



Ottawa Statement Regarding Bill C-36 Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act

Date: June 27, 2014

To: Standing Committee on Justice & Human Rights Email: just@parl.gc.ca

Re: Bill C-36 *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act*

We, the undersigned, are writing today to express our deep concern about the proposed passage of Bill C-36, the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act. We represent a broad cross-section of organizations and individuals specializing in violence against women, community health, and services to vulnerable populations in the Ottawa area.

As a diverse group with autonomous mandates we hold a range of perspectives on how to address the balance of sex worker safety, community safety, and the protection of vulnerable persons. Our diversity of positions makes it all the more striking that we find ourselves unified in the position that Bill C-36 is fundamentally flawed and, as such, should not become the law in Canada.

Of particular concern is the failure of the Bill to address the Security of the Person issues raised by the recent Supreme Court ruling in *Canada (Attorney General) v. Bedford* 2013 SCC 72. Not only does Bill C-36 fail to alleviate the criminalization of women in sex work, we are concerned it may add new potential for harm and thereby exacerbate the precarious position of women socially, and under the law.

We urge the committee to act to ensure this proposed legislation does not pass into law in Canada without, at minimum, significant amendment informed by a wide range of testimony and evidence-based expert opinion. We particularly urge Parliamentarians to hear from sex workers and community-based women's advocates about the safety and criminalization consequences that Bill C-36 will provoke, should it pass in its current form.

Organizational Signatories

Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women

Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre

AIDS Committee of Ottawa

Carlington Community Health Centre

Catholic Family Service Ottawa

Coalition for a Carleton Sexual Assault Centre

The HIV and HCV Prevention Research Team, University of Ottawa

Interval House



Minwaashin Lodge

Sandy Hill Community Health Centre

Sexual Assault Network

Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa

Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments (WISE)

Independent Signatories

Leslie Bennett

Toby Brooks

Sarah Doucet

Tru Evans

Nhi Huynh

Sydney Lloyd

Edward Ndoupu

Emma Sabourin

Halina Siedlikowski

Steve Sullivan, Former Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime

Merissa Taylor-Meissner

Elise Wohlbold

Joanne Woodill, Probation Officer, Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services,
Ottawa