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POSITION: Oppose RI HB 7165 (Criminal Offenses – Commercial Sexual Activity)

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee.

My name is Robin Levasseur from Johnston, RI.

As I already said, it is hard to tell the difference between the two immunity bills under discussion today. I am sorry that members of the House seem to be spending a lot of time on a supposed problem that would impact a tiny, tiny percentage of people in our state.

So I have to ask, why are these bills even being considered? And the answer is that the loitering repeal and the immunity proposals were recommendations made by a commission created to advance the idea that Rhode Island should return to the days when prostitution was legal, if it happened indoors.

As I explained, I was prostituted in Providence in those last years of the legal sex trade and it was a dangerous form of Hell. My Life was threatened more times than I can count. I was punched, hit, beat, stepped on, thrown downstairs, thrown against cars. I won't go on but I could.

I honestly do not want my precious granddaughter to live in a state where public officials keep flirting with organized violence against women.

Repeal laws that punish women in prostitution but makes laws against tricks and pimps more fierce—and direct law enforcement to target them aggressively.

I oppose HB 7165 because it is part of a very sneaky, dangerous attempt to resurrect legal torture, also known as prostitution.

Thank you.