

28 February 2022

To whom it may concern

I am writing to contribute my thoughts on the review of the Anti-Discrimination Act in relation to sex work and sex workers.

As a sex worker in Queensland, I think the current wording of 'lawful sexual activity' is a start to protecting sex workers but does not go far enough.

Under the current law, sex work is heavily regulated, and harmless activities such as working in pairs for safety are deemed illegal. Therefore, broader wording is needed in the Act. It should refer clearly to 'sex work' and 'sex workers'.

Referring directly and broadly to 'sex work' and 'sex workers' would allow better protection of current and former workers from discrimination, which is a real concern for many workers. I have personally known other workers who have been faced with discrimination from having their children refused school enrolment to struggling to find stable accommodation. Robust discrimination by the Anti-Discrimination Act is crucial to support us against such mistreatment, which must be made explicitly unlawful.

In addition, the Act must change to include protection for 'people presumed to be sex workers'. This would protect people such as migrant women and transgender women who are often assumed to be working in the industry but may not be. Asian and trans women have been thrown out of hotels, for example, even if not doing sex work, due to assumptions and discrimination. These people must also be protected by a revised and stronger Act.

In particular, the sex worker accommodation exemption in the Act must be repealed. The ability of accommodation providers to refuse housing to people they assume are sex workers has left vulnerable people in situations from lost money to homelessness.

Thank you for considering the needs of sex workers in this review of the Act. I look forward to seeing legislation that better protects all Queenslanders.

Kind regards

Jesse Jones