

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Press Advisory
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ESPLER Project Releases Comprehensive Policy Agenda 2025 Advocating for the Rights and Safety of Erotic Service Providers

San Francisco, California –Today, the ESPLER Project announces the release of its comprehensive "Policy Agenda 2025," a groundbreaking document outlining a clear pathway towards ending the criminalization, discrimination, and stigmatization faced by consenting adults in the sex industry.

The Policy Agenda is driven by the fundamental principles of a rights-based approach and harm reduction, recognizing sex workers as individuals with autonomy and fundamental human and constitutional rights, including privacy, equal protection, and the right to work safely.

It directly critiques the current landscape of criminalization and what it identifies as problematic "anti-trafficking" legislation, arguing that these approaches undermine the safety of sex workers. Instead of perpetuating harmful criminal penalties, the ESPLER Project advocates for a fundamental paradigm shift towards recognizing sex work as legitimate labor.

It proposes a series of concrete legislative steps aimed at fostering a safer and more humane environment for sex workers. These include:

- Decriminalization of sex work.
- Reparations for individuals harmed by past and present criminalization.
- Implementation of anti-discrimination measures to protect sex workers from prejudice in housing, healthcare, and other essential services.
- Increased privacy protections to safeguard sex workers from unwanted exposure and potential harm.

The Policy Agenda draws upon the experiences of successful decriminalization efforts internationally (in New Zealand, Australia and Belgium) and highlights proposed (but not yet passed) legislation in the United States, demonstrating the growing momentum for a more just and effective approach to sex work. It underscores the urgent need to move away from punitive measures that endanger sex workers and towards policies that prioritize their safety and well-being.

"For too long, harmful laws have pushed sex work into the shadows, making individuals more vulnerable to exploitation and violence," stated Maxine Doogan, President of the ESPLER Project. "Our Policy Agenda 2025 offers a clear roadmap for policy makers to end this cycle of criminalization and discrimination."

Another key aspect of the Policy Agenda is its commitment to a harm reduction perspective. By decriminalizing sex work, the ESPLER Project believes that sex workers will be better able to access vital health and safety resources, report violence without fear of arrest, and organize for their own protection.

“The criminalization of sex work has failed to eliminate the industry and has instead created a more dangerous environment for everybody involved,” added Claire Alwayne, CEO of ESPLERLP. “Our agenda prioritizes evidence-based solutions that have been proven to increase safety and empower sex workers. Decriminalization is not about condoning or condemning sex work; it is about recognizing the reality of the industry and implementing policies that will genuinely protect the individuals within it.”

“I know from lived experience that criminalization doesn’t stop sex work – it pushes us and our clients into the shadows where predators thrive,” said Amber Batts. “These laws don’t protect us – they expose us to police abuse, violence, and exploitation, especially here in Alaska where sex workers are already targets. This Policy Agenda says what we’ve been saying all along – full decriminalization is the only way forward. Repeal the laws that criminalize our survival and the safety strategies we use. We’re not asking for anything radical. Just the right to live and work in safety, with dignity, and be recognized as people with rights.”

“Sex workers are the stakeholders in policies that impact our lives,” said Antonia Crane, Founder and Director at the Stripper Worker Center. “We know what is needed to dismantle stigma and to prohibit all kinds of discrimination we face – a comprehensive legislative roadmap that recognizes policy failures and recommends bills that expand our safety and codifies our unalienable rights. The excellent ESPLER Project Policy Agenda 2025 contains an arsenal of our lived experiences and with it, we will continue to make inroads towards decriminalization.”

The ESPLER Project calls on policymakers, advocates, and the public to engage with the Policy Agenda and to work collaboratively towards a future where the rights and safety of all consenting adults are respected. The full "Policy Agenda 2025" is available at https://esplerp.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Policy-Agenda-2025_image.pdf

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