

Mary Petrella's Deputation to the Committee of the Whole - York Region on October 14-2021 on behalf of Marnie Hill - CEO of the Council of Women Against Sex Trafficking in York Region

Mr. Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Mary Petrella.

I am Executive Director of the Council of Women Against Sex Trafficking in York Region.

Thank you.

On June 21, Newmarket Town Council **unanimously** passed a motion that **prohibits all sexual activity** in retail and commercial massage establishments within its jurisdiction while protecting the integrity of legitimate massage and personal wellness establishments.

Beginning in 2022, illicit BRPs will disappear from Newmarket because the Town will have updated its Bylaws and Regulations to:

1. Only issue operating licenses to owner / operators of legitimate Personal Wellness Establishments – holding them responsible for all staff and attendants, and for ensuring all services provided comply with federal, provincial and municipal regulations.
2. Require from attendants that they provide proof of certification from an accredited Canadian institution. This enables qualified massage and wellness attendants, who work in a legitimate business, to serve their clients with a high-level of skill, integrity and professionalism.
3. Work with York Regional Police in creating a review process of applications that will prevent businesses associated with criminal activities from obtaining a license; and finally
4. Require attendants to provide proof of age (18 years or older), a Citizen of Canada, a landed immigrant or have a work permit issued by the Government of Canada to work in the Alternative Massage services or a similar occupation category.

Newmarket did this because, as Mayor Taylor put it to his Council colleagues, **"it's illegal for those businesses to do this!"**

And for that, Mayor Taylor and Council came under attack.

They were accused of Asian Hate and Racism.

Leading the attack was the group known as Butterfly-Asian Migrant Sex Workers.

Butterfly is an advocacy and placement group for Asian Migrant Sex Workers who are working in our Country but doing so illegally.

This is critical to you as they are operating in the remaining 4 municipalities of York as well as Toronto.

Fact is Butterfly's network of 2,000 Asian-Migrant sex workers are **not accredited** masseuses.

And, from a legal standpoint, their work permits prohibit them from ***“doing sex work or working in sex work-related industries.”***

I quote Canada's Immigration and Citizenship regulations: ***“Open work permits allow persons to work for any employer in Canada, except for an employer who offers striptease, erotic dance, escort services or erotic massages. Anyone who does not have Canadian citizenship or permanent residence status (i.e., “temporary residents” or “foreign nationals”) is prohibited from doing sex work or working in sex work-related industries.”***

But, rest assured, that attacks on Newmarket Council will continue and Mayor Taylor advised them to that effect.

In fact, the attack began last March.

Here are the details:

Butterfly - Asian Migrant Sex Workers, as part of an Alliance, launched a legal challenge in Ontario Superior Court of Justice with the goal of scrapping the 'prostitution-related' sections of the ***“Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act”*** as outlined in the Criminal Code.

The Canadian Alliance for Sex Work Law Reform is made up of 25 sex worker rights groups

This Alliance actively lobbies for the **full decriminalisation of the ENTIRE sex trade** including, and I quote from their website:

“The entire sex trade includes sex workers, clients, families, and third parties such as personal managers, brothel keepers, receptionists, maids, landlords, hotels who rent rooms to sex workers and anyone else who is seen as facilitating, organising and profiting from sex work.”

We know this because our 3 groups have retained Counsel to secure our role as INTERVENORS/Friends of the Court in this legal challenge as it makes its way to the Supreme Court.

In conclusion, it is HIGH TIME that we make the FULL region of York the FIRST zone in Ontario FREE from Sex Trafficking and the Sexual Exploitation of Women from Prostitution.

I turn it back to Mr. Vallée for your questions.

Thank you.



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