



Decriminalize
Sex Work ♡

END HUMAN TRAFFICKING.
PROMOTE HEALTH & SAFETY.

www.DecriminalizeSex.Work

Vermont Voters Support the Decriminalization of Sex Work

Montpelier, VT (January 31, 2022) – A recent statewide survey shows Vermonters support the decriminalization of sex work by more than 13% compared to those that think sex work should remain a crime (46–33). 21% of those surveyed remain undecided. The poll found that Democrats are far more supportive (50–24) of decriminalization than Republicans (30–57). Individuals over the age of 65 are least in favor of reform, while those between the ages of 18 and 45 are most supportive of decriminalization followed by those between the ages of 46 and 65. These results closely reflect national trends.

Evidence supporting the numerous benefits of decriminalization continues to surface. Sex workers, academics, human-rights activists, and public-health experts are increasingly calling on legislators to consider the facts around decriminalization, which demonstrate increases in public health and safety and decreases in exploitation.

On January 14, 2022, Representatives Colburn of Burlington and Kornheiser of Brattleboro, along with eleven other legislators, [introduced H.630, an act relating to voluntary engagement in sex work](#). The bill, citing research and evidence proving the many deleterious effects of criminalization, cultural changes in the century since laws prohibiting prostitution were enacted, and “Vermont’s commitment to personal and bodily autonomy” proposes to decriminalize consensual adult prostitution while reinforcing laws against human trafficking.

The survey also asked voters whether they would support decriminalizing the sale of sex, while keeping the purchase of sex illegal. Only 13% support this model of prohibiting prostitution, while 61% oppose it, and 26% are unsure. Bills proposing this “[entrapment model](#)” – also called the “Nordic model” or “equality model” – have been introduced in the New York, Massachusetts, and Maine state legislatures. Lawmakers market this legislation as a means of curtailing prostitution and combatting trafficking, while evidence shows it does neither. Countries that

have implemented the entrapment model continue to see violence and exploitation perpetrated against sex workers.

Most individuals involved in selling and buying sex are consenting adults. Sex work is not inherently dangerous or exploitative, but criminalization puts sex workers at risk and creates conditions that allow for trafficking to proliferate. “The decriminalization of sex work has reduced exploitation where and when it has been implemented,” said J. Leigh Oshiro-Brantly, co-founder of The Ishtar Collective, Vermont’s only organization run by and for sex workers and survivors of trafficking and research and project manager at Decriminalize Sex Work. “Unambiguous data from around the world shows a clear correlation between laws like the equality or entrapment model and an increase in violence and exploitation within the sex trade,” they continued.

The decriminalization of consensual adult sex work, a critical component of criminal-justice reform, has gained considerable traction amid a nationwide reckoning with the dangers of over-policing, a ballooning prison population, and cries for immediate changes to the criminal justice system.

The [poll, which surveyed 616 registered voters in Vermont](#), was conducted by Public Policy Polling on January 17 and 18, 2022.

Decriminalize Sex Work

Decriminalize Sex Work is a national organization pursuing a state-by-state strategy to end the prohibition of consensual, adult prostitution in the United States. We work with local organizations, advocates, and lobbyists to build community support and convince legislators to stop prostitution-related arrests. Evidence shows that decriminalizing sex work will help end human trafficking, improve public health, and promote community safety.

Ariela Moscowitz

Communications Director

212-368-7874

ariela@dswork.org