Urban Justice Center

Sex Workers' rights and Human Trafficking

https://sexworkersproject.org/publications/reports/behind-closed-doors/

Policy Isssue Resources

Drawingon theextensive and diverseknowledge of our staffandotherimpacted communitieswithlived experience working in the sex trades, weengage inpolicy advocacy and research todocumentand addressthepressing issues and needsof sex workers.

Our groundbreakingresearchexploresthe narratives of sex workers andpeople who have experiencedhuman trafficking. Read ourstatements,guides, memos, and reportsbelow.

September 14th, 2022|

The Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center (SWP) spearheaded the effort to highlight the devastating impacts of SESTA/FOSTA on people who trade sex, including sex workers and human trafficking survivors, and the urgent need for Congress to rigorously study these consequences through the SAFE SEX Workers Study Act.

April 11th, 2022|

Four Years Since SESTA/FOSTA was Signed, Sex Workers Call on Congress to Learn from its Mistake! On the Anniversary of SESTA/FOSTA, Sex Worker Rights Organizations Hold a Call-in Day to Demand Passage of the SAFE SEX Workers Study Act.

March 3rd, 2022|

On March 3, 2022, International Sex Workers Rights Day, Rep. Ro Khanna, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Rep. Barbara Lee and Sen. Ron Wyden make history by re-introducing the SAFE SEX Workers Study Act (SSWSA) with the support of 70 different organizations from anti-violence, public health, technology, and civil and human rights.

February 9th, 2022|

The Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center strongly opposes the Eliminating Abusive and Rampant Neglect of Interactive Technologies Act of 2022, also known as the EARN IT Act of 2022 (S.3538). Despite being premised on the critically important goal of combatting sexual exploitation of children online, this bill would in fact make protecting children from such abuse more challenging.

January 14th, 2022|

No more anti-trafficking trainings that perpetuate systems of oppression. by Nat Paul

December 7th, 2021|

It is with great pride and gratitude that we celebrate our 20th anniversary here at the Sex Workers Project (SWP) of the Urban Justice Center (UJC).

December 6th, 2021|

This blog post from the Sex Workers Project (SWP) of the Urban Justice Center is part of the 2021 Leading to Violence Campaign. This campaign highlights the critical issues that must be addressed to realize the goals of the International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers, recognized each year on December 17. SWP is writing on the topic of policing and the ways in which it harms and leads to systemic and interpersonal violence at the hands of law enforcement and the criminal legal system.

December 2nd, 2021|

An interview-based study of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the health and safety of sex workers in the United States.

November 23rd, 2021|

On November 16, 2021, the Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center (SWP) realized one of its longest-standing goals, as Gov. Kathy Hochul signed the START (Survivors of Trafficking Attaining Relief Together) Act into law.

September 7th, 2021|

California lawmakers must pass SB-357 to repeal penal code 653.22, a harmful law that hurts some of the state's most marginalized community members.

September 1st, 2021|

"I would first emphasize that people who do sex work, as with most other jobs, come from varied backgrounds and identities. There are sex workers of all races, ethnicities, nationalities, sexualities, genders, religions, education levels, and incomes. There is also a great diversity in the types of labor sex workers engage in."

August 12th, 2021|

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected people across all walks of life, among them sex workers. In this essay based on their SSRC-funded research, Denton Callander, tienne Meunier, and Mariah Grant examine how the pandemic has impacted sex workers in the United States, analyzing the role stigma plays in heightening the health, social, and economic threats posed by the pandemic.

March 17th, 2021|

The Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center mourns the eight people whose lives were tragically cut short in acts of violence in three Georgia massage businesses last night.

February 3rd, 2021|

The Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center strongly supports S. 00674 (Ramos) and A. 00459 (Gottfried), the Survivors of Trafficking Attaining Relief Together (START) Act and urges its passage by the New York State Legislature.

February 3rd, 2021|

Statement on prohibitionist Nordic Model Legislation in New York: Oppose the harmful "Sex Trade Survivors Justice and Equality Act"

February 3rd, 2021|

Dismantling Vice in NYC: a human rights cause even police can get behind

January 27th, 2021|

We signed on to this letter on January 27, 2021 to the Biden/Harris Administration and the 117th Congress: In the wake of this latest act of white supremacist violence directed at the U.S. Capitol, its more urgent than ever that lawmakers take steps to address systemic racism and injustice, and to hold Big Tech companies accountable for their role in undermining democracy and amplifying harmful content.

December 1st, 2020|

Together, Woodhull and SWP have prepared this response to highlight the impacts of systemic racism and police brutality on Black Sex Workers in the United States, this includes immigrants from Africa or African diaspora communities in other countries, as well as people of African descent.

July 31st, 2020|

Sexual violence against sex workers - a fact sheet

September 23rd, 2019|

"It is critical that the government work to systematically involve sex workers in policy decisions that affect them..."

January 1st, 2012|

This pamphlet offers info for sex workers, and tools to help you assert your rights. This pamphlet is not a substitute for talking to a lawyer. If you are arrested or have questions about your rights, contact us at 646.602.5617 or SWP@urbanjustice.org.

January 1st, 2008|

The Bush administration introduced the anti-prostitution pledge. This document details why this pledge is counter-productive for creating a world safe for all workers and where human trafficking does not exist.

August 29th, 2022|

This research guide provides an overview of promising practices and considerations to produce ethical research on the sex trades.

September 1st, 2018|

A report by the Global Health Justice Partnership of the Yale Law School and Yale School of Public Health in collaboration with The Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center | September 2018

April 17th, 2012|

A joint report with the PROS Network on the impact of using condoms as evidence of prostitution in New York City. | 04/17/2012

January 1st, 2012|

An analysis of the role of gender, poverty & violence in trafficking from Mexico to the US.

January 9th, 2009|

An analysis of the use of law enforcement raids to fight trafficking in persons. | 01/09/2009

March 30th, 2005|

An analysis of indoor sex work in New York City. | 03/30/2005

June 23rd, 2003|

An analysis of street-based prostitution in New York City. | 06/23/2003

After the 2018 passage of FOSTA-SESTA, service providers around the country saw an increase in street-based sex work among their client populations.

Street-based sex work has been shown to be more inherently dangerous to sex workers. As such, sex workers and sex workers advocates have called for Congress to pass the 2022 Safe Sex Workers Study Act, which would study and analyze the health and safety needs of sex workers and survivors of sex trafficking and whether FOSTA-SESTA resulted in an increased risk for sex workers nationwide.

Listen to our panelists discuss the importance of this bill and the implications of FOSTA-SESTA.

The past decade has seen a dramatic increase in the sites for anti-trafficking education and the range of educators who shape how the public and institutions understand and respond to human trafficking. Thus, there is a need to analyse the formalised and informalised practices that facilitate teaching and learning about trafficking. At its worst, anti-trafficking education steeped in misinformation and myths fails to contextualise and complicate trafficking, which can lead to dehumanisation and violence. At its best, anti-trafficking education can encourage and inform efforts to create structural change, social justice, and individual empowerment. At this online event, educators from universities, non-government organisations, and worker associations discuss one central question: What would it take for anti-trafficking education to be in the service of human rights, economic justice, labour rights, and public health?

Featuring Mariah Grant, Director of Research and Advocacy for the Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center

October 21, 2021 In September, Gov. Kathy Hochul ignited the hopes of advocates trying to decriminalize sex work in New York, when she expressed a willingness to engage on the issue. To understand the current landscape of sex work in New York and what it would mean to take this underground part of the economy out of the penal code, we turned to Andy Bowen, associate director, government affairs of the Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Center.

Gov. Hochul plans to decriminalize sex work here in New York. Mariah Grant, Director of Research and Advocacy at the Sex Workers Project of The Urban Justice Center, speaks out about the importance of the FULL decriminalization of sex work in our society.

Sarah speaks with Mariah Grant, a human rights and migration specialist with a focus on migrant and sex workers rights, freedom of movement, and labor exploitation. As the Research and Advocacy Director at the The Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center she oversees Sex Workers Project advocacy efforts and development of original research. Mariah and Sarah discuss the initiatives of SWP, labor exploitation, and societys need for real and honest conversations about the realities of sex and work in general. The way SWP likes to look at human trafficking is that for human trafficking to be properly addressed its really about protecting and defending the rights of workers a conversation that regardless of the kind of work we do applies to us all.

Whats Next in Our Neighborhood & Nation. The host for this episode is Joshua Cooper. The guests for this episode are Donna Murray, Mariah Grant of the Sex Workers Project and Jackie Smith.

Whats Next in Our Neighborhood & Nation. On May 11, 2020, the 3rd UPR of the USA was to be conducted at the UN in Geneva, Switzerland. COVID delayed the actual review; however, the civil society across the country joined forces for justice and freedom highlighting economic, social & cultural rights.

The Oldest Profession is a short animated documentary that explores the fight to decriminalize sex work in New York as told through the lens of a policy maker, a human rights activist, and a sex worker. Featuring NY Assemblyman Richard Gottfried, Director of the Sex Workers Project at The Urban Justice Center RJ Thompson, and an anonymous sex worker.

NYC and Philly sex working organizers speak on how they are surviving and caring for their communities. Protest, celebrate, support, and flood our feeds in your finest RED + BLACK threads with messages of love and solidarity with sex workers!

This webinar on systemic racism featured RJ Thompson and Gretchen Nealon from the Urban Justice Center, as well as staff from the NYCLU and Good Call NYC.

We welcome your questions and comments

Telephone: 646-602-5617

Email: swp@urbanjustice.org

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Message

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