULL DECRIMINALIZATION AND LEGALIZATION MODELS

## THE NETHERLANDS (legalized the sex trade in 2000)

- An estimated 50-90% of women in the legal sex trade fit the definition of sex trafficking victims.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2022, the Netherlands was listed among the top 5 countries with the highest rate of human trafficking.<sup>2</sup>
- As of 2024, the Netherlands hosts the largest proportion of CSAM (child sexual abuse material) on the internet.<sup>3</sup>
- 60% of women in the sex trade reported experiencing violence, threats, or coercion.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2022, 45% of cases against traffickers were dismissed.

## GERMANY (legalized the sex trade in 2002)

- Sex trafficking cases rose by 70% following legalization.<sup>6</sup>
- Approximately 1 million men buy sexual acts daily, with Berlin alone hosting over 500 brothels.<sup>7</sup>
- Germany reported over 140 homicides of women in prostitution since it legalized the sex trade.<sup>8</sup>
- 90% of women in the sex trade are unregistered.
- 80% of the public doesn't believe the law works.
- Only 10% of those working in Germany are German nationals. The other 90% are foreign born.<sup>11</sup>
- 1 "The effects of different legislative approaches to prostitution on trafficking for sexual exploitation," European Women's Lobby, 2011.
- 2 "Netherlands among worst nations for human trafficking, but number of reports declining," NL Times, 18 Oct 2022.
- 3 "Legal and institutional responses to the online sexual exploitation of children: Netherlands case study," University of Nottingham Rights Lab, September 2023.
- 4 "Violence against women: An EU-wide survey," European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014.
- 5 "Access to justice and effective remedies for victims of trafficking in human beings," GRETA, 9 Nov 2023.
- 6 "The effects of different legislative approaches to prostitution on trafficking for sexual exploitation," European Women's Lobby, 2011.
- "Germany has become the cut-rate prostitution capital of the world," Time, 18 June, 2013.
- 8 "Murders in the German Sex Trade: 1920 to 2017," Dignity: A Journal of Analysis of Exploitation and Violence, 2021.
- 9 "Sex workers speak out against German prostitution law," DW, 18 Oct 2021.
- 10 Köcher, Renate. "Allensbach zu Prostitution." Emma , 28 Oct 2020.

# FAILURES OF FULL DECRIMINALIZATION AND LEGALIZATION MODELS

## NEW ZEALAND (decriminalized the sex trade in 2003)

- There is a disproportionate representation of indigenous Maori, Pacific Islands, and Asian women in the sex trade.
- Third party exploiters can legally take up to 50% of a person's earnings.<sup>2</sup>
- Brothels are permitted to allow women to live on the premises, leaving them vulnerable to relying on work for shelter.<sup>3</sup>
- After decriminalization passed, it took 12 years before New Zealand convicted a sex trafficker.<sup>4</sup>

#### **AUSTRALIA**

## (several states have either decriminalized or legalized the sex trade)

- There was a 30% increase in femicide in 2023, with 1 woman murdered every 4 days by men's violence.<sup>5</sup>
- In Melbourne, there are 500 illegal massage businesses that are operating among the 90 registered ones.6
- 90% of women working in these brothels are Asian women from China, Thailand, Korea, Philippines, and Pacific Islands.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Germany and New Zealand: A Comparison in Prostitution Laws," the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, June 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4 &</sup>quot;Exposed: The dark underbelly of human trafficking in New Zealand," The New Zealand Herald, 21 Sept 2016.

<sup>5 &</sup>quot;Australia sees a rise in female intimate partner homicide in new research report," Australian Institute of Criminology, 30 April 2024.

<sup>6</sup> Larin, Tegan, "(In)visible sites of the sex industry: massage parlours and the construction of space," Monash University, 23 March 2021. 7 Ibid.



-Schon, Manuela and Hoheide, Anna., "Murders In the

German Sex Trade: 1920 to 2017," 2021.



## SUCCESS OF THE EQUALITY MODEL AROUND THE WORLD

## **SWEDEN (adopted Equality Model in 1999)**

- Prostitution dropped 40% and has remained at this lower level.
- The number of men purchasing sexual acts dropped from 13.6% to 7.4%
- In 2021, the Swedish Ambassador-at-Large to Combat Human Trafficking declared: "The Swedish market for human trafficking is practically dead."3

## **NORWAY (adopted Equality Model in 2009)**

- Street prostitution in Oslo decreased between 35% to 60%, while the indoor market shrunk by 10% to 20%,4
- Reduced human trafficking.<sup>5</sup>
- Violence against women or against people in prostitution did not increase.

## FRANCE (adopted Equality Model in 2016)

- No prostituted person has been arrested or convicted (compared to 2,000 arrests per year before the law went into effect).7
- As of January 1, 2023, 1,247 prostituted people have benefited from an exit program and 95% of have found stable employment. 8
- The number of criminal investigations related to pimping and trafficking increased by 54% in the first three years of the law's implementation. 9
- Almost 2.35 million euros have been confiscated from exploiters and reinvested in the protection and rehabilitation of sex trade survivors.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ekberg, Gunilla S., "Swedish laws, policies, and interventions on prostitution and trafficking in human beings: an overview," 16 Feb 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Per-Anders Sunesson, the Swedish Ambassador-at-Large to Combat Human Trafficking: "The Swedish market for human trafficking is practically dead." (Main Points of Statement by Helmut Sporer, On the Consultation of the Committee on Gender Equality and Women of the State Parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany) on January 14, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Koranyi, B., "Norway's closely watched prostitution ban works, study finds," Reuters, 11 Aug 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Cuxac, P. A., Isabelle Lonvis-Rome: "Je souhaite porter une nouvelle stratégie nationale de lutte contre la prostitution à la rentrée," 13 Apirl 2023.



-THE SWEDISH AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING, 2021



# SHARE OUR EDUCATIONAL SHORTS!>>>>



**End Demand, End Sex Trafficking** 



**Can Money Buy Consent?** 



**Sex Buyers in New York** 



How Full Decriminalization of the Sex Trade
Leads to Increased Sex Trafficking



Rhode Island Case Study: The Experiment with Full Decriminalization

WHAT HAPPENED
DURING RHODE
ISLAND'S YEARS OF
DEGRIMINALIZED
PROSTITUTION?

# FOLLOW KEY PEOPLE/ ORGANIZATIONS TO STAY UP TO DATE ON THE EQUALITY MODEL



## via X (formerly known as Twitter):

- 1. Equality Model (General Updates) updates on EM from around the world
  - a. CAP Intl @CAPIntl
  - b. CATW @CATWIntl
  - c. NYFEM @EqualityModelNY
  - d. Movimento Feminista de Madrid @MovFemMad
  - e. Associazione Aura @auraassociazione
  - f. Nordic Model Now @nordicmodelnow
  - g. PAFA Equality Model CA @EqualityModelCA
  - h. SPACE International @SPACEintl
  - i. PACT @WeAre PACT
  - j. WorldWE @WorldWEUS
  - k. Rights for Girls @rights4girls

#### 2. Equality Model (NYS) - updates on EM specific to NYS

- a. <u>NYFEM</u> @EqualityModelNY
- b. Pamela Hunter @PamelaHunter128
- c. Senator Liz Krueger @LizKrueger
- d. New York State Senate @NYSenate
- e. Cristian Eduardo @ceduardonyfem
- f. Covenant House NY @CovenantHouseNY
- g. Af3irm NYC @AF3IRMNYC
- h. Lifeway Network @LifeWayNetwork
- i. NYS Anti-Trafficking @NYS\_ATC
- j. *Restore NYC* @RestoreNYC
- k. *Taina Bien-Aime* @tainabienaime
- I. NOW NYC @NOW\_NYC
- m. Sanctuary for Families @SFFNY

# SIGN OUR STATEMENT OF SUPPORT



Add your name to this list of signatories showing support for the Equality Model! Ensure that your voice is counted in the fight for justice and equality.

# REACH OUT TO YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Sending an individual letter to state representatives is an effective way to show legislators which issues and legislation their constituents care about. Use our template letter (see page 39) to personalize your own letter and send directly to your state representatives.

Find Your State Senator
Find Your State Assembly Member

## TEMPLATE LETTER

Dear

We are members of New Yorkers for the Equality Model, a coalition grounded in the courageous voices of survivors, fortified by advocates and allied organizations. Our shared vision is a New York that champions the healing and empowerment of those ensnared in the sex trade.

We collectively call on you to support the Sex Trade Survivors Justice & Equality Act (S.2005 Krueger/A.1465 Hunter). This legislation confronts the harsh reality that prostitution is not only a system of violence but one that permeates with exploitation and abuse, especially against women and girls. Your support and cosponsorship are not just valuable – they are critical. Aligning with this cause is more than just legislative action. It is a stand for a just and equitable society that values the dignity of all its members.

#### **Supporting and Empowering Survivors**

Essential to the Sex Trade Survivors Justice & Equality Act (STSJEA) is the groundbreaking step to end the arrests and incarceration of prostituted individuals, removing the stigmas and legal hurdles that obstruct their journey to rebuild their lives. Further, it proposes robust and expanded support systems, such as trauma-informed health care, housing, education – crucial lifelines for survivors striving to escape cycles of violence and exploitation.

#### **Upholding Community Safety and Integrity**

The STSJEA maintains stringent sanctions against those who perpetrate sexual exploitation. Those who promote prostitution (e.g. pimping) and buy sex are the ones perpetrating harm and the people who are prostituted and exploited by them should not bear the burdens of legal penalties. Current laws against pimps and buyers remain unchanged. Buyers' fear of legal consequences, social rebuke, and public shame serves as a powerful deterrent, thereby reducing the demand that fuels this underground economy. Such a shift aims to reduce the prevalence of related criminal activities that disproportionately affect marginalized communities, safeguarding not just individuals, but the social fabric of our neighborhoods.

#### **Dismantling Exploitation Markets**

By strategically focusing on targeting demand, the STSJEA effectively disrupts the economic foundations of commercial sexual exploitation and prostitution. This bill offers a comprehensive model that rejects the normalization of exploitation, particularly among vulnerable populations such as women and girls, LBGTQ+youth, immigrants, and communities of color.

#### **Call to Action**

We stand ready to support you with detailed briefings, expert consultations, and powerful survivor testimony. Your leadership can significantly shape the trajectory of New York's commitment to ending commercial sexual exploitation.

We respectfully urge your support and co-sponsorship of the Sex Trade Survivors Justice & Equality Act. Let's work together to protect our communities and provide a path to justice and equality for survivors. Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter. We look forward to your partnership in making a meaningful difference.

With respect and hope,

# HOST A PANEL OR PRESENTATION ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Hosting a panel or presentation on human trafficking in your community is one way you can raise awareness and drive action to combat this widespread issue. These events can help educate others in your community on the realities of commercial sexual exploitation, share knowledge for identifying and preventing this exploitation, and discuss legislative solutions such as the Sex Trade Survivors Justice and Equality Act.

Our coalition can connect you with key experts who are leaders in the field, ensuring that your panel or presentation is informative, impactful, and grounded in the latest research and advocacy strategies. Together, we can make a difference and protect the most vulnerable in our communities.

Click on the link below to connect with our coalition to host your next event.

Host a human trafficking awareness event with NYFEM

