

Dear City of Regina,

Please do not vote in favour of licensing the owners and operators (pimps) of body rubs.

Under Canadian law, PCEPA, prostitutes as well as body rub workers are protected because they are seen as victims. However, it is illegal to purchase these kinds of services or to advertise them and profit from their sales. The latter is exactly what the body rub owners are doing. It is illegal.

If you do some searching on massage parlours in the news, you can find numerous news articles of stories both in Canada and in the United States of police busts done on these places. They all look the same as the ones in Regina. They have covered windows and bright “massage” and “open” lights flashing on them. The workers are primarily Asian. There are human trafficking rings which are a form of organised crime that bring in Asian women to North America to work in these places. Many women are forced into this through psychological manipulation and abuse, threats to their family and in general being exploited at a time when they are vulnerable. Many of them claim that they do not even speak English.

I used to live in a neighbourhood close to the massage parlours. I have watched and observed them. I’ve seen men drive up to a massage parlour and text on their phone. In a few minutes a worker would come out and go into the man’s car and he would drive away. To where? Do you think she is safe? Imagine if this was your daughter, sister or niece. It is dangerous and exploitive. What if the women in there get sick? What if they want out? If they were hurt, would anyone know? Do they even have access to basic medical care? No, they don’t have rights in those buildings and allowing the pimps to be in charge is like letting the fox rule the henhouse. This is unacceptable.

Please don’t think of this as some kind of “empowerment for women”. Listen to your conscious and vote the right way. You are in a position of authority, please make a difference that is good. Even if it may be unpopular to some.

If these owners and pimps are licensed by our city then it will be impossible to arrest and charge them for what they are doing. Please stand on the side of the victim. Be a voice for those who cannot speak here for themselves.

These women need our help, they don’t need us to empower their abusers.

Daria Frostad