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POSITION: Oppose RI HB 7307 (Criminal Offenses – Commercial Sexual Activity)

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee.

My name is Robin Levasseur from Johnston.

A regular citizen can hardly tell the difference between the two immunity bills you are considering. I'm not a lawyer.

But I know the commercial sex trade in Rhode Island and I know one of the LEAST relevant problems happening right now is the idea that folks need immunity in order to report a crime.

I have to be honest with you as a lived experience expert. It is very very very rare that, for example, a trick witnesses a girl getting beat up and he wants to call the police but doesn't because he doesn't want to be charged with procuring. Doesn't happen.

Police rarely charge anyone involved in these transactions, but I strongly believe the buyers should be charged because they cause a massive amount of harm. They buy us to hurt us.

I oppose HB 7307 because it protects buyers, as though they are innocent bystanders when they routinely damage our bodies and minds.

Once again, you are portraying a fantasy world when the reality is: commercial sex is rife with violence, mainly committed by the buyers, who typically have families, nice houses, and disposable income.

They do not need free passes. They need accountability.

Thank you.