



• SAN FRANCISCO •
WOMEN'S POLITICAL COMMITTEE

SFWPC Support for Supervisor Ronen's Resolution Urging Legalization of Sex Work in California

February 28, 2023

San Francisco Board of Supervisors
City Hall, Legislative Chamber, Room 250
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of the San Francisco Women's Political Committee (SFWPC), we are writing in strong support of Resolution 230179, urging Governor Gavin Newsom, Senator Scott Wiener, Assemblymember Matt Haney, and Assemblymember Phil Ting to legalize consensual adult prostitution in the State of California.

As an organization that champions policies that promote intersectional feminism, gender equity, and equitable systems that advance racial justice, wellness, and equity for all women, we recognize that decriminalizing and legalizing sex work is an important step. While we understand stated concerns surrounding the impacts that legalization may have on women's safety and combatting human trafficking, the current criminalization and policing of sex work harms sex workers' safety, access to housing, and employment opportunities. As noted in the Resolution, decriminalization of sex work is associated with a 30-50% reduction in rapes and sexual assaults in locations like Scotland, Rhode Island, and the Netherlands. Because decriminalization reduces the threat of detention and arrest, workers feel safer and more often report violent crime to police.¹ Decriminalization also improves sex

¹ ACLU. "Is Sex Work Decriminalization the Answer? What the Research Tells Us." 2020. <https://www.aclu.org/report/sex-work-decriminalization-answer-what-research-tells-us>

workers' safety and well-being by reducing one of the biggest barriers to securing affordable housing. A survey of transgender sex workers found that housing was the most immediate need for 79% of the population.² Decriminalization improves the ability of workers to obtain housing, formal employment, capital/loans, and even healthcare.³

We therefore strongly support decriminalization and legalization of sex work as a proven method to improve the safety, health, and economic justice outcomes. It is a crucial first step to broader cultural change needed to reduce stigma surrounding sex work.

Sincerely,

SFWPC Board of Directors

² Macon, C.; Tai, E. "Earning Housing: Removing Barriers to Housing to Improve the Health and Wellbeing of Chronically Homeless Sex Workers." *Soc. Sci.* **2022**, *11*, 399. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11090399>

³ Amnesty International. "Sex workers at risk: a research summary on human rights abuses against sex workers." Published May 2016.