For Release On a

Monday June 24, 2014

**Sex Workers Groups Urge “NO” on California Senate Bill 1388**

**When**: Tuesday June 24, 2014, 9:00 am

**What**: California Assembly Public Safety Committee Hearing

**Where**: Capitol building, State Capitol, Room 126 Sacramento, California

**Contact**: Maxine Doogan, Erotic Service Providers Union 415-265-3302 & Rachel West, US PROStitutes Collective 415-640-4250

On Tuesday June 24, 2014 sex worker groups and others will be urging law makers at the California Assembly Public Safety Committee to join them in opposing SB 1388 in Sacramento. In May, the US PROStitutes Collective and the Erotic Service Providers Union were appalled to find that Senate Bill 1388 had passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee by using insider government rule 28.8 that rubber stamp the bill without any committee member or public comment. The committee’s analysis was also conspicuously missing.

Senate Bill 1388, inappropriately titled “Human Trafficking” would make sex workers and clients of sex workers serve new mandatory 48 hour jail sentence and pay new high fines and fees that would be shared between police, district attorneys and non profits, giving them financial incentives to increase arrests and encourages corruption. Given the state of already overcrowded prison system, it is unclear how this passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee without full review.

Rachel West of the US PROStitutes Collective says "Criminalizing clients will not stop prostitution, nor will it stop the criminalization of women. But it will make it more dangerous and stigmatizing for sex workers. We are appalled that at a time when nearly 1 in 4 people live in poverty in California and California has the highest poverty rate in the country, high unemployment, increased homelessness, loss of benefits and debt are forcing more women, particularly mothers, into prostitution, the best that legislators can come up with is to increase criminalization. These proposals will further divert police time and resources from investigating rape, trafficking and other violent crimes to policing consenting sex.”

Maxine Doogan of the Erotic Service Providers Union said: “Imposing harsher penalties on sex workers and our clients will not benefit victims of labor exploitation. SB 1388 will only increase unsafe work condition and re-criminalize sex workers. We urge the Assembly Public Safety Committee to do their due diligence in reviewing the implications of the 48 hour mandatory jail time.”

In 2011 there were 10,659 arrests for prostitution in California. The mandatory 48-hour minimum jail time would result in 511,632 additional hours of jail time in combination with the unlikely collectability of the proposed high fines will leave the tax payers on the hook to cover the costs.

Sex worker groups and others will be opposing this bill which is due to be heard in the Assembly Public Safety Committee Tuesday June 23, 2014 at 9am.



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