

POLITICIANS PUT PROSTITUTION HARM IN 'TOO HARD BASKET'

Media Release 5 Dec 2014

Family First NZ says that politicians are living in 'la-la land' when it comes to the concerns of families regarding the ongoing harms of street prostitution and residential brothels.

“The politicians have shown a complete lack of moral conviction and kicked the bill to control street prostitution ‘to touch’. They simply can’t handle the heat of tackling this issue and are instead throwing a flawed law back at local councils who are already struggling with it,” says Bob McCoskrie, National Director of Family First NZ.

“Until a brothel is running next door to one of these politicians or they have to deal with the fall-out from street prostitution affecting their local community and family shopping area, they will remain blissfully ignorant.”

“The bill was introduced in 2010, submissions were made in early 2012, and yet the politicians have fluffed around and still don’t have the willpower to bring action on this vexed issue which is harming communities, especially in South Auckland and Christchurch.”

“The ongoing problems of the decriminalisation of prostitution have been highlighted by retailers and families in Manurewa, Papatoetoe, Christchurch and many residential areas being affected by the activities of prostitution, including half-naked prostitutes, used condoms, propositioning of family members, intimidation, noise and nuisance, and a general reduced sense of safety. The fallout from the decriminalisation of prostitution has affected both residential areas and family shopping areas and the local councils have been powerless to act,” says Mr McCoskrie.

“The association of prostitution with gang and criminal behaviour, alcohol and drug abuse, underage prostitution, and sexual abuse and violence means that we are also sentencing more and more young people and prostitutes to an unacceptable situation.”

A delegation of former prostitutes accompanied by their advocates appeared before the Select Committee in Parliament last year calling for a change to prostitution laws, and with a plea from the former prostitutes that decriminalisation has failed them and others still in the industry. Elizabeth Subritzky from the organisation Freedom from Sexual Exploitation (FFSE) which sponsored the petition presented to Parliament said that the message from the former prostitutes is that it has wrecked their lives, many suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, that their troubled upbringings attracted them to prostitution, and that the only solution is to prosecute buyers in order to help prostitutes out of the industry. “Our government has made legal that which we as a society fail to see as legitimate. Once defined as work, the Prostitution Reform Act (PRA) not only encouraged more men to buy sex, but transformed prostitution into an acceptable, even attractive job for young, poor woman in New Zealand,” said Mrs Subritzky.

“How can we be serious about reducing sexual violence against women when the state legitimises the sexual abuse and exploitation of vulnerable people. There is a healthy stigma against prostitution – and for good reason. The politicians are simply burying their head in the sand,” said Mr McCoskrie.

<https://www.familyfirst.org.nz/2014/12/politicians-put-prostitution-harm-in-too-hard-basket/>