

Sex Work is Work

Advocacy for law amendment - “two women in one apartment” de-criminalization

The cold-blooded act of serial murdering “one woman apartment” sex workers is happening again! Working as a sex worker in a “one woman apartment” is not illegal in Hong Kong, but personal safety is of the utmost importance, it is indeed the basic appeal. Sad to say, under the present law, sex workers in “one woman apartments” are operating without any tangible support. In other words, they are being “marginalized”! Therefore, our agency strongly urges the Department of Justice immediately to review the law related to prostitution and to allow sex workers to operate in a “two women apartment”.

“Two women apartment” de-criminalization

According to Hong Kong law, prostitution is not a criminal act, regardless of whether you are a sex service provider or a sex service consumer. Prostitution is a victimless crime. When adults voluntarily provide a sex service for monetary return and the consumers receive sexual satisfaction, this is indeed a fair trade, since it does not harm anyone. Based on the personal security issue as well as to promote the notion of mutual help within the industry, all aiming for crime prevention, we strongly urge the authority to immediately amend the related law, so that two women can work in one apartment. In the long term, the authority should review the related law, exploring the possibility of completely de-criminalizing sex work so that their working environment can be enormously improved and their personal safety can be secured.

Robbery continued

In accordance with the research “Hong Kong sex workers occupational safety” surveyed by us in 2007, we successfully interviewed 113 sex workers. They had always dealt with involuntary sex (25.7%), robbery (14.2%) and threat (13.3%), some were even life-threatening acts. However, it was disappointing to learn that over 80% would not report to the police, their main consideration being not wanting to disclose their own identity as a sex worker. “Two women in one apartment” is a feasible solution so that mutual help can be offered. It is believed that this can serve as a positive means of crime prevention.

Sex worker targeted for murder

Under the present circumstances, working as a sex worker in “one woman apartment” is not a criminal act. However, there is societal discrimination towards sex workers, in addition to their severely low social status. In Hong Kong, sex work killers appear every year. The issue of being robbed and killed pathetically reflects the fact that sex worker is in no way protected. This is exactly what the sex workers have to deal with while they have no other option to make a living!

We demand:

- The authority immediately amends the related law, thus permitting the women to operate in a form of “two women in one apartment”.
- Review the present law and rescind “soliciting for immoral purpose” as a criminal act, especially as the two adults have sex voluntarily. Such rescission will definitely improve the working environment of the sex workers so that their personal safety is protected.

Initiating agency: Action For REACH OUT

We were established as a non-government and charitable organization in 1993. We offer services and support to women working in sex industry. We firmly believe that sex work is a work with the aim to advocate for sex work de-criminalization.

Our website: <http://www.afro.org.hk>

Research quoted from our “HK sex workers occupational safety research report”

<http://www.afro.org.hk/pdf/articles/20071216.pdf>

Urgent petition: Sex work is work
Advocacy for “two women in one apartment” de-criminalization (3.2008)

TO: Mr Donald Tsang, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China; Mr Ambrose Lee, Secretary for Security; Mr Wong Yan Lung, Secretary for Justice; The Law Reform Commission of Hong Kong.

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We welcome agency and individual signature. We will submit them to Department of Justice and Legislative counselors to demand for amendment of “two women in one apartment”. Please email us at afro@afro.org.hk