

For Immediate Release

ONTARIO PROSTITUTION RULING MUST BE APPEALED

March 26, 2012 (Ottawa) –Today’s ruling at the Ontario Court of Appeal legalizes brothels in Ontario. While this is being touted as a success that will make prostitution safer, international evidence exposes this myth. It also belies the realities facing the vast majority of prostitutes in Ontario today.

A high percentage of prostitutes have drug and sexual abuse in their pasts. Many are coerced into prostitution as minors. Prostitution is inherently dangerous and the legal changes that are currently being made in Ontario will not change that.

Ontario should follow the Swedish model, particularly when contrasted with the Netherlands.

Sweden criminalizes the buyer, understanding that an abuse of power is at play when largely male clients are able to buy their largely female human “merchandise.” Sweden has seen a reduction in the number of prostitutes as well as the accompanying social ills, like human trafficking, drug use and organized crime.

On the other hand, when the Netherlands legalized prostitution, new criminal activity arose. Amsterdam’s former mayor Job Cohen reported: “We’ve realized that this is no longer about small scale entrepreneurs, but that big crime organizations are involved here in trafficking women, drugs, killings and other criminal activities.”

“There is room to improve and change Ontario’s prostitution laws,” says Andrea Mrozek, Manager of Research and Communications. “How we do so should emphasize the inherent dangers of prostitution and provide plenty of exit strategies. Above all, the law should not in any way, shape or form allow men to buy women’s bodies. There will be no equality in Ontario so long as we sanction that.”

For comment, please contact Andrea Mrozek, Manager of Research and Communications, at 613-565-3832, ext. 7502.

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