

United Sex Workers, North Queensland, (US, NQ)

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We are a group of Sex Workers in North Queensland, Australia and we are very distressed at the current situation that workers in Hong Kong are having to work in, particularly with a serial murderer targeting them. We understand that when Sex Workers are forced to work in isolation from their peers and are not given the opportunity to work with support staff, they are seen as targets for perpetrators of violence and other crimes such as theft.

This coupled with their lack of voice when accessing services such as the Police due to the levels of discrimination and intolerance, makes them extremely attractive targets. As the perpetrators have little chance of being apprehended, charged and prosecuted for their violent crimes against predominantly women who are attempting to provide for the basic needs of themselves and often their families.

These women's willingness and tenacity to earn a living in a way that does not harm others and provides a service that is openly sort by predominantly men, should be encouraged and rewarded by Government as it reduces the stress on the social support structures of the country. Not persecuted and punished as appears to be the current trends.

We strongly urge:

1. The police to improve their enforcement carry out effective measures to protect sex workers but not eradicating sex workers from the community. The police should also improve the present 999 system and allow sex workers to provide information in a secure and comfortable way without any discrimination or humiliation.
2. Sex workers working as sole traders (alone) should be able to join JJJ's Association 'Sisters Network', where they can further foster the linkage and protect themselves. If they have been assaulted or robbed, etc, they would be able to provide relevant information and be encouraged to contact the police as soon as possible. They can then stop the robbers and murders immediately.
3. The society to eliminate the discrimination against sex workers. When sex workers are in trouble or danger, the community can offer help to sex workers, who mainly work in the industry for the sake of family and children.
4. The family of the victims to contact an organization such as JJJ's Association. They are always ready to provide help.

5. The Government to reform current sex work law, so that sex workers can implement workplace health and safety initiatives without fear of prosecution.

Yours truly,

Jenny King

United Sex Workers, North Queensland