

Dear Mr. Mayor and City Council Members,

My name is Harry Rohde and I am representing myself and my family. I apologize for our late response to the issue of the approval and licensing of body rub establishments. I only became aware of the upcoming vote at City Council on August 15th. I don't follow the news much and didn't even realize that the City had even approved these type of businesses. I thought this issue was laid to rest in 2015, after City Council denied the land use application for a strip club. At that time, I presented a petition with signatures from many in our neighbourhood, and many other groups made presentations as well, opposing the establishment of these types of businesses since they do not contribute to a healthy society and are a detriment to encouraging healthy relationships between men and women. Therefore, we implore you to vote against the licensing of body rub establishments and do not approve these type of establishments in our City.

I did review some of the information prepared by the City, and can see that a lot of effort has been made to try and address this issue and properly manage this industry. However, we first need to realize that encouraging this industry is harmful to all women, not only to those who are often trapped in this industry, since this practice is degrading to women and continues to portray them as sex objects that can be bought for a price. Personally, it's hard for me to fathom in this day and age, where women have made such advances, and as a society where we are correcting many long-standing inequalities such as slavery, segregation and racism, that we continue to tolerate sexual exploitation of women.

Besides being extremely demeaning and disrespectful to women, this practice of purchasing sexual services is still illegal in Canada and it is also illegal for others to profit from the sale of these services or advertise these services (Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act - PCEPA). By licensing the owner of these establishments you are allowing the owners(pimps) to advertise and profit from the sale of the services provided by their workers. Also, the clients are purchasing these services which is also illegal. Also, by licensing these owners (pimps), it legitimizes these establishments and makes it nearly impossible to arrest and charge them for pimping, since they City has allowed them to operate in this fashion. I believe once you take the step to license the owners of these establishments, you will open a "Pandora's Box" and this will potentially lead to increased human trafficking and sexual exploitation of women, which is already a worldwide problem.

Our City needs to take a more proactive approach. It's easy look at other jurisdictions and conform to the way everyone else is operating, but it takes bold leadership to change an attitude. Most businesses operate under the principle of supply and demand. In addressing this issue, we tend to look at the supply end (pimps and sex workers) and forget about the demand side (clients). I challenge you to address the demand side - the men who are seeking out these establishments and sexual services. These men are also inflicting long-term harm on themselves and other women, since they will not know how to develop healthy and respectful relationships with women. Our young men and women need to be properly educated on how to develop healthy relationships with the opposite sex that motivates them to build a healthy and progressive community that promotes mutual respect.

We all have pride in our City, and I know you Mr. Mayor and members of City Council want our City "to be the best that it can be" otherwise you wouldn't have taken on these leadership positions. However, remember, you were elected to be our leaders, not administrators, and in this

leadership role you must always do what's right for the betterment of our community and look to things that will propel us forward and not pull us back. I personally cannot see how approving and licensing these establishments will be for the betterment of our City and only see potential problems and pitfalls. As residents of Regina, I strongly believe that we should leave a legacy for future generations that shows that we stood for a healthy and progressive society where women and men were equally respected. I would be ashamed of myself if I didn't speak up on behalf of my family and neighbourhood and I hope that you, as our City Council, will not be afraid to speak against this proposal on behalf of your families and your constituents, and that you would promote a higher set of values that we as a progressive society should adhere to, so we continue to show proper respect to the women in our society. If you agree, I urge you as our City Council to vote against the licensing of body rub establishments in our City.

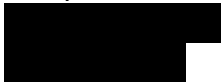
In closing, I would urge you all to step up and lead; to be the leaders that the residents of Regina can be proud of. What sort of legacy do you want to leave for future generations? One that shows our apathy where we shrug our shoulders and say, "well, it will happen anyway, there's no way to stop it"; or where we finally say, "enough is enough" and shape a society that shows our sons and daughters, and those that chose to make our City their home what a well-functioning community looks like, where men and women are equally respected and not portrayed or viewed in a demeaning or disrespectful way. Personally, I would be ashamed and embarrassed to have to face my children and family and say that I allowed this to happen when I had the power to stop this.

We all know what is inherently right or wrong, because we have a conscience, which will either "accuse us" or "excuse us" when we face questionable issues. I know you want to do what is right for our City and by listening to your conscience and voting against the licensing of these body rub establishments, your conscience will excuse you. In 2015, you made the right decision and this was further demonstrated later that Spring when the province also banned strip clubs.

Therefore, as our elected officials, I again challenge you to step up and do the right thing for our City. It's easy to conform to what our jurisdictions are doing, however, you still have the power to shape the development of our City and make it the "best that it can be" – so do it!

Respectfully yours,

Harry Rohde

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