



Safe New Jersey Campaign

Presented by,

Bridges4Life



CEO: Tahtianna

Tahtianna Fermin is the founder and CEO of Bridges4Life, which works to help teens and young adults on street and in foster care become responsible, self-sufficient, confident and educated adults. Bridges4Life provides housing, preparation for adulthood, prevention services, and assists young people in negotiating aging-out services within the foster care system. Bridges4Life's works within existing programs and resources to leverage new opportunities for the teens and young adults involved in the program, empowering social change agencies to develop local strategies for urban service.



The goal of this presentation is not to recruit rather inform!





SEX WORK IS
WORK

Sex work is the oldest profession in the world.

The earliest mention of sex work makes the profession 4400 years old which puts it close to priests as one of the oldest professions of all time.

Evidence for prostitution as an occupation dates to 2400 BCE in Mesopotamia.

January 1st - Human Trafficking Awareness

designed to educate the public about human trafficking and the role they can play in preventing and responding to human trafficking.



March 3rd - International Sex Worker Rights Day

Sex workers and activists organize protests, gatherings, art shows, and lectures across the globe to raise awareness about the human rights abuses sex workers face.

Sex workers deserve
the right to work **safely**
without fear of arrest or
stigmatization.

**Full decriminalization is
the only way to achieve
this.**

@decriminalizework

March 3rd

**INTERNATIONAL
SEX WORKER
RIGHTS DAY** 

@decriminalizework

June 2nd International Whores' Day/Sex Workers' Day

International Whores' Day or International Sex Workers' Day honours sex workers and recognises their often exploited working conditions.

Observed annually on December 17 by sex workers, their advocates, friends, families, and allies.

Violent crimes against sex workers go underreported, underaddressed and unpunished.

December 17

International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers

The red umbrella is a symbol for sex workers rights, first used in Venice Italy in 2001. The symbol protests inhumane work conditions and human rights abuses.

The day calls attention to hate crimes committed against sex workers worldwide as well as the need to remove social stigma and discrimination that have contributed to violence against sex workers and indifference from the communities they are part of.

Legalize

Vs.

Decriminalize

Allows only licensed sex workers and clients who participate in the regulated market to report crimes committed against them.
Creates a two-tiered system that favors brothel owners and other wealthy, well-connected people.
Leaves unlicensed sex workers unprotected against violence, and often unable to treat or prevent STIs without fearing prosecution.
Has no impact on human trafficking because the black market persists; sex workers remain dependent on potentially exploitative third parties such as brothel owners.
Allows police departments to still conduct stings, raids, and surveillance of unlicensed sex workers and their clients.
Is an impractical and exclusionary system that does not minimize the harms of criminalization.

Enables all sex workers and their clients to report crimes committed against them without fear of prosecution.
Does not create barriers to participation, such as licensing, and does not bestow power on third parties such as brothel owners.
Significantly reduces STI transmission and violence against sex workers.
Reduces the risks of human trafficking, as sex workers are able to freely advocate for their own health and safety, eliminating the need for exploitative third parties.
Saves or diverts law enforcement resources related to arresting and prosecuting consensual adult activities.
Protects the human rights of everyone, including sex workers.

Current Status of Legalized Prostitution



A number of European countries have legalized prostitution in which selling sex is allowed (under certain circumstances), but paying for it is not.

- Must register within the state
- Have a professional certificate
- Work in a licensed brothel

Belgium is the first country in Europe to officially decriminalize selling sex, paying for it, and working with sex workers.

New Zealand decriminalized prostitution in 2003.

Maine is the only US state to have Neo-Abolitionism or the “Nordic Model”,

while Nevada has some Legalization

Legality of Prostitution
Worldwide

Legality of Prostitution in North
America



- Decriminalization – no criminal penalties for prostitution
- Legalization – prostitution legal and regulated
- Abolitionism – prostitution is legal, but organized activities such as brothels and pimping are illegal; prostitution is *not* regulated
- Neo-abolitionism – illegal to buy sex and for 3rd party involvement, legal to sell sex
- Prohibitionism – prostitution illegal
- Legality varies with local laws

What is the “Nordic Model” or “Neo-abolitionism”?

Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (FOSTA)
Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act (SESTA)

Harmful policies which governs sex work that criminalizes sex workers' clients for purchasing services, forcing them to work in secret.

- subordinates women
- promotes inequality between the sexes
- ignores that sex workers face violence from law enforcement and not just clients, managers, or pimps.



Rhode Island and Legal Indoor Sex Work

In 2003, Rhode Island realized that it had accidentally legalized indoor sex work (through a legal loophole), after attorney Mike Kiselica successfully argued for his sex worker clients that as long as actions were between two consenting adults, it didn't matter what they agreed to, as long as they did in private, and it could certainly involve anything including money.

Rhode Island re-criminalized all prostitution in 2009, but reported rapes went down by 31% and reported statewide gonorrhea diminished by 39% when prostitution was legal indoors.



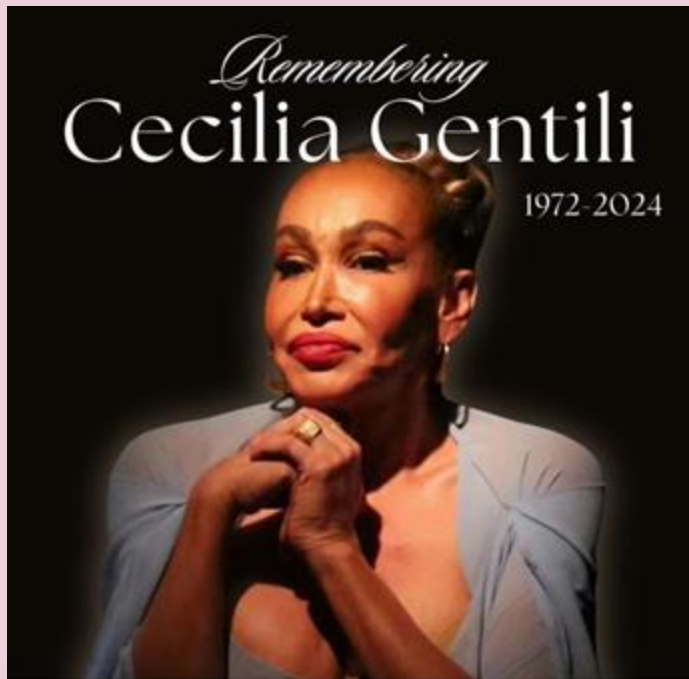
Pushing sex work underground makes it dangerous.

Workers are forced to work in secrecy which can harm their safety and livelihood.

The criminalization of consensual adult sex work is a violation of human rights.

Remembering
Cecilia Gentili

1972-2024



This Is What Will Make Sex Work in New York Safer

By Cecilia Gentili

Ms. Gentili is the founder of Transgender Equity Consulting. She is a former sex worker.

When I took my first client as a sex worker in the 1980s, I had no other choice. It was right after the fall of the dictatorship in Argentina. As a young trans woman, I found that sex work was the only way for me to survive, but I faced constant harassment and violence, especially from la policía. So, I left my home to come to the United States, thinking things would be different.

But when I got here, I had no more luck. On top of being trans, now I also struggled with being undocumented and learning English. Once again, I turned to sex work to stay afloat. Within two weeks I was arrested walking down Washington Avenue in Miami Beach; the police laughed at me, misgendered me and left me in a prison cell full of men.

We knew that the best way to help sex workers was not to decriminalize only their actions but also those of their clients. The legal pressure that clients face is absorbed by sex workers: A smaller client base means lower wages and poorer working conditions, with clients who are more likely to act in ways that make sex workers' lives more difficult.

We believe criminalization of either side of the sex trade does not help protect sex workers but rather merely perpetuates the social stigma that treats sex work as an inherently harmful activity — a stigma that I have long worked to eradicate.

The Story of SiSi (Yang Song)

A prostitute in New York opted to jump to her death amid a sting operation as colleagues explained that she told them she'd rather "kill herself" than get arrested again.

However, CC died in the hospital on Sunday from the injuries she sustained from the fall, according to [NYPost](#). It's reported that CC was meeting with an undercover cop who she was supposed to perform sex acts with in a massage parlor located at 135-32 40th Road in Flushing.

The incident occurred on a Saturday night during 7:30 pm when the woman panicked and jumped out the window after her undercover client called for police backup. Locals told police that CC was just released from prison about four months ago.

A 42-year-old nearby resident named Rob claimed that CC was trying to turn over a new leaf as he explained that the prostitute was in the midst of looking for a new job. **"It's really horrible. I saw the paddy wagon this morning and I knew,"** Rob exclaimed.

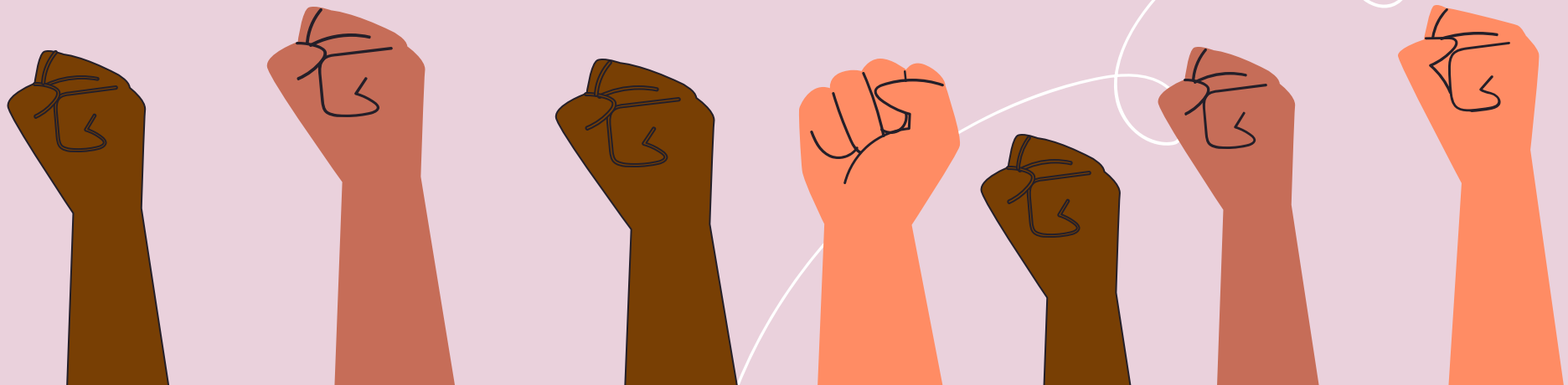
Lawmakers introduced a bill back in October which required massage parlor owners to apply for a special license to operate as their means to lessen these illicit establishments. The [source reported](#) that some sex workers were taken straight from the airport and were promised work and opportunities.

The report mentioned that these women eventually end up in massage parlors but most of them don't realize that they're already in a human trafficking situation. Meanwhile, local authorities have been cracking down on this shady industry for quite a long time as police have already shut down up to twelve massage parlors in Brooklyn since 2013, according to [ABC7](#).

This is the story of SiSi, who was the owner of the massage parlor in New York City in Flushing, Queens, who supposedly jumped to her death, through a sting operation, but family members feel that she was purposely murdered by NYPD.

Solution: Decriminalize Sex Work

We encourage you to call on Congress to repeal laws like SESTA/FOSTA which have pushed sex workers and trafficking victims into more dangerous and exploitative situations.



Bridges4Life aims to make progress towards equity and bodily autonomy.

No one should be criminalized for making choice about their own body.

DECRIMINALIZE SEX WORK
DECRIMINALIZE ABORTION
DECRIMINALIZE CHOICE
MAXIMIZE CONSENT



Ways to be an Ally

- Don't assume or judge
- Respect personal boundaries
- Address your prejudices
- Respect that sex work is real work
- Don't play rescuer
- Realize sex work transcends race, gender, class, etc.
- Don't let stigma and bigotry continue





Thoughts?
Feedback?



THANKS!

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