

Mayor Fougere and Regina City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about the issue of Body Rub Parlours.

I would like to see you support bylaws that would ban these establishments from within City limits. I would also encourage the City to provide budgetary dollars for a robust enforcement of these bylaws.

As is referenced numerous times in the report from Administration, the purchase of sexual services, or a “Happy Ending” is a part of these establishments. There is ample evidence that these types of establishments are places where human trafficking can occur. So, I would contend, like other establishments that include illegal activities, these add nothing to our city.

While the safety of the workers in these establishments is paramount, I think we can do better – I would like to think we could offer them a better living that one rife with exploitation. I would encourage you to view a video from August 2019 in which women who have or are currently working in Body Rub parlours talk about the issues they faced. It can be viewed on YouTube here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5rZon5hgwE&t=213s>

I would not recommend we pursue a “harm reduction” model, not because I don’t think there is harm, but, based on other jurisdictions where brothels have been legalized, there is evidence that a illegal, unsupervised and unregulated trade mushrooms, which I believe actually puts the workers at more risk.

I disagree with the assertion that if we ban these parlours in Regina, that the workers would move to higher-risk activities, such as street prostitution. Having had the opportunity to chat with workers in about a third of these establishments, this does not appear to be their modus operandi. Rather, I would agree, as the report asserts, that the workers would move to another city, possibly to another parlour. However, the workers in these establishments already move with regularity, so that would not be a change from the current situation; it would not be an added harm resulting from banning.

A concern I have is that licensing these establishments normalizes this activity in our city. It makes it appear that everything that happens there is “legal,” when in fact the law is being broken within the establishment. I would not want the City to be complicit in normalizing prostitution, even as a “Happy Ending.”

I would ask that you not support the Administration’s recommendation that would allow massage parlours as a discretionary use in industrial and major arterial commercial zones.

In conclusion, I want to thank you for your service to the citizens of Regina. I would ask that you support a bylaw structure that would not allow, or would ban, these establishments in Regina.

Arlene Stinson