

Submitter: Teal Lindseth

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4157

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Wallen, Chotzen, and members of the committee,

My name is Teal Lindseth, and I am a former sex worker with Sex Worker Affirming Advocates (SWAA), dedicated to decriminalizing sex work. I urge you to oppose HB 4157.

While we appreciate the intent to address trafficking concerns, this bill was developed without any meaningful consultation with BIPOC sex worker-led organizations and carries significant risks for consensual sex workers.

I worked as a sex worker in Oregon by choice. Like many others, I relied on community, visibility, and the ability to assess risk to stay safe. Bills like HB 4157 make that harder. When sex work is pushed further into the shadows, workers are less able to screen clients, seek help, or work together—making people in Oregon less safe, not more. I oppose HB 4157 because I do not want others who choose to work here to face greater danger as a result of well-intended but harmful policy.

In 2023, we worked with Senator Steiner and other legislators to add a budget note to study the impacts of criminalization and public health on sex workers, which ended up being line-item vetoed by Governor Kotek. We also worked on HB 2734 in 2025 with Representative Travis Nelson to provide labor protection and safety for sex workers who work in entertainment establishments, which ended up not moving forward.

Engage meaningfully with BIPOC sex workers and BIPOC-led organizations before advancing any legislation affecting our communities. Our steering committee and sex workers across the state are eager to work with anti-trafficking organizations, district attorneys, and lawmakers to work collaboratively on a bill to be introduced in the 2027 long session.

We urge you to oppose HB 4157 in its current form and instead also work with BIPOC sex worker-led organizations like Sex Worker Affirming Advocates to develop legislation that addresses trafficking without harming consensual sex workers.

Respectfully submitted,  
Teal Lindseth

