

MEDIA RELEASE

RUTH FORREST MLC
PO BOX 104
WYNYARD TAS 7325

Tel. 03 6443 8600
Fax. 03 6443 8603

RUTH FORREST MLC SAYS PROPOSED SEX INDUSTRY LEGISLATION IS NOT THE ANSWER.

Legislative Councillor, Ruth Forrest, said that while reform, regulation and legislation of the sex industry is urgently needed, the proposed sex industry legislation does not adequately address the issues.

Ms Forrest said that the issue of protection of women, young men and children from exploitation was vitally important.

“National and international information has shown that legal brothels continue to engage children – if there is no power provided within the legislation for regular, unannounced reviews of legal brothels, these children will not be protected by this legislation either,” Ms Forrest said.

Ms Forrest acknowledged that the Bill included a range of sex-industry related offences to protect children and sex workers, promote safe sex practices, implement appropriate health measures and exclude inappropriate people from opening a brothel.

“Whilst the intention of this is good, I believe these issues will not adequately be addressed without significant amendment,” Ms Forrest said.

Ms Forrest suggested that it would be more appropriate for the Government to address the issues of disadvantage, homelessness and poverty, the cycle that often drives women, young men and children into this industry.

“Studies have shown that the majority of women do not enter the sex industry through choice. They enter through coercion, poverty, homelessness, hunger, disadvantage and powerlessness,” said Ms Forrest.

Ms Forrest said that, as the Bill stands, sex workers working for an employer do not need to be registered, only the business, with the employer having taken reasonable steps to ensure the worker is not under 18 years of age.

“I do not believe this will provide adequate protection for children or trafficked women or men, especially in light of information that clearly shows that children and trafficked women are working in legal and illegal brothels around the country,” the Member for Murchison said.

For further information, please phone 0419 879 524.