



## HOLDING THE US ACCOUNTABLE FOR SEX WORKER RIGHTS

[www.bestpracticespolicy.org](http://www.bestpracticespolicy.org)

Wednesday August 5, 2015

Dear Amnesty International Secretary General, International Board, Section Directors and Section Chairs,

The Best Practices Policy Project is a national organization dedicated to supporting rights based approaches to policy and harm reduction work with sex workers, people in the sex trade and related communities in the United States. We produce materials for policy environments, address research and academic concerns and provide organizations and advocates with technical assistance. Everything that we do is guided by principles that protect the rights of people who engage in commercial sex in all its forms.

We have reviewed the “Draft Policy on Sex Work” which will be submitted for consideration at AI’s International Council Meeting in this month and it is our conclusion that adopting the policy will be a significant step forward in terms of Amnesty International’s ability to advocate for human rights and the decision will support the rights of sex workers worldwide. We find that the policy is carefully researched and reflects the facts of the communities that we work with all across the United States.

The most important sources of information for the Best Practices Policy Project are sex workers themselves, and in this debate, many US sex workers have spoken out publicly for the very first time in defense of the policy. From our constituents we have heard that it is vital to adopt the policy calling for sex worker rights and decriminalization, to:

- work towards a future in which sex workers, their families, friends and customers/clients are no longer targeted by law enforcement simply because of the work they do
- work towards ending the profiling of people—such as transgender people, migrants, low income people of color and the homeless—by law enforcement implementing laws against sex workers and their clients
- prevent the incarceration of people because of their arrest under anti-prostitution and related laws and thereby prevent further harms and deaths in custody. Incarceration in the United States is rights violating in and of itself, harming sex workers and people profiled as such immeasurably
- ensure that resources are utilized to support communities of sex workers needing rights based and harm reduction services, rather than be routed into law enforcement activities.

We join our voice to the 10,000s of other organizations and advocates who have also shared similar views with Amnesty International and support the policy. An important part of the mission of the Best Practices Policy Project is to hold the United States accountable for sex worker rights. The US is the exporter of some of the most detrimental policies on sex work and drug use globally. Our role as organizations based inside this country is to question the utility of such policies that prevent harm reduction programs from being funded, stigmatize sex workers, prevent migration and conflate sex work and trafficking to the detriment of all concerned. We also urge you not to be swayed by the misinformation recently distributed by organizations and high profile media figures based in the United States. This information is not reflective of the decades of experience of our networks of organizations working with sex workers and is in fact, not based on any legitimate evidence at all.

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