



The Honorable Robert Rodriguez  
Majority Leader of the Senate, State of Colorado  
Colorado State Capitol  
Denver, CO 80203

CC: The Honorable Jared Polis  
Governor, State of Colorado  
Colorado State Capitol  
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Woodhull Freedom Foundation Advocates for the passage of the “Decriminalize Adult Commercial Sexual Activity”, Colorado Bill SB097

The Woodhull Freedom Foundation is an organization dedicated to defending sexual freedom as a fundamental human right. It is in that capacity that we strongly advocate for the passage of Colorado [SB097](#), “Decriminalize Adult Commercial Sexual Activity”. [Don't Strip Our Rights](#), a sex worker-led organization working to end violence and criminalization of sex workers and trafficking survivors, has been the organizing force behind SB097. We at Woodhull uplift Don't Strip Our Rights' efforts and with them urge Colorado legislators to pass SB097 to end the unjust criminalization of consenting adults who trade sex, collaborate with or support peers, or patronize adult sex workers.

As legislators, we know that you need the facts to craft effective laws that serve the interests of your constituents to make them and their communities safer and healthier. It is a fact that decriminalizing sex work unequivocally serves this purpose, which [vast research](#) and [evidence prove](#). Through comprehensive sex work decriminalization, the “Decriminalize Adult Commercial Sexual Activity” will address coercion in the sex trade by creating an environment in which sex workers and trafficking survivors enjoy their rights to health, housing, bodily autonomy, freedom, education, privacy, expression, equal protection before the law, and choice of employment.

In passing the “Decriminalize Adult Commercial Sexual Activity” and decriminalizing sex work, Colorado lawmakers will demonstrate that they legislate based on facts and not moral panic. Colorado will lead the way in making the sex trade safer by protecting sex workers' health and rights while preventing human trafficking in the sex industry. Woodhull addresses how crucial sex work decriminalization is to protect the human rights, health, and safety of all people in the sex trade in our series [Fact Checked by Woodhull](#), including how [decriminalization improves sex workers' safety and public health](#).

Sex work decriminalization achieves this by removing the threat of arrest, which abusers, including police, use to coerce sex workers into performing services under duress or controlling victims of trafficking. Decriminalizing sex work also creates safer dynamics between sex workers and their clients, allowing workers to more effectively screen clients and negotiate condom use, which lowers STI transmissions and improves public health. Sex

workers are also able to more effectively employ other harm reduction and safety tools, including working collaboratively.

When sex workers and trafficking survivors no longer face the life-altering consequences of criminal records, they also experience fewer barriers to housing and education, which are critical protective factors against exploitation. Additionally, under decriminalization, sex workers can seek social, medical, or legal services without fear of economic consequences or legal repercussions. Prominent human rights, public health, and anti-trafficking organizations, including [Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women](#), [Human Rights Watch](#), [Amnesty International](#), [Freedom Network USA](#), the [Human Rights Campaign](#), the [ACLU](#), [UNAIDS](#), the [World Health Organization](#), and the [Global Network of Sex Work Projects](#), recognize these crucial benefits of sex work decriminalization.

By decriminalizing sex work and making the sex trade safer, SB097 will also honor the expertise and lived experiences of sex workers most harmed by criminalization. In championing the “Decriminalize Adult Commercial Sexual Activity”, Woodhull and Don’t Strip Our Rights center the experiences of those most directly impacted by the criminalization of adult consensual sex work including Black, Brown, and LGBTQIA+ sex workers and criminalized survivors. Through SB097, Colorado will remedy the acutely racist ways in which the sex trade is currently policed by removing criminal penalties for selling or buying sex. Critically, the “Decriminalize Adult Commercial Sexual Activity” **WILL NOT** repeal statutes that criminalize human trafficking, the sexual exploitation of minors, or pandering that involves menacing or criminal intimidation.

In this moment of unprecedented attacks on human rights and the cruel targeting of trans communities across the country, the “Decriminalize Adult Commercial Sexual Activity” (SB097, Sen. Hinrichsen, Sen. Cutter, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Stewart) is needed now more than ever. This is the only legislation that will stop trafficking in the sex trade while ensuring the safety and dignity of all people involved in commercial sex.

Your consideration of these matters is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,



Ricci Joy Levy  
President & CEO  
Woodhull Freedom Foundation