



RI Police Chiefs' Association

Date: April 24, 2023

Special Legislative Commission to Study Ensuring racial Equity and Optimizing Health and Safety Laws Affecting Marginalized Individuals.

- Recognize Chairwomen Ajello and members of the Commission and the many hours of work put into preparing and receiving testimony.
- Note I am the representative of the RIPCA and my comments today are based on my participation and not reflective of the RIPCA as a whole.
- I have reviewed every document received by the Commission and thank many of the groups represented or presented: CoyoteRI, Amnesty International, RIDOH, Commercial Sex Workers, and members of other participating groups – I have truly listened and respect the perspective of others.

I do need to state that the “laws” which are the basis for much of the discussions are put in place by our Legislators and are representative of “Societies” beliefs! Law Enforcement takes its guidance by those laws.

1. Documents of information:
 - a. Chapter 12: The Sex Industry and COVID-19
 - b. Policing “Modern Day Slavery” & Career Care in Rhode Island
 - c. Prostitution and Prostitution -Related Charges in RI: 2000 – Present (2023)

All of these documents provide a perspective of the issues, concerns and suggested remedies which law enforcement doesn't regularly consider.

2. So what has this done for me:
 - a. Cause me to be sure that law enforcement is approaching any cases of suspected sex trafficking, Prostitution, Pandering, (juvenile or adult) that individuals involved to be victims first!
 - b. Consideration of **Force or Coercion**
 - c. Multi-Disciplinary Teams, review approach and certain wording on investigative procedures.
 - d. Reaffirm my complaints of the wrap-around services in RI are insufficient.
 - e. No juvenile in “Foster” care should feel safer on the streets than in some sort of care!
 - f. **Survival Sex**
 - g. Decriminalization? Model to review: New Zealand / Choose to regulate rather than criminalize. This model is much deeper than just that. It also needed those wrap around services, health care, housing, counseling, ect.
 - h. Fear of Police is unacceptable to ME! Relationships with Stakeholders must be continually improved!