

## NEWS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Vermont Voters Support the Decriminalization of Sex Work

**Montpelier, VT** (September 10, 2024) – A recent statewide survey shows Vermonters strongly support the decriminalization of consensual adult sex work by more than 26% compared to those that think sex work should remain a crime (50–24). 26% of those surveyed remain undecided. The poll found that Democrats/Progressives strongly support decriminalization with 62% in support and only 14% opposed. Decriminalization is supported by one third of Republicans surveyed. Decriminalization is strongly supported by voters ages 18-45 (59-24). These results closely reflect national trends.

58% of voters said that the government should stop expending resources to arrest adults for consensual prostitution. VT has recently implemented several policy changes supporting the basic human rights of sex workers and survivors of trafficking at both the state and city levels. In 2023, [a new law was enacted prohibiting law enforcement from engaging in investigatory sex](#), which along with the state's prohibition on custodial sex, now comprises the country's most comprehensive ban on police sexual violence. In 2022, VT passed a ballot referendum that removed a [ban on prostitution from the city charter in Burlington, VT](#), and a similar local ordinance also passed in Montpelier, the state capital. [Laws](#) that allow sex workers and survivors of trafficking to seek justice or medical care when they are victimized or witness a crime were enacted in 2022.

The survey also asked voters whether they would support decriminalizing the sale of sex, while keeping the purchase of sex illegal. Only 15% support this model of prohibiting prostitution, while 51% oppose it, and 34% are unsure. Lawmakers market "[entrapment model](#)" – also called the "Nordic model" or "equality model" legislation as a means of curtailing prostitution and combating trafficking but [countries that have implemented the entrapment model](#) continue to see violence and exploitation perpetrated against sex workers.

"These poll results match what we're hearing from Vermont voters daily," said Henri Bynx, co-director of The Ishtar Collective, which supports survivors of exploitation and consensual

adult sex workers throughout VT. “Half of voters support decriminalizing sex work, while one-quarter of voters are undecided and open-minded on the issue. Also, voters disapprove of the entrapment approach to sex work, and aren’t thrilled about spending taxpayer money to arrest consenting adults said Henri Bynx, co-director of The Ishtar Collective, which supports survivors of exploitation and consensual adult sex workers throughout VT.

The [poll](#), which surveyed 539 voters in Vermont, was conducted by Public Policy Polling on September 4 and 5, 2024.

### **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.*