



Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Limited  
Company No: 07058666

## REASONS FOR LOBBYING/PETITIONING FOR BAN ON ADVERTISING FOR SEXUAL SERVICES

Whilst we understand that legislation against sex advertisements will have counteractions, we nevertheless find it morally abhorrent that our society is complicit in allowing criminals to advertise their wares in the sort of advertisements that appear in *Loot* and other newspapers, and which are readily available in reputable newsagents.

We feel that there is no other form of criminality in which social acceptance is so great, or which society does so little to prevent, and wish to bring the issue forward for debate.

### STATEMENT:

We call upon the Government to introduce legislation that will make it illegal for “sex for sale” advertisements to appear in any media or location where vulnerable adults and children are being sexually exploited for the profit and gain of others.

The legislation should cover all aspects of advertising by all means including paper, electronic or other objects and should encompass those who assist, promote or aid and abet such advertising.

### BACKGROUND:

By allowing visible advertising we are legitimizing prostitution and by extension, forced prostitution for profit of others. Women and girls who are trafficked for sexual exploitation - forced prostitution - endure appalling conditions: they suffer violent control, false imprisonment, denial of human rights and dignity, brutal rape.

***Where is the line to be drawn? We don't allow tobacco advertising – why does our society allow “sex for sale” advertising, often a front for forced prostitution?***

### Reasons for having legislation in place

- The increase in available pornography and explicit films and DVD's is increasing men's perceived need for sex, and fuelling the demand for sex, which is increasingly being met through forced prostitution – trafficking – using fraud, deception and violence
- The sale of people for sex of all kinds is readily available to view and purchase on the internet, advertisements offering girls for sex in newspapers, magazines, massage parlours, lap dancing clubs, shop signage, toilets, telephone boxes and so on. These enticements help to create and increase demand – generating tax free profits for the men and women who are tricking women and children into forced prostitution.
- The message we give to boys and young men is that if sexual services are legitimately advertised, then it must be acceptable, and legal, to use the services offered

***Is this the morality and the culture we want to encourage?***

### Benefits of having legislation in place

- Removing easily accessible information on where to buy sex will be an irritation and a disruption to the habitual user thus potentially reducing the demand.
- The police unit responsible for counter-trafficking in London feel strongly that if by making the printing and publication of such adverts illegal, publishers who would be liable to prosecution will refuse to accept sex for sale advertising.
- By removing visible advertising we make it more difficult for first-time or casual users to access the marketplace
- By making visible advertising illegal we remove the most obvious means by which brothel managers and traffickers draw in their customers and thus disrupt their marketing strategy.
- By making such advertising illegal we would be discouraging the prevailing subliminal message being given, particularly to susceptible boys and young men, that it is acceptable to buy women for sex
- Publishers who ignore the legislation and continue to advertise such services, can more easily be prosecuted.

*Purple Teardrop Campaign and Soroptimist International Poole welcome queries of a general nature via email to: [enquiries@sipool.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@sipool.org.uk) or [enquiries@purpleteardrop.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@purpleteardrop.org.uk)*



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Registered Charity No 1141695 Company No 07496934

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(Alternative presentation)

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We feel that there is no other form of criminality in which social acceptance is so great, or which society does so little to prevent, and wish to bring the issue forward for debate.

Sex for sale advertising encourages demand for anonymous and easy sex. Massage parlours, escort businesses and saunas are mostly a front for illegal brothels, where victims of trafficking work in forced prostitution. A ban would therefore help to disrupt traffickers' business, as legitimate publishers and distributors would immediately refuse to accept such advertising, thereby reducing opportunities for users to buy into the trade. Publishers and distributors who continue to accept such advertising would by default be liable to prosecution.

There is an argument for saying that banning 'sex for sale' advertising in newspapers would force human trafficking further underground than present and make it harder for the police/NGOs to make direct contact with women victims. However, it is hard to see how much more underground this trade could be, as women are offered for sex on the internet and in other ways as well as in newspapers. We have it on good authority that the police do not use newspaper advertisements as a sole source of information, and will of course continue to have access to advertising which has not been removed.

It could be argued that a focus on a ban of sex for sale advertising would risk diverting government attention from potentially more useful policies/legislation, although this legislation would surely only be one measure in a range of measures for disruption of the supply and demand of women and girls for sex. Given that 'sex for sale' advertising fronts up human trafficking organised crime, SCD9 specifically expressed their requirement for legislation to facilitate prosecutions against publishers and to maximise disruption of the illegitimate sex trade.

It is suggested that legislating for a ban on 'sex for sale' advertising would be difficult to implement as sex trafficking is not always a police priority and has no target or evaluation, but surely changing police priorities can be sustained, especially if legislation offers better chances of prosecution.

Permitting 'sex for sale' advertising sends a message within society that having sex with a trafficked woman is acceptable when clearly it is not. The advertising readily available for all punters to access, including tourists, susceptible young men just into puberty, legitimizes this activity and gives the "green light" of societal approval to those seeking anonymous sex whatever the source.