

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE October 18th, 2017**

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## **Civil Rights and LGBTQ Organizations Support Sex Workers in Ninth Circuit Appeal**

*More Than Thirty Civil Rights And LGBTQ Organizations Filed Amicus Briefs In Ninth Circuit In Support Of ESPLERP's Groundbreaking Appeal Challenging California's Anti-Prostitution Law*

San Francisco, CA - This Thursday (October 19th) the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (picture at end) has scheduled Oral Arguments in a historic court case challenging California's anti-prostitution law Penal Code 647(b) on the grounds that it is unconstitutional - effectively seeking to decriminalize sex work.

In the build up to the hearing, more than thirty civil right and LGBTQ organizations filed a series of amicus (friend-of-the-court) briefs in the Ninth Circuit supporting the Erotic Service Providers Legal Education Research Project's (ESPLERP) appeal. [The case is ESPLERP v Gascon, case #16-15927]

Participating organizations include the American Civil Liberties Union Foundations of Southern California and Northern California, AIDS United, API Equality-LA, APLA Health, Bienestar, Black Women for Wellness, California Rural Legal Assistance Inc., California Women's Law Center, the Center for HIV Law and Policy (CHLP), Children of the Night, Equality California, Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement, the First Amendment Lawyers Association, the Free Speech Coalition, Genders and Sexualities Alliance Network ("GSA Network"), Gender Justice Los Angeles, GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD), the HIV Prevention Justice Alliance (HIV PJA), Justice Now, Lambda Legal, the Los Angeles LGBT Center, the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD), the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE), Positively Trans (T+), Positive Women's Network-USA (PWN-USA), San Francisco AIDS Foundation (SFAF), Sero Project, Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Center, the Transgender Gender-Variant Intersex Justice Project, TransLatin@ Coalition, the Transgender Law Center, Brad Sears Executive Director of the Williams Institute, and the Woodhull Freedom Foundation.

"Lambda Legal's landmark Supreme Court victory in *Lawrence v. Texas*, the case that struck down laws that criminalized sex between same-sex partners, underscored that our right to liberty protects our decisions about adult, consensual sexual intimacy," said Kara Ingelhart, Lambda Legal Law Fellow. "It is merely logical that *Lawrence* extend to the adult, consensual sexual intimacy that occurs between sex workers and their clients; the fact that money is exchanged shouldn't matter."

“These organizations join a long list of reputable international organizations, including [Amnesty International](#), the [World Health Organization](#), the Lancet, Human Rights Watch, and the UN Global Commission on HIV and the Law, that have called for the decriminalization of sex work,” said Claire Alwyne of ESPLERP. “They recognize that laws like California’s 647(b) criminalize the private lives of consenting adults, impact the human rights of sex workers and their clients, and have very adverse effects on public health and safety.”

*ESPLERP v Gascon is mostly funded by individuals making small contributions, but our opponents have deep pockets - essentially using our taxpayer dollars to deny us our rights. Contributions to support the court case can be submitted through the crowd fundraiser - [www.litigatetoemancipate.com](http://www.litigatetoemancipate.com).*

*The Erotic Service Providers Legal, Education and Research Project (ESPLERP) is a diverse community-based coalition advancing sexual privacy rights through litigation, education, and research.*

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