



Centre for Aboriginal
Health Research

Dear Members of the Senate Committee,

Honourable Bob Runciman bob.runciman@sen.parl.gc.ca
Honourable George Baker, george.baker@sen.parl.gc.ca
Honourable Mobina S.B. Jaffer, mjaffer@sen.parl.gc.ca
Honourable Piere Hugues Boivenu, boisvp@sen.parl.gc.ca
Committee Clerk Shaila Anwar, lcjc@sen.parl.gc.ca

I am writing on behalf of the Centre for Aboriginal Health Research (CAHR), University of Victoria, to express our support for the Senate submission provided by PEERS Victoria Resources Society.

PEERS Victoria Resources Society has provided crime prevention and social and health support services to Aboriginal sex workers in Greater Victoria since 1995, and continues to make a valuable contribution through services that meet the needs of Aboriginal sex workers while also working to dispel common myths about the sex industry, address discrimination and inequality, and strengthen leadership opportunities among sex workers.

The CAHR shares PEERS' commitment to harm reduction approaches and the promotion of sex workers' rights and leadership as foundational strategies for supporting the health and safety of people in the sex industry. We also support PEERS' efforts to prevent crimes against sex workers, and to work with local police to increase reporting and investigation of sex-work related crimes. We have partnered with PEERS to consider and address the factors that promote the health and safety of people involved in the industry. We have also supported annual events such as Red Umbrella Day, which call community attention to violence against sex workers.

We respect the expertise and efforts of organizations such as PEERS to reduce harms against sex workers. We share the concern that Bill C36 will cause harm to sex workers by discouraging collaborative relationships with police, health providers and social service organizations.

We urge the Senate Committee to listen to the concerns of sex worker-led organizations across Canada regarding how prostitution law affects the lives of sex workers. We support the constitutional rights of sex workers and champion community approaches that promote equal access to justice services and full access to harm reduction and health prevention resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlotte Reading". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Charlotte Reading PhD
Director, Centre for Aboriginal Health Research
University of Victoria