To: The Joint Multi Party Women's Caucus

Chair: Hon RMS Moruta

Attention: Bryan Mantyi

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Re: Response to the South African Law Reform Commission's report on 'Sexual offenses: Adult Prostitution'

Dear Mr Mantyi,

I am writing this submission as someone who has been loosely involved in the sex industry for more than a decade, working as a dancer in strip clubs and being hired to perform shows in brothels all over the country. What I have noticed, is that the fact that sex work is outlawed in no way acts as a deterrent. The sex industry is thriving and sex work occurs across all socio-economic strata.

The SALRC report has a bias towards abolitionism, when it is clear that abolitionism does not work. Abolitionism tends to harm sex workers in more ways than it helps. Keeping an entire industry illegal leaves the workers open to exploitation and abuse, with no recourse to report crimes.  The sex industry is already entrenched in society, a new approach is needed in order to ameliorate its negative effects such as violence against women, financial exploitation and drug abuse. In this submission, I urge the government to consider decriminalisation as a means to overhaul the sex industry.

Regards,

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