

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for taking the time to hear testimony on this important bill. My name is *Audra Doody*, and I live in – Worcester, MA. I am writing today to ask you to support LDs [1435](#) An Act to Reduce Commercial Sexual Exploitation. I am writing to you today as a survivor of exploitation and trafficking. I believe this bill should be passed to help all survivors of exploitation. From my own personal experience, being trafficked all up and down the east coast, trafficking has no limits. We are brought from state to state and sometimes we don't even know where we are. All we know is what we are told by our traffickers. I needed help and services not arresting me and charging me with a crime. Prostitution is a choice for the people with the fewest choices. It is no little girls dream to be prostituted. I believe this bill will help so many of our women by decriminalizing them and providing more exit support. The sex trade is not glamorous, its violence and buyers have a complete disregard for prostituted women. I believe we need to be holding the buyers and traffickers accountable. You should never be allowed to sell or purchase anyone's body. The buyers know who is vulnerable and take full advantage of that. These women often come from a place where they feel broken, damaged, and used. The buyers and traffickers see this as weakness in the women and use it to prey on their insecurities. I believe the buyers should be held accountable for their actions. Women are not objects to be bought and sold for sex; women's bodies are not for men to tear apart. We as women are strong and intelligent, not sex objects. Prostituted people are often dehumanized for what they do, but what about the buyers? Are they not the ones seeking women for their own sexual proclivities? To use them, to degrade them and to take their bodies and throw them away like trash when their done. The scars that the sex trade leaves the victims with are long lasting and are generational and impact their families as well. Social media tends to romanticize prostitution but what they do not tell you is that women are beaten, raped, harassed, and even murdered by johns that treat them as less than human. Buyers are predatory and I am urging you to support "An Act To Reduce Commercial Sexual Exploitation" So we can create a cultural shift and help our advance for human rights and gender equity. Would you go to the grocery store and pick out a woman that you like to use? No, so why should the men be able to go online and "shop for a woman."

I am using my voice as a survivor to change this. I ask you to put yourself in the shoes of prostituted women, into their families' shoes. How would you feel if this were your daughter being sold and your son the buyer?? These women matter and they are not the criminals. So, lets stop seeing them as the criminals and start seeing them as the victims and holding buyers accountable.

As a survivor and a woman who supports and creates access to exit programs for prostituted people, I urge you to support this bill, please vote "ought to pass" on LDs 1435.

Sincerely,

Audra Doody

VP of Direct Services

Living in Freedom Together, LIFT