

Lloyd, Brian

From: Craig Charlton [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 1 April 2011 10:55 PM
To: Lloyd, Brian
Subject: Re: Submission to the Inquiry into the operation of the Prostitution Act 1992

Dear Dr Lloyd

Please find my submission with address below.

Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

Dear Committee Members

I understand that this inquiry was triggered by the death of 17-year-old Janine Cameron in a Fyshwick brothel on 15 September 2008. I thank you for the opportunity to contribute.

There is an accepted premise that if prostitution is regulated in the ACT that this will provide a level of safety for sex workers and prevent underage individuals being involved in sex work. This has clearly not occurred in Janine Cameron's case. While the legalisation and regulation of prostitution may address some issues relating to the safety of sex workers, I am concerned that it has also facilitated an environment where a young and vulnerable woman was placed at risk and harm.

In an article about Janine Cameron's death, the Canberra Times (1/11/08) reported a number of allegations against the ACT sex industry, including the routine use of underage girls to staff brothels. If the current legislation failed to protect Janine Cameron, how can it protect any other young or vulnerable women?

The same article quotes the ACT Attorney-General, Mr Simon Corbell, as saying, "We will always have a level of non-compliance, but I think that level of non-compliance is low..." It appears from Mr Corbell's comment that a level of non-compliance in the ACT is inevitable. Any level of non-compliance, no matter how low, will incur risks. As has been demonstrated by the death of Janine Cameron, an acceptance of a low level of non-compliance has devastating consequences. The only way to completely mitigate these risks is to support sex workers to leave those environments and remove the environments where harm and illegal prostitution could occur.

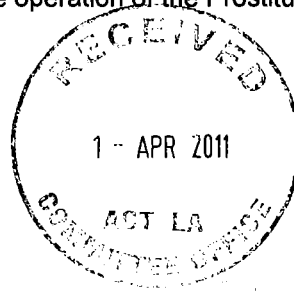
I think that a mature and responsible government should not seek to maintain the current legislation indefinitely, but should focus on assisting sex workers to leave the industry with the aim of removing all prostitution from the territory. I strongly encourage the Committee to investigate the example set by the Swedish Government, who recognises prostitution as sexual exploitation and has made it an offence to buy sex. I understand that this successful approach also involves real support for sex workers to leave the industry.

I agree with the Swedish Government that prostitution is sexual exploitation. I find it difficult to comprehend how the ACT Government can progressively protect equality and human rights, but also sanction an industry that erodes equality and exploits its workers.

Regards

Craig Charlton

29 Bendora Avenue
QUEANBEYAN NSW 2620



 A.C.T. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE OFFICE	
SUBMISSION NUMBER	58
DATE AUTH'D FOR PUBLICATION	11/25/2011 Bf.