



Hon Jack Dempsey
Member for Bundaberg

20 June 2012

**Minister for Police
and Community Safety**

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for forwarding me a copy of petition 1852-12 for my response. The petition is in respect of sole operator sex workers providing services in suburban areas, and has 17 signatures.

I appreciate that prostitution remains a contentious issue and that there is no community consensus on how to deal with the issue. As you have acknowledged, prostitution in suburban areas can be quite troubling for residents. As the petitioners note, licensed brothels are subject to location restrictions so that they are almost entirely located in light industrial areas. These location restrictions, in conjunction with limits on room numbers, maximum numbers of sex workers, and restrictions on signage and the like, are designed to limit the state's licensed brothels impact on community amenity. It is significant that according to the Prostitution Licensing Authority (PLA), it has received no complaints in respect of the impact on community amenity of any licensed brothel.

I understand the impact sole operators sex workers may have on communities and the concerns residents have. Sole operator sex work is lawful in Queensland, and these workers may provide services from premises in suburban areas. Only one worker may provide services at these premises, which limits the potential for any adverse impact on community amenity. Sex worker co-operatives are unlawful under the Criminal Code.

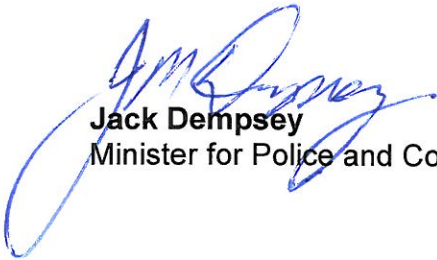
If the presence of a sole operator sex worker is having an impact on the community, action can be taken to ensure community amenity is upheld. It is an offence under s.76 of the *Prostitution Act 1999* for a person to cause unreasonable annoyance or disruption to privacy of another person in the vicinity of a place which is used for prostitution and is caused by the presence, or suspected presence, of prostitution at that place. Those concerned by the presence of sole operator sex workers can contact their local police station who will be able to resolve the issue.

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Finally, the petitioners state that they are concerned about the possible impact on children. I understand the petitioners concerns and, by law, acts of prostitution must take place in private. Under s. 73 of the Prostitution Act, it is unlawful for a person to publicly solicit for prostitution. If the worker and client were engaging in sexual activities in public it would be likely to constitute a number of offences under the Criminal Code. If this is the case, residents should contact police who will be able to take action.

I appreciate this opportunity to respond to petition 1852-12.

Yours sincerely



Jack Dempsey
Minister for Police and Community Safety