

# US SW Policy InfoShare Newsletter #18

**December / End of Year 2021**

**Hosts: Ashley**

Welcome to our newsletter for December! We're coming back after a hiatus in November with a ton of updates about the state of sex work policy - a big hefty 59 page newsletter summarizing thousands of pages of reports, plans and policy statements (that you absolutely should read in detail.)

This doc is designed to be readable and informative to people who cannot make the meetings, with more updates included below the agenda. Outline navigation links are in the left sidebar.

***Writers / Journalists: You can be on this list as an organizer.***

***The call and documentation are OFF THE RECORD. DO NOT RECORD / REPORT.***

***You can get in touch with the groups referenced in each update to ask for comment!***

# Agenda

## Hello / Attendance

1. Hello / Affirm Our Goal
  - a. *Our goal with the US SW Policy InfoShare effort is to facilitate non-hierarchical communication and coordination between sex worker groups, allied groups, and eager volunteers. This effort is not a project of any one organization. This is a collaborative effort.*
  - b. Reminder on joining protocol: We'll approve people from the wait room for calls, so we need contact info before they join. That's name, affiliated orgs if any, location if you'd like, and email. Have new contacts [email ashley@swopbehindbars.org](mailto:ashley@swopbehindbars.org).
  - c. Everyone paste your info in chat as well, for transparency and networking!
  - d. Remember this is effectively a public space, so we keep the scope to sharing public information on the call and recommend contacting each other to strategize and plan.
2. Before we start
  - a. A reminder that we're now meeting on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month at 1pm EST.
  - b. With the new schedule, we've created a recurring google calendar invite. Feel free to accept it and mark yourself as "attending" or "maybe" without worrying about actual plans. The event is just to help you plan around if you'd like to add it to your calendar, we won't be taking attendance through it.
  - c. If you don't have the event invite or are experiencing issues, email [ashley@swopbehindbars.org](mailto:ashley@swopbehindbars.org) to troubleshoot!
3. If you'd like to add anything to today's agenda, let us know so we can make a note and not forget anything - or just chime in when we're at the relevant section.

## National & Global SW Policy and Research Topics

We'll be catching up on a lot of major items and policy releases since our October InfoShare meeting, through the November hiatus to today. Lots to cover, so apologies if we move fast - still feel free to chime in if you have questions or additions! Legislation is in the next section.

### 4. The “Blitz” Is Here

- a. A few months back we mentioned rumblings of what antis were calling a global policy “blitz”.
- b. The concept is simple: They have the funds and centralized organization to translate key anti-sex work concepts into legislation in many languages crafted to specifically address many specific localities.
- c. By introducing all of this at once, they will not only overwhelm our meager capabilities to fight back, but notch up wins in “small” localities that drastically impact the entire landscape and/or can be quickly adjusted to replace the losing fights in neighboring localities and immediately re-introduced.
- d. It's clear from a glance at the international and state sections that they are well into this plan and having great success.
- e. These policies can roughly be sorted into three categories: End Demand, Child Safety From Pornography, Confirmed Consent Moderation.
- f. **End Demand:**
  1. This includes proposals referred to as “nordic model”, “asymmetrical decriminalization”, “equality model”, “going after the buyers”, “going after the men”, and are easily identifiable by a desire to increase criminal penalties (in general), increase police involvement, while using a heavy cover of “survivor” and “victim” focused jargon to maintain criminalization or continue increasing funding for criminalization.
  2. In localities where sex work is criminalized, like US states, the end form when passed has *never yet* actually decriminalized anyone, but actually made “buying” a *felony* now in Texas and Hawaii.
  3. In localities where sex work is partially decriminalized, like Spain, the “gender equality” proposals are to criminalize sex work further.

4. In localities that already have the “nordic model”, these efforts have taken the shape of increased persecution of migrants, for example.
5. However all of these efforts are linked in shared organizations and funding, and use similar language about gender justice, protecting women, and “fairness”, usually also appropriating the idea of “decriminalization”. But you will always identify them by the actual text of the legislation looking to increase criminalization.

**g. Child Safety From Pornography, a Public Health Risk**

1. In the US, we are looking at this on two fronts - “Online safety”, a major focus in many other countries as well, and “keeping pornography out of schools” / “parent choice”
2. The major feature of these proposals is they rely on a rarely defended statement that pornography is a massive public health risk (often a “deadly risk”) to children, and due to this huge risk, limits on adults must be accepted, and limits on discussion of things they call pornography (anything about LGBTQ issues) are necessary to protect from this new and growing risk.
3. In Germany, we see entire sites now blocked at the domain level. In Australia and America and the UK, mandatory ID checks for any visitor to porn sites are being pushed - hard - supposedly to protect children from seeing porn.
4. In Texas, Virginia, and Nebraska, heated policy debates are raging about how “pornography” has been found in school books and new policy is needed to prevent such exposure - and that “sex ed”, if too sexual, gives kids “keywords” that will expose them to porn at home.
5. While the book proposals seem centered on kids, in reality this is deeply tied to online search monitoring through software in school such as Gaggle, so this is actually also a prong of the same ‘online safety’ debate - the logical endpoint is we can control the school easily but drastic measures must be taken to deal with the kid’s access to internet at school.
6. These policies ignore any study of children’s health, simply to keep a major “save the children” narrative centered in these efforts as a whole.

7. See: [Anonymity No More? Age Checks Come to the Web.](#)

#### **h. Confirmed Consent Moderation, to Prevent Trafficking On Porn Sites**

1. Perhaps a little less obvious, but incredibly important aspect to this, is the push for more and more extremely specific regulation (though banking or government policy) designed to make sex work sites “safer” “for workers”
2. But these policies are in fact to make things INCREDIBLY UNSAFE for workers, both by making the industry harder to make a stable living in and by ‘scarlet lettering’ workers with increased surveillance and stigma they feel will be designed to shrink the industry - as such it’s not a surprise that liability based policy encourages more surveillance and data tracking of workers but offers workers no new tools to protect their data or privacy and safety.
3. In the EU, an example is the committee just voting for a policy saying all porn must include the mobile number of the the worker - somehow to confirm that they are safer.
4. In the US we see this heavily today through new policy to confirm consent from MasterCard that actually, as predicted has resulted in deplatforming, entire sites shutting down, skyrocketing rates of censorship.
5. On all our sites, we have seen roll outs of startling levels of biometrics and invasive questions and data requests.
6. Worldwide this and the child safety proposals are being rolled into “esafety” proposals and “moderation” regulations and in the us “section 230 reforms” - all of which are designed to burden the industry and sidestep actual abuse by targeting porn sites, where statistically abuse is rare.

#### **i. All Together**

1. These policies together are designed to accomplish one thing: further criminalize and censor sexual expression in the face of a global community that *does not want to criminalize and censor sexual expression* and in the face of undeniable overwhelming evidence these approaches *harm sex trade participants and create the circumstances for exploitation and trafficking.*

2. The blitz campaigners have designed a policy ecosystem where they can excuse finely crafted discrimination as a helping hand with incredibly confusing but very consistent bad faith public messaging.
3. But they are clear in their internal communications and on their websites they have one goal: the complete end of “porn” and thus every other sort of sex work and all the expression they decide is porn.

**j. Now what**

1. We have to acknowledge this and know how hard this fight is and how well it’s been maneuvered. But we’ll also start this big meeting off with something encouraging:
2. These last couple months have seen the releases of many big important reports that prove all of these approaches are wrong and many that expose the bad faith. Our challenges are great but our toolbox is as strong as ever.
3. A bit of encouragement: [How Creators Can Fight The War On Porn](#) from Free Speech Coalition.
4. So here we go! We’ll start kind of by date for recent studies - and I’ll attempt to summarize these sections as we have *60 pages* to get through today.

**5. Caught in the Carceral Web: Migrant Sex Workers**

- a. Released in October by writers from [Butterfly](#): Asian and Migrant Sex Workers Support Network, the HIV Legal Network and other academic contributors, the report was titled [Caught in the Carceral Web: Anti-Trafficking Laws and Policies and Their Impact on Migrant Sex Workers](#).
- b. From their summary:
- c. “This report evaluates the combined impact of four areas of law on migrant sex workers:
  1. federal criminal laws targeting sex work and human trafficking;
  2. federal immigration laws regarding both inadmissibility as well as human trafficking;

- 3. Ontario's human trafficking laws;
- 4. and municipal bylaws in Toronto regulating holistic health centres and body rub parlours."
- d. Though this report is directly about Canadian policy, but the issues here are international (by their nature migrant issues and border policies are international.)
- e. It's worth reading for US organizers trying to stay on top of the complex web of policy our country and close allies like Canada impose on much of the rest of the world
- f. It also includes many recommendations on how to improve policy that can be applied outside their locality. The full 62 page report is [available as PDF here](#).
- g. You can see a video of the authors discussing their work from a launch event on October 25th, [now available on youtube here](#).
- h. See also: Event from November 5th via Freedom United: [Why decriminalizing sex work will help to end trafficking: Canada in a global context](#)

## 6. **MasterCard / ACLU / Banking Discrimination**

- a. Despite protests and meetings with advocates, MasterCard went ahead with their new adult content policy plans on October 15th.
- b. Efforts against this have been ongoing. Notably, after the AcceptanceMatters.org open letter before the policy, [ACLU has started their own petition campaign](#) around October 25th (Representatives from ACLU were in the meeting that organizers from many groups had with MasterCard execs on October 13th)
- c. See reporting on that meeting: [Sex Workers Say Mastercard Ignored Their Concerns About New Regulations](#)
- d. There was also [another protest rally in front of MasterCard offices in NYC](#) on October 23rd.
- e. Statement/report at ACLU: [How Mastercard's New Policy Violates Sex Workers' Rights](#)

- f. From ACLU's mailing to members about the petition, from Lala B. Holston-Zannel, Trans Justice Campaign Manager at ACLU:
- g. "Mastercard put into effect a new policy regulating adult content sellers that makes it extremely hard for sex workers to make a living online."
- h. "Laws and policies like Mastercard's criminalize and stigmatize sex work in ways that disproportionately harm the safety and wellbeing of Black trans women, chills free speech, and invade our privacy."
- i. "We talked with Mastercard and warned them of the harm this policy will have on sex workers and Black trans women. They went forward with it anyway."
- j. "This new policy imposes strict requirements on adult content websites that use Mastercard's credit card or payment options – including pre-approval of all content before publication. The stated intent of this is to prevent child sexual abuse material and other non-consensual content. But the policy only applies to websites that host adult content – despite all available evidence indicating these problems proliferate across the web."
- k. "So in reality, all Mastercard's policy really does is threaten sex workers' access to the financial services and online platforms that they depend on for safety and livelihood – making them even more vulnerable, especially those who are trans women of color."
- l. ACLU also put out a few tweets on the subject and [even some video](#) promotion.
- m. **Related:** In June ACLU and 22 other civil rights groups released a letter demanding PayPal and Venmo stop similar discriminatory practices: [PayPal and Venmo are Shutting Out Sex Workers, Putting Lives and Livelihoods at Risk](#)
- n. **Impact:** In previous mailings we've attempted to track some of the impact of the policies so far. It's hard to overemphasize how this is shaking every single adult site - we are seeing smaller ones (like AVN) close down entirely, every site deleting content, and increased enforcement of existing TOS conditions.
- o. We're working on projects to track TOS and platform issues in a more ongoing manner, and will include some major platform notes in the platform section below. There continues to be "SESTA-scale" impact on the internet from this policy, as predicted.



p. **Also Related:** [Antis have been pressuring](#) (and suing) Visa just as hard - we'd be smart to be working connections at that company now. Here's [another thread from FSC on Visa](#).

q. **Some Newish reporting:**

1. [Prudish Mastercard About To Make Life Difficult For Tons Of Websites](#) - TechDirt, 10/13
  2. [Sex workers, adult shops and gun businesses say they are being denied banking services](#) - ABCNews AU, 10/13
  3. [Credit-card firms are becoming reluctant regulators of the web](#) - The Economist, 10/16
  4. [Sex discrimination: why banks shun workers in adult entertainment](#) - The Guardian - 10/16
  5. [Advocates Say New Mastercard Policy Hurts Sex Workers](#) - Gay City News, 10/19
  6. [New Mastercard Policy Will Hurt Sex Workers](#) - Them, 10/20
  7. [Porn, Mastercard Moderation and How Bitcoin Doesn't Fix It](#) - CoinDesk - 10/25
  8. [Why Mastercard's New Porn Rules Should Scare Everyone](#) - The Daily Beast - 11/17
  9. [The Payment Processors vs. Porn](#) - Comic (!) at The Nib
  10. [Another Porn Site Says Banks Forced It to Stop Paying Sex Workers](#) - Motherboard - 12/2 (See AVN below)
- r. Some of the reporting has included new [gaslighty statements](#) from MasterCard like
1. "We welcome dialogue and different perspectives about our policies and programs, but let us be clear — allegations of bias against adult content creators are demonstrably untrue," a spokesperson for Mastercard said in a written statement.
  2. "Our actions and business practices against trafficking and exploitation clearly show this. And, as we have shared in our discussions with groups over the past several months, we are monitoring how the program is implemented so that we can provide

further clarification and guidance to the acquiring banks and their customers as needed.”

- s. **Survey Opportunity:** Valerie Webber (Board Chair at PASS) launched a survey to get more data around the MasterCard policy impact. [Twitter thread and instructions here](#).
- t. So we know we're annoying them enough to actually comment at least! Keep the pressure up!
- u. **FOR WORKERS:** [Security and Privacy Checklist for Joining New Indie Platforms](#)

## 7. #NoNutNovember / #NoPornNovember

- a. Now a yearly occurrence celebrated by anti-porn religious orgs - and really pushed by them, at least this year Mike Stabile at Free Speech Coalition has been tracking and explaining the movements (and how commercially motivated some of them are as well).
- b. Fight The New Drug, one organization, which gets donations and promotes “programs” to cure porn addiction, is a “non-profit” which promotes an app called “Fortify” which IS for profit... [owned by the founder of Fight the New Drug, Clay Olsen](#).
- c. Fight the New Drug also has somehow managed to run at a loss for two years and [showed over 1 million dollars in “investment losses” in one year alone](#). Sketchy finance moves afoot with the antis, as normal!
- d. [Read one thread on twitter about it here](#).
- e. Here's [another thread on twitter](#) that goes into anti-semitic roots of this movement and exposes some frankly startlingly anti-semitic imagery currently in use by the anti-porn campaigners.
- f. [Another twitter thread](#), from Gustavo Turner, on Elle UK's “partners of porn addicts” article, pushing the debunked concept.
- g. **Related:** NCOSE “Whiter Ribbons Against Pornography Campaign” launched at the end of October - [another informative thread from Mike available on this campaign as well](#).
- h. As Mike notes, remember, NO official medical body has endorsed ANY of these faith based claims - “Stigma and shame around masturbation is not healthy!”

## 8. Healthy Relationship Porn Study

- a. Let's follow up that nonsense with this: [Study finds couples who watch porn together have happier relationships](#)
- b. "The research, published in the journal Frontiers in Psychology ... questions the claim – from radical feminist activists or conservative religious organizations – that being exposed to pornography is a public health crisis"
- c. You can read the full study (with a much more wordy sciency name) here: [But What's Your Partner Up to? Associations Between Relationship Quality and Pornography Use Depend on Contextual Patterns of Use Within the Couple](#)

## 9. House Hearing on LGBTQ Financial Inclusion

- a. The house hosted a hearing on November 9th titled "[There's No Pride in Prejudice: Eliminating Barriers to Full Economic Inclusion for the LGBTQ+ Community](#)"
- b. It's my understanding the witnesses brought up sex work or testimony was sent in, but I haven't had a chance to watch it.
- c. "In June 2020, the United States Supreme Court issued a decision that extended protections against firing based on sexual orientation or gender identity, paving the way for federal agencies to do more to protect the LGBTQ+ community"
- d. But as we know, targeting businesses in high use by our community, aka sex work, is totally kosher (see [AcceptanceMatters.org](#), etc)
- e. "According to a 2015 survey, 21% of LGBT people are "unbanked," meaning they don't have at least one basic bank product like a checking or savings account"
- f. Video available at the above link or [on youtube here](#).

## 10. Over-Policing Sex Trafficking Report

- a. The USC Gould International Human Rights Clinic released a new report with a virtual event on November 15th - [recording available here](#).
- b. The report, [Over-Policing Sex Trafficking: How US Law Enforcement Should Reform Operations](#), is available as a 39 page PDF on their site.

- c. Excerpts from their summary on the site hosting the report:
- d. “The report is one of the first comprehensive reports about U.S. anti-sex trafficking law enforcement operations, jointly coordinated at the federal, state and local levels, and often known as “raids”, “stings” or “sweeps”.
- e. “Our report analyzes whether operations actually protect persons who are sex trafficked, prosecute traffickers, and prevent trafficking as required under the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA).”
- f. “Based on a comprehensive review... we found minimal evidence that operations further these goals. Instead, our research and analysis suggest operations are ill-suited for achieving the aims of the TVPA.”
- g. “In light of our findings, we urge law enforcement to reconsider their use of operations to combat sex trafficking in the U.S.”
- h. “Effective anti-trafficking efforts are moving away from support for use of operations, focusing instead on community involvement; public health and harm-reduction strategies; and investing in poverty relief, anti-discrimination initiatives, and opportunities for education and employment.”
- i. Recommendations included redirecting funds from law enforcement, severely limiting the use of operations, increasing transparency and oversight of operations, increasing services and including our community organizations and sex workers in communication and crafting policy.
- j. [More about the panelists and contributors](#) can also be found at their website.

## 11. **Anti-Sex Work Feminism Roundtable**

- a. Political Research Associates hosted a roundtable discussion on November 18th titled [Anti-Sex Work Feminism and the Lived Reality of Criminalization and State Violence](#)
- b. You can view the panel [at this link](#) or [on vimeo here](#).
- c. From the promotional materials:
- d. “Anti-Sex Work Feminists have a (deadly) listening problem: a problem listening to the people whose lives and livelihoods have been made economically and socially precarious by the state and made subject to daily violence by its carceral arm.”

- e. The panel included valuable information on personal struggles, but was also full of important information for organizers and policy makers - linking these personal struggles directly to policy fights and an education from penal code numbers and platform issues to how we've actually logistically managed to fight to get changes made.
- f. More information on the participants and an infographic with important quotes is [available on their site](#).
- g. There is also a full transcript (I love when these are created, so important for accessibility and letting ideas travel!) [available as a PDF here](#) - a good solid 29 page read.
- h. This webinar is the 3rd of 4 in a PRA webinar series: [Subverting State Violence](#)
- i. **See Also:** [If you think punter forums are grim you should see how this parenting website talks about sex workers](#) by Molly Smit
- j. **See Also, Study:** [Problematizing the Educational Messaging on Sex Trafficking in the US "End-demand" Movement: The \(Mis\)Representation of Victims and Anti-Sex Work Rhetoric](#)
- k. **Related, same folks:** [The Anti-Trans 'Gender-Critical' Movement Is Overflowing with Bullshit](#)
- l. **And some new guidance:** [Briefing Note: Guide for Allies to Meaningful Partnership and Engagement with Sex Worker-Led Organisations](#) at NSW

## 12. **Mistress Velvet Exhibit**

- a. In November, the Leather Archives in Chicago hosted "a celebration of life for Mistress Velvet organized by local sex workers and comrades, including a screening of a film celebrating their life and work."
- b. "Mistress Velvet was a co-director of Sex Workers Outreach Project-USA and a fierce and vocal advocate for sex workers and trans liberation". They passed away in May.
- c. Reporting: [Black and Brown Sex Workers Pay Tribute to Mistress Velvet with Exhibit in Rogers Park](#)

## 13. **November 20th - Trans Day of Remembrance**

- a. An annual observance on Nov 20th honors the memory of the transgender people whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence. ([History of the day available here at GLAAD](#))
- b. Many groups run by or serving sex workers memorialized the day with action and media releases - we'll try to include more in the newsletter (if we don't get around to updating this section in time for the meeting)
- c. [Thread and flyers from English Collective of Prostitutes](#).
- d. SWOP Behind Bars Blog post: [Trans Day of Remembrance can be More than One Day!](#)

#### 14. **December 1st - International HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**

- a. Many sex worker orgs and allied groups released information and campaigns around the international date set aside to educate about HIV and AIDs.
- b. Via Aids United: [Ending HIV means ending sex workers' invisibility](#) (though published earlier this year)
- c. [The National HIV/Aids Strategy for the United States 2022-2025](#) - **Released on the 1st by the White House**
  - 1. We are the only nation that does not include sex workers as one of the groups most heavily suffering from HIV.
  - 2. Some notes via RHJ: "While sex workers are not (yet) a "key population" for focus, there was more mention than in any previous strategy! Nora Darling and Anna Forbes from AIDS United and Breanna Diaz from Positive Women's Network have been leading a great conversation on this topic, and have been fantastic advocates in pushing this issue."
  - 3. Specific mention of sex work were included in a few sections, including about reducing HIV-related stigma and discrimination, a mention of how the criminalized nature of exchange of sex makes collection of data complicated, and the need to educate health and policy staff on training on bias towards populations who experience risk of HIV including sex workers.
  - 4. For those unfamiliar, this "strategy" document isn't legislation or an order but influences a broad array of policy and includes

(sometimes pretty vague) plans for how they will implement previously passed legislation.

5. It doesn't have any budget or teeth on its own as a document, but like other "strategy" and "plan" documents, is a good barometer of how the gov is looking to approach these issues (or how it talks about them anyway - again, none of these 'goals' come with budget or staff).
  6. There is, however, quite a lot of rich information in here and it's notably a fair amount less bad faith than the 'trafficking' plan docs, they do discuss recent science and there are some interesting and useful stats - notably because these stats don't come from law enforcement.
  7. It's developed by the White House Office of National Aids Policy and other federal partners and a large array of orgs.
  8. You can [read the 98 page document on the White House website here](#).
  9. **See Also:** [Nothing about us without ALL of us: Sex workers must be included in the new National HIV/AIDS Strategy](#), published before the unveiling.
  10. **And:** [An open letter to ONAP and allied organizations](#) advocating for inclusion
- d. The government wasn't the only group leading conversation on the 1st. Some policy items of interest mentioned in the public conversation, among many important ones:
1. Decriminalizing carrying protection (ending use of condoms as evidence in prostitution arrests)
  2. The need to end the US "anti-prostitution pledge" for receiving aid (currently countries need to criminalize prostitution to receive needed medical support)
  3. How we need to further educate about PREP outside of an LGBTQ context (rates of transmission are high among groups who may think more stigmatized groups are the only ones at risk)
  4. The need to reform adult media production standards to stop discrimination against undetectable HIV positive performers

(Undetectable = Untransmissible, there's no need to end people's careers when production is totally safe)

**e. Positive Women's Network**

1. ... and a coalition of other groups released a fact sheet titled [Demanding Better: An HIV Policy Agenda by People Living with HIV](#), including a section on “adding sex workers as priority populations throughout the federal response.”
  2. The 50 page document includes some good sections, including noting criminalization creates a structural barrier to sex workers protecting their own help, and that workers are also at increased risk of violence *from* law enforcement and bear the brunt of HIV-related prosecutions, convictions and sentence enhancements.
  3. You can [read the PDF hosted at PWN's site here](#). They also [hosted a discussion](#) on these issues on the 30th - and [livetweeted much of it](#).
- f. *Upcoming* - December 8th Event, 2:30 PM CST: [Let's Talk About Sex \(Work and HIV Criminalization\)](#)
- g. This event is by Health Not Prisons collective, an intersectional national initiative launched in 2020 by Counter Narrative Project (CNP), the Positive Women's Network – USA (PWN), Sero Project, Transgender Law Center (TLC), and the U.S. Caucus of People Living with HIV (the HIV Caucus). [More info here](#).

**15. December 3rd - International day of people with disabilities**

- a. Numerous groups [shared information](#) about the intersection of sex work and disabilities - we'll be trying to gather some links.
- b. Older article on the subject: [Sex Work is a Disability Issue. So Why Doesn't the Disability Community Recognize That?](#)

**16. National Action Plan To Combat Human Trafficking - December 3rd Release**

- a. The Biden administration has released the latest renewal to the National Action Plan, a “strategy” document that lists a lot of existing efforts and goals and past legislation to be implemented.



- b. PR placed reporting here: [Biden administration releases new plan to combat human trafficking](#) and admin "fact sheet" available here: [FACT SHEET: The National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking \(NAP\)](#)
- c. To anyone unfamiliar with this stuff, they've been updating this "plan" since 2000 and patting themselves on the back about it, these efforts influence everything but it doesn't have the same teeth as something like SESTA
- d. However these are big on familiar lofty statements about goals and small on particulars. There are probably much better resources on this (attempting to find in my notes - A) but from [a twitter thread by Ashley](#):
- e. "Those first two promos don't mention "sex" at all, all these bullet points will mostly sound "right" but they literally sell all trafficking policy with these soundbites"
- f. "Let's look at the actual thing - their [first 'definition' of trafficking](#) is specifically about sex, though it does include "force" and age here, while SESTA didn't in the final language. They define human trafficking first with references to "commercial sex act (sex trafficking)" which is unfortunately our US gov status quo."
- g. "really broad definitions of trafficker here, easily including many things WE don't consider force or coercion. Note how our gov also switches between adults and "child" randomly, constantly making this policy about "saving" children even though it's mostly influencing cops interacting w adults"
- h. "They mention trafficking occurs in other industries [in the intro](#), but in the next sentence return to stigmatizing our businesses like massage parlors."
- i. "Wide use of misleading stats throughout [including an over-reliance on NGO "reports"](#) compared to actual instances."
- j. A statistic showing "[80 percent of human trafficking cases investigated involved victims of sex trafficking](#)" is actually evidence they are really fucking up, since labor trafficking in other industries makes up the majority of trafficking - them focusing on "sex trafficking" in 80 percent of their case kind of really shows they are focusing and reporting wrong.
- k. They later mention "[historically](#), labor trafficking has been more difficult for law enforcement to detect than sex trafficking" (perhaps because they use all their resources on sex work stings and seizing sex work assets instead of making any real effort!)

- l. There is a TON more in here, it's a very dense document ([very long twitter thread here](#)). There is some progress, as there is more mention of survivor focused programs, prevention, working with sex worker orgs and fighting stigma and even more study of law enforcement of abuse.
- m. The major takeaway is this while this is promoted as a forward thinking 'new' plan, it's actually a good document showing where the US government (and really both parties) are on Sex Work, and how much of it is still focused on "operations" (see other sections in this newsletter on the efficacy of stings)
- n. It's also a good place to see how many totally nonsense niche useless sex trafficking policy "wins" have been racked up by grandstanding politicians, including endless increasing of criminalization for things already criminal, mandating 'spot the signs' educating for more and more businesses (such as specific legislation to insist on training truckers and another one to insist on training ride share drivers), and just how engrained orgs like NCMEC or Polaris are, deputized by the government to surveil us without proper oversight.
- o. **On the spot the signs note, related:** [Southwest employee accused white mom with Black daughter of human trafficking](#) *(these stories never stop)*
- p. Don't get too disheartened, because again, this is the status quo that already exists and not exactly really a plan to make things worse, while it could be read that way. It's not legislation or an executive order in itself, and comes with no budget assignment or power before the budgeting apparatus. It can only inform those things by saying what the white house's "plan" is for them.
- q. It is available in PDF at [the White House Gov site here](#).
- r. **See Also (much of this plan talks about DHS):** [ICE Doubles Down On Controversial Facial Recognition Technology](#)

## 17. December 4th - International Day of Banks

- a. December is just chock full of "days" huh?
- b. [Here's a thread from Sex Workers Alliance Ireland marking the occasion](#).
- c. "Today is International Day of Banks and rather than celebrate them we want to highlight how sex workers experience discrimination from banks

and financial institutes. On paper sex work is decriminalised in Ireland so sex workers should be able to open business accounts, right?”

- d. “Wrong. Just this week we have been in contact with an online creator who was refused a business account, despite her work being perfectly legal.”
- e. “PayPal, which has its European headquarters in Ireland, have closed the accounts of sex workers, refused to pay out the remaining balance which amounts to stealing money, even for those who do not use the platform to be paid for sex work.”
- f. “Our COVID hardship fund in 2020 sought to get cash straight into the hands of sex workers who really needed it and we struggled with a reliable way to deliver it. Stigma against sex work is pervasive.
- g. Read/share [the full thread on twitter](#).

#### **18. Decrim MN’s Unfucking Whorephobia - Starting December 8th**

- a. “An offering of basic skills and resources for service providers to unpack their biases and reduce stigma towards sex workers. Join a virtual discussion about what it means to work in right relationship with the community and how you can expand your own advocacy and support of sex workers.”
- b. “You will be emailed separate ground rules and expectations on the framing of the workshop after you register.” [Link here](#).

#### **19. December 17th - International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers**

- a. This yearly day of remembrance is marked by memorials, actions and educational projects released from groups around the globe.
- b. Here are some we’ve got info on, in alphabetical order please send us any others you know of and we’ll try to add before we send out as a newsletter!
- c. Times are at local time to the event’s city, if timezone is not stated!
- d. ***Coyote RI’s virtual event***

1. The virtual event will be on the 17th at 7pm-10pm EST at this url:  
<https://tinyurl.com/bsdufym6>
  2. There's [a flyer to share on twitter](#).
  3. Via email:
  4. "This year's memorial video will go from 1836 to 2021 with over 800 murdered US sex workers."
  5. "If you would like to be a speaker for COYOTES International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers, a virtual event."
  6. "Folks can read a poem, talk about someone they lost, or the violence sex workers experience in general."
  7. "Please email Kayla Katt at [communications@coyoteri.org](mailto:communications@coyoteri.org)"
- e. *Sex Work Hive, Prostitutes Collective, and All African Women Group***
1. Will be holding a demonstration outside of the Ministry of Defence to protest the murder of Agnes Wanjiru, a Kenyan sex worker, who was killed by a British Army soldier in March 2012.
  2. They will demonstrate at 12pm in Whitehall Gardens, Central London.
  3. [More information and flyer are available on twitter](#).
- f. *Sex Workers Alliance Ireland***
1. "The Sex Workers Alliance Ireland (SWAI) invites all sex workers, supporters and allies to join us at a candlelit vigil to mark International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers"
  2. The event will be at 6:30PM outside Leinster House in Dublin.
  3. More [event information on FaceBook here](#), [tweet to promote here](#).
- g. *Sex Work Project at the Urban Justice Center, RHJ, AU (and some others) (Via the SWR listserv)***
1. "This year, starting today, SWP, RHJ, AU and many other organizations are doing a campaign to highlight the issues and vulnerabilities which lead to violence"

2. Here is an “[Unofficial Toolkit](#)” they’ve shared and they also have a [folder of images from the toolkit](#) as separate PNG files. (This is mostly focused to other organizers as a resource)
3. The toolkit includes a lot of useful links for crafting your blog posts and tweets (and actually includes a bunch of example tweets you are free to use).
4. It’s organized to give you conversation topics and info to share through December.
5. The organizers involved note they’ll be adding to their toolkit and the associated folder regularly.

***h. SWOP Behind Bars (and a bunch of guests)***

1. Their Memorial Event will include a panel on institutional violence - featuring Ashunte Coleman, Mulan Williams, and Candy moderated by Alex Andrews at 7pm EST.
2. Afterwards, a burlesque performance will take place at 8pm. Doors open at 6pm.
3. The event will be held at 9220 US Hwy 17/92 in Maitland Florida.
4. It will also be broadcast on zoom, [you can RSVP at this link](#).

***i. SWOP Brooklyn***

1. Is working to coordinate their 12/17 events, contact [brooklyn@swopusa.org](mailto:brooklyn@swopusa.org) if you’re in the NYC area and would like access to their google docs and signal chats to get involved!

***j. Other Events***

1. Anyone on the call - can you share now any events you may be hosting, involved with or know of that we can add to our list and send out in the newsletter?

***k. Articles/Blog Posts***

1. [December 17th and Mourning the Victims of the Green River Killer](#) by Laura Lemoon @ SWOP Behind Bars
2. Cool: [Controversial art piece auctioned off to support sex trafficking survivors](#)

3. **See also, report:** [An Epidemic of Violence 2021: Fatal Violence Against Transgender and Gender Non-Confirming People in the United States in 2021](#)
20. **The Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Consent and Safety in Adult Content Distribution**
  - a. Any word of rescheduling? Did I miss it?
21. **EU Porn “Phone Number” Policy**
  - a. There’s a lot of crazy stuff going on in europe (and around the globe), most of it a pretty direct mirror of all the bad policy proposals we’re dealing with in the US. (see some specifics by region in the international section)
  - b. But some stuff is alarming on a huge level. On November 30th, [two EU committees voted to make it mandatory to collect and verify the mobile phone numbers of all uploaders to porn platforms](#).
  - c. “The consequences: Data leaks, blackmail of celebrities, and threats/stalking of sex workers.” [via twitter](#).
22. **Abortion / Bodily Autonomy**
  - a. In the news a lot, don’t need to tell you. Of interest is this report available in PDF from [Interrupting Criminalization](#):
  - b. [Abortion Decriminalization is Part of The Larger Struggle Against Policing And Criminalization: How Our Movements Can Organize In Solidarity With Each Other](#)
23. **BackPage**
  - a. New trial legal maneuvering is ongoing. [From a Nov 19th thread by Stephen Lemons](#) (who previously livetweeted much of the proceedings for the last trial, declared a mistrial). We keep this in the general policy section due to the national PR nature of the persecution of the site and all the precedent that is finally getting tested because the founders are actually fighting it instead of pleading out like previous site owners in sex work cases.
  - b. “Asset seizure is a corrupt practice. In the Lacey/Larkin case, the feds are using it to bleed the defense dry. “

- c. Reporting: [Lacey/Larkin Defense Asks Judge to Release Portion of Illegally-Seized Assets](#) - 11/19
- d. Recap: "In 2018, the feds seized ALL of Michael Lacey and Jim Larkin's assets, including: money made from their 40 years in the newspaper business, assets set aside for their legal defense, assets belonging to their children and their wives. The feds also liened their property. "
- e. Lots of important nuance in the details of these proceedings but incredibly hard to summarize well. In this case one of the claims is that the gov knew it would lose the first trial and is intentionally spreading the defense thin with the new trial - they believe, like so many cases in the US, the prosecutors want to force a plea via asset seizure.
- f. Further reporting: [Lacey/Larkin Defense: Government 'Goaded' Mistrial as Part of Pattern of Misconduct](#)
- g. "A defense brief filed prior to a Dec. 3 hearing contends prosecutors intentionally caused a mistrial in the Lacey/Larkin case; included is an exculpatory email from former NCMEC chief Ernie Allen."
- h. Very interesting filing, we'll see if it goes anywhere!

## 24. **APAG**

### **a. Elections**

1. The sex worker union is holding its federally mandated elections! Time to run for office and vote! (Well, Nominations are now closed)
2. "The APAG Election Committee, with the approval of the union's executive board, has announced elections for a new term for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant at Arms and Board Member.
3. Nominations were accepted through Monday, Nov. 29; submissions will be reviewed, approved and publicly posted from Nov. 29 through Dec. 13.
4. Voting will then take place for seven days, through a third-party election site, from Dec. 13-20; ballot will be verified and tallied from Dec. 20 through Jan. 3, 2022.
5. Election results will be announced by the election committee on January 3.

6. [More information can be found on their site here.](#)
7. (organizer note: there is leadership policy at many groups we disagree with - telling people to join and vote in the union is like suggesting voting in democratic primaries. We can't change the policy while completely abstaining - though of course if you object strongly enough with any group you should absolutely do your own group)

#### **b. FSSW Policy**

1. Despite prior comments encouraging all sorts of sex workers to join the guild, according [to minutes posted to twitter](#):
2. "By 7:50 p.m. pst after a very thorough discussion, Alana Evans moved for the board to decide if they would allow legal escorts/brothel workers as APAG Union Members. It was seconded by Vice President Ruby."
3. "Vote: with 0 yays, 7 opposed, 0 abstained"
4. "Resolved: The APAG Board will not accept legal escorts into the Union. A camera must be present to be considered a performer. APAG Union will currently only accept Porn performers, Webcam Performers, Phone Sex Operators"
5. This has lead to outcry among many workers and organizers for abandoning the most at risk workers, while some point out that APAG may feel constrained by the current climate and see this issue as an existential threat to operation.
6. In any case, the debate highlights how severely stigma and criminalization impact our ability to organize with each other, and some have mentioned making this a point of contention in the elections.

#### **25. Alternatives To Big Tech Letter (12/17 Deadline)**

- a. Via Fight for the future, a sign on opportunity:
- b. "We hope that your organization will be able to join Access Now, Presente, Adalah Justice Project, Indigenous Friends Association, Yale Privacy Lab, Electronic Frontier Foundation, and Fight for the Future in signing on to a letter to legislators in support of alternatives to Big Tech.



- c. We believe it is incredibly important for human rights, privacy, and digital rights advocates to be involved as technology changes and is legislated, ready to speak up for the communities we serve and fend off both harmful tech and harmful laws while working for a better internet. Because of this, we would very much like to get your organization signed on to this letter, and welcome feedback and conversation as well as signatures. The sign on & feedback deadline is EOD December 17th.
- d. You can [read the letter text here](#).
- e. The [sign on link is available here](#).
- f. They “also held a briefing around these issues to be an additional resource. [Here is the link in case it is helpful](#).”

**26. Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center put out the “Sex(ual) Healing” Documentary**

- a. The documentary, which previously screened in a limited run, is now on exhibition until February 8th at the Museum of Sex in NYC, as part of [Reclaiming & Making: Art, Desire, Violence](#)
- b. The filmmakers have shared a call for the second film in the series, focused on Sex Worker Families (title to be decided.) From their call:
- c. “We are looking for sex workers who are comfortable being interviewed about their family life for a documentary series that is for and by sex workers.”
- d. “Like any job, we would like to discuss your work/life balance and how the stigma and criminalization of sex work affects your well-being.”
- e. “If you are someone who is currently or formerly in the sex work industry and have a bio and/or chosen family, we would like to amplify your voice (and anyone who is in your family that wants to speak out)”
- f. “This is a paid interview and will also be a part of a docuseries that will be shown both nationally and internationally.”
- g. If you are interested, or know someone who may be, the contact is Zola at [Zbruce@urbanjustice.org](mailto:Zbruce@urbanjustice.org). They are looking to finalize participants by mid-January.

**27. University of Toronto Study: Sex Work Decriminalization Policy (Twitter focus)**

- a. If you self-identify as an activist supporting Sex Work (full) decriminalization policy and have experience of using Twitter for your advocacy work, you are eligible to participate in this PAID study
- b. Seeking “interviews with activists who advocate for sex work (full)decriminalization policy and have experience of using Twitter for this important advocacy work. Participation is compensated (80 USD), including a remote interview (approx. 60 - 75 mins; \$50) and a brief follow-up (\$30) confirming the accuracy of data reporting. “ny
- c. Information on the academics involved (and a lot more info) [available at this link, as well as a way to apply](#).

## 28. **New Pride Agenda Relief Fund**

- a. NPA has a relief fund available to sex workers (focusing on impacted by COVID or criminalization).
- b. “Priority will be given to those impacted by the criminalization of adult consensual sex work and/or the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. NPA will send one-time direct relief payments in the amount of \$100.00 - \$200.00 USD.”
- c. Workers can [fill out a form to apply here](#) and [a tweet/flyer to help promote can be found here](#).
- d. (They are also [hiring a program manager!](#))

## 29. **22 Years of “End Demand”**

- a. Reframe Health and Justice put out a report in September and have been promoting it, with a new article here: [22 Years of End Demand: The Evidence Is In](#)
- b. The report, titled “[Attacking Demand, Escalating Violence: The Impact of Twenty Years of End Demand Implementation on People who Trade Sex](#)” summarizes the impact from five different countries
- c. Biggest takeaway summaries, from the section headers of the article:
  1. “It doesn’t change whether people trade sex — It Changes the Conditions under which people trade sex”
  2. “Reports of Violence Go Up”
  3. “No Change in the Size of the Sex Trade”
  4. “No Changes in Trafficking of Workers”
- d. Frankly, “End Demand” (aka Nordic Model, Equality Model, “partial” decriminalization) has failed on every one of the supposed planned goals, and creates a lot more new problems.
- e. “The only country which reported a decrease in the overall size of the sex trade, Norway, also engaged in a policy that no other country employed — [Operation Homelessness](#). The four year program, which law enforcement openly admits it engaged in, targeted racialized workers, and engaged tactics of forced eviction, including sending letters to landlords threatening criminal penalty. This targeting led to the immediate eviction of sex workers of color en masse. “
- f. The conclusion? The evidence against “End Demand” is undeniable and fully studied from over two decades of the policy in practice - there is no reason to implement an already failed policy in more countries in the face of this evidence.
- g. Read [the full 37 page report in PDF format here](#).

## 30. **Red Canary Song & Survived and Punished Joint Statement**

- a. The orgs released a statement in response to the charges in the Atlanta Massage Parlor shooting.

- b. [Via twitter](#): “While these charges have been released since May, we felt it was still necessary to write and release a statement given that the organizations that make up the mainstream and very well funded #StopAsianHate are not pushing against antiBlack policing and prison institutions.”
- c. “The nonprofits that make up #StopAsianHate have de-centered and discarded the people most impacted by the violence that has brought anti-Asian violence to the forefront of people’s minds. We are a migrant massage and sex worker organization that has always stood against policing.”
- d. [Read their statement, which is also available in Chinese and Korean, here.](#)
- e. **See Also:** Statement from Detroit Will Breath condemning Warren PD’s raids on massage parlors. [Thread on twitter.](#)
- f. “Since the Atlanta shootings, law enforcement has used the tragedy to justify more policing and surveillance on Asian massage and spa workers
- g. “We are calling for co-signers on the statement:  
[http://bit.ly/WarrenStatement.](http://bit.ly/WarrenStatement)”

### 31. **Exxxotica - right now Dec 3-5!**

- a. The popular adult content convention in DC has been going strong back in person, you can [follow on their site](#). The next event is in Chicago at the end of April!

### 32. **XBIZ January 2022 Convention**

- a. Will be in person again in January (3rd - 6th) 2022 in Los Angeles, with “X3 Expo” Jan 7-8 and the XBiz Awards on Jan 9th.
- b. It will followed shortly by the adult product ANME/XBIZ Expo in Burbank CA Jan 10-12th ([each event has a separate page you can find on the event listing here](#)).
- c. One of the adult content industry’s biggest trade shows, it also generally hosts a wide variety of panels including those with political focus.
- d. [Find out more about the main convention and register online here.](#)

- e. (If you're a content creator, you can commonly get admission for free and a place at booths with sites you work on like chaturbate - you'll want to contact those sites to ask if you can get a pass and appear at their booth. Usually it's fans and other industry who buy the passes, try and get it covered if you're a performer!)

### 33. **Freedom Network USA's 2022 Anti-Trafficking Conference Registration**

- a. The upcoming conference will be held March 16-17th and will be a "hybrid" event with events onsite in Miami Florida and online.
- b. From the announcement: "Anti-trafficking work is entering a new era. In the past two years, the global pandemic and renewed calls for racial justice forced advocates out of their comfort zones to meet the needs of survivors"
- c. "We have made tremendous progress, but the approach and tools we have used to prevent and address human trafficking have fallen short."
- d. "Join us to commemorate 20 years of progress and to reimagine what is possible in anti-trafficking work ahead."
- e. Registration [available here online](#).
- f. (As a note, while FNUSA and member orgs [are for sex work decriminalization](#), these broad "trafficking" focused conventions and events have rarely been an accepting place for sex workers and harm reductionists - this is slowly changing but expect challenging interactions at such events!)

### 34. **Museums on OnlyFans**

- a. A consortium of museums opened an OnlyFans account as part of its 'Vienna Laid Bare Campaign.'
- b. Reporting: [Museum Starts OnlyFans Account After Its TikTok Is Banned for Posting Nudes](#)
- c. Another article: [Vienna museums open adult-only OnlyFans account to display nudes](#)
- d. (*You gotta wonder - how are they handling ID requirements for archival photo art?*)

### 35. **Decriminalized Futures**

- a. In February 2022, the Institute of Contemporary Arts (London) will present Decriminalised Futures, a group exhibition featuring thirteen international artists whose work speaks to the multiplicity of contemporary sex worker experiences.
- b. More information about the exhibit and artists can be found here, reporting: [The ICA to Present Decriminalized Futures, an Exhibition Inspired by the Sex Workers Rights Movement](#)

### 36. **Marshall Project / Police Use Of Force**

- a. The Marshall Project released a report on police use of violence against girls.
- b. “In New Orleans, every girl who was involved in police use of force incidents from 2015-2020 was Black; two-thirds of the girls who live in the city are Black. The story is similar in Chicago, Minneapolis, Indianapolis Columbus, Ohio and Portland, Oregon.”
- c. Read here: [Police Hurt Thousands of Teens Every Year. A Striking Number Are Black Girls.](#)

### 37. **Camming Content Policy Research**

- a. New article out: [Regulating and representing camming: Strict limits on acceptable content on webcam sex platforms](#)
- b. “This analysis shows that these platforms, for legal and financial reasons, reject the idea of camming as sexually explicit or as (sex) work.”
- c. “Such a construction of camming limits sexual expression online, obstructs online sex workers’ labour rights and perpetuates sex work stigma. This article sheds light on how digital platforms can establish and maintain norms which regulate users’ online expressions, working conditions and representations.”
- d. See also: launch [thead by the author, Hanne Stegemen, on twitter.](#)

### 38. **“Predictive Policing” and other Justice items of note**

- a. [Good thread here by Cory Doctorow](#) about police stats and how tech is being used to whitewash confirmation bias, useful for anyone trying to understand government statistics and tactics.

- b. See Also: [Another thread by Alec Karakatsanis](#) about how journalists decide which of those stats are “news” about “crime”.
- c. New analysis: “[There Is No One Answer to Over-Policing and Mass Incarceration — There Are Many](#)”
- d. Also of interest: [Shadowdragon: Inside The Social Media Surveillance Software That Can Watch Your Every Move](#)

### **39. Student Sex Work**

- a. We previously shared updates about fearmongering about college programs designed to support existing student sex workers.
- b. New Article: [What Student Sex Workers Want You To Know](#)

### **40. Transaction Reporting**

- a. We previously mentioned a plan by Dems to ask for increased reporting from platforms like Venmo, etc. Update: [Democrats to scale back Treasury's IRS bank reporting plan amid GOP uproar](#)
- b. Thanks GOP?

### **41. It's the fucking holidays! Be kind to yourself!!**

- a. Blog post: [Holiday Survival Guide for Sex Workers](#)

### **42. Any other national policy items to go over?**

### **43. National Senator / Representative Meetings Debriefing:** Anyone have recent politician meetings to share details from?

## **Legislation Tracking**

### **44. Safe SEX Workers Study Act**

- a. Still in progress, the backers (updates via Reframe Health and Justice's mailings) have been meeting with bill sponsors and are intending to have it reintroduced on/by December 17th to coincide with other actions.
- b. I'm not sure what details are publicly sharable - I would contact [kmdadamo@gmail.com](mailto:kmdadamo@gmail.com) and ask if you can join the efforts on their calls and listserv to influence this policy proposal.

- c. Info from first introduction in 2019 for those not sure what this one is: [Wyden Introduces SAFE SEX Workers Study Act](#) (from his site)
- d. Brief summary: This is the “unintended consequences” study bill on SESTA/FOSTA (and other related policy and site seizures) which is designed to give political cover to those who voted for SESTA (basically everyone in congress) to instead back decrim and try and repeal it and other bad legal policy.
- e. From Wyden’s introduction on December 17 in 2019:
- f. “Last year I warned that forcing websites to take down any mention of sex work would remove agency from sex workers and put them at great risk of violence and abuse, all while making it harder to catch sex traffickers and aid victims of human trafficking.”
- g. “So far, initial reports from cities across Oregon and the country show that violence against sex workers is rising dramatically and there’s little evidence that this law is helping victims.”
- h. “The SAFE SEX Workers Act is a common-sense step to ensure the federal government will study the impacts of SESTA/FOSTA on the most vulnerable members of society, so that Congress can make informed policy decisions, rather than chasing knee-jerk responses,” Wyden said.
- i. The previously introduced text of the bill (introduced to the house by Ro Khanna) [can be found here](#).
- j. **See Also, new podcast episode:** [Decriminalization In A Post SESTA/FOSTA World](#) at Sex Work CEO (promo tweet [here](#))

#### 45. EARN IT Act

- a. [Via Mike Stabile on twitter](#) (End of October):
- b. “Get ready. [Senator Blumenthal says he plans to reintroduce the EARN IT Act](#) — aka SESTA/FOSTA 2.0 in a few weeks. In its original form, EARN IT effectively allowed platforms and law enforcement to monitor private messages now protected by end-to-end encryption”
- c. “In fact, by making them liable for the content on their platforms (EARN IT refers to “earning” Section 230 protections through increased moderation), it pretty much requires it. And it means broad devastation online for adult content and sex workers.”



- d. "It also creates a "Best Practices" commission that will evaluate what sites get Section 230 protections based on what content they \*might\* expose children to. Blumenthal seems especially excited by this after the Facebook hearings."
- e. "Which gives us even more reason to worry about conservatives taking the House/Senate. You might have noticed their children protection scheme includes just about everything related to sex and race."
- f. "For those of you who weren't around during the first EARN IT Act go-round, @samleecole has a great explainer. Read up and gear up for the fight."
- g. Reporting: [What is the EARN IT Act and Why Is It Bad for the Internet](#)
- h. Our observations of antis maneuvering shows they have a lot of support for this, there will be a major conservative push if this is reintroduced.
- i. (Ashley Note: I was contacted by someone claiming membership at one of these orgs seeming to having a crisis of faith, saying they'd been in strategy meetings where plans were made specifically about how they would "stop lgbtq" and not actually help kids and this is what they were putting all their bets on and how this person felt it was too wrong to not say something.

I'm not that experienced in talking to / deprogramming these folks and am a little skeptical of the source, but if someone wants to try and reach out and explore this and see if it can help us strategize or fight back and expose bigotry send me an email at [ashley@swopbehindbars.org](mailto:ashley@swopbehindbars.org) and I'll fill you in)

#### **46. The Justice Against Malicious Algorithms Act**

- a. Yet another Section 230 "reform" effort, by dems.
- b. Reporting: [House Dems Introduce Bill to Further Erode Section 230 Over 'Harmful Content'](#)
- c. According to the legislators' announcement, the bill aims to "remove [the] liability shield when a platform knowingly or recklessly promotes harmful content."
- d. If passed, JAMAA would erode Section 230 protections for the first time since FOSTA-SESTA in 2018, and would mark only the second time ever that legislation has assailed those protections.

- e. Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr., D-N.J., Communications and Technology Subcommittee Chairman Mike Doyle, D-Pa., Consumer Protection and Commerce Subcommittee Chair Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill. and Health Subcommittee Chair Anna Eshoo, D-Calif., announced the bill on Thursday and introduced it in the House on Friday. The timing follows on the heels of the so-called “Facebook whistleblower” testimony earlier this month.
  - f. According to a statement by Rep. Pallone’s office, JAMAA “would lift the Section 230 liability shield when an online platform knowingly or recklessly uses an algorithm or other technology to recommend content that materially contributes to physical or severe emotional injury.”
  - g. [The proposed text of the bill can be found here.](#)
  - h. **See Also:** [Democrats to target Section 230 in Haugen hearing](#) and [posts on twitter about this](#) from Evan Greer from Fight for the Future
  - i. **And:** Another thread from Evan [live tweeting the House Energy and Commerce Committee Section 230 hearing on December 1st.](#)
47. [S.2989, DHS Blue Campaign Enhancement Act](#) [NOTE: Passed the House July 20, 2021] and [S.2991, Countering Human Trafficking Act of 2021](#)
- a. Not sure much about these two bills, text available at link above. Anyone know if they are going anywhere and worth tracking?
  - b. “Marked up” on November 3rd?
48. [H.R.3996 - Empowering Law Enforcement To Fight Sex Trafficking Demand Act of 2021](#)
- a. This bill allows grants under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program to be used for programs to combat human trafficking.

## Local / State Legislative and Policy Topics

49. **Maryland**
- a. After one year of local-level Non-Prosecution of Prostitution Charges: The Results! (Via RHJ mailing list)

- b. “Last year, the pandemic/realization that jails are cesspools led the Baltimore State’s Attorneys Office (SAO, the Baltimore version of a DA) decided to stop prosecuting low level drug offenses and prostitution charges, among others. After a year, the SAO's office made those decisions permanent. Johns Hopkins researchers have been following the impact, and recently released the report. Top lines are:
  - 1. Projecting out the number of averted arrested, 80% of those would have been in the Black community.
  - 2. Of those whose open warrants were dismissed, less than 1% went on to commit a more serious crime. That's lower than the overall state recidivism rate.
  - 3. There was no increase in 911 calls for drug-related or prostitution-related complaints (so Baltimore is, in fact, not a thriving haven for the sex trades now - it's just stayed the same).”
- c. Read the article: [Baltimore’s No-Prosecution Policy for Low-Level Drug Possession and Prostitution Finds Almost No Rearrests for Serious Offenses](#)
- d. More reporting: [New study boosts movements to decriminalize drugs and sex work](#)
- e. You can read the full 21 page report, “[Evaluation of Prosecutorial Policy Reforms Eliminating Criminal Penalties for Drug Possession and Sex Work in Baltimore, Maryland](#)” in PDF format [at this link](#).

## 50. New York

### a. Governor Considers “Legalization”

- 1. (Via RHJ): “Recently, NY Gov Kathy Hochul signaled that she is considering plans to "legalize" sex work in the state of New York. It is unclear how she defines this.”
- 2. “Currently, there are two bills in the legislature - one for full decriminalization, and one for asymmetrical criminalization or the Nordic Model.” (“End Demand”)
- 3. “The new session begins in January, and advocates are hopeful.”
- 4. Read more: [Lawmakers and advocates debate legalizing sex work in New York](#) (October 11th)

5. Advocate Op Ed in favor of full decrim: [This Is What Will Make Sex Work in New York Safer](#)

**b. Goodbye Cy**

1. Survived & Punished NYC held a party in November to say goodbye to outgoing Manhattan DA Cy Vance's "Reign of terror." [See info on twitter here.](#)

**c. Resource Guide**

1. Anti-Violence Project released a Sex Worker Resources Guide that has a list of resources (with contact numbers and addresses) in new york including health care, legal aid, mental health services, social services, and sex worker peer orgs.
2. Not sure the original hosting URL (they sent it in email) but [we mirrored the PDF at this link to help share it around.](#)

**51. California**

**a. Prop 60**

1. Nothing new has happened with this long dead proposal to mandate condoms in porn, but Mike Stabile at Free Speech Coalition (the adult company trade group) wrote a recent blog post directed towards sex worker political organizers.
2. Read it here: [7 Lessons Adult Activists Can Learn from Prop 60](#)

- b. SB 357** - decriminalizing loitering for the purpose of engaging in a prostitution offense.

1. Is it still on Newsom's desk?

**52. Pennsylvania**

**a. [Pennsylvania, HB1835](#)**

1. "The bill would have done a range of things, including turning patronizing into a felony (following such efforts in Texas and Hawaii - the true goal of this "end demand" "decrim" - just increasing crim), and increasing penalties, including for those who are HIV positive."

2. “This call in led to the House Democratic Policy Committee hosting a briefing a few weeks ago on HIV criminalization laws. You can check out the hearing [here](#).”

## 53. Florida

### a. Operation Round-Up

1. In October announced 125 arrests in “operation round-up”, a fairly typical US sting operation. But as usual, while advertised as a human trafficking victory, none of the arrests were for trafficking.
2. From reporting:
3. “Of the charges, 103 arrests were for “soliciting another to commit prostitution,” eight were for “entering or remaining in a place for prostitution,” and two were county ordinance violations for “unlawful acts related to a solicitation event/as a precursor to prostitution.” Four people were charged with aiding and abetting prostitution, two with transporting for prostitution, one with offering to procure another for prostitution, and one with purchasing the services of a person engaged in prostitution. One person was charged only for having a previous warrant. All of these charges were misdemeanors.”
4. “Of the four felony charges, two people with were charged with transmission of harmful material to a minor, using a computer to solicit and other related charges; one was charged with “deriving support from the proceeds of prostitution”; and one person received a felony drug charge for possession in addition to a misdemeanor solicitation charge.
5. Obviously none of this actually impacts trafficking. Read more in this Op Ed: [Why Human Trafficking Raids Put Sex Workers At Risk](#)
6. Of note is where the “victims” end up. From the reporting:
7. “Chronister’s office referred the women to Selah Freedom, an anti-trafficking non-profit based in Sarasota that runs a *22-bed* residential shelter for trafficking victims. The organization, which brought in *\$4 million* in revenue in 2019, is also part of the Tampa Bay human trafficking task force.”

8. “Stacey Efaw, Selah Freedom’s executive director, said it could not confirm it is providing services to these women, or explain the services it is providing them.”

#### 54. Texas

- a. The [governor weighed in](#) supporting banning “pornographic” and “obscene” books and other media from schools.
- b. Reporting: [Texas governor calls books 'pornography' in latest effort to remove LGBTQ titles from school libraries](#)
- c. As [observed on twitter](#), this includes pretty much any book mentioning trans content.
- d. We keep pointing out that when the antis say they should ban porn, they literally mean all *discussion* of sexuality outside of their preferences!
- e. **See also:** “Prominent conservative outlet The Federalist just published instructions by a Wisconsin Lutheran minister on how to force local libraries to censor sexual expression they consider “pornographic” (mostly sex-ed and LGBTQ+ content)”: [What To Do About Your Local Library Putting Porn On Kid’s Shelves](#) - [via Gustavo Turner](#)
- f. **See Also:** [Backlash to school books centering on race, sex and LGBTQ people turns into conservative rallying cry](#) (starting to look like we should have put this all in one section nationally.)
- g. **Oh and Texas?** [Ex-Waco police officer who investigated sex crimes arrested in prostitution sting for 2nd time](#)

#### 55. Virginia

- a. A police department who led the Northern VA federally-funded human trafficking task force was sexually abusing victims of trafficking according to a federal lawsuit.
- b. “The plaintiff, who filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for Eastern Virginia under the pseudonym “Jane Doe,” alleges that in 2010 she was approached by a woman who suggested she travel to the U.S. to work as an “escort”—a job she says was described as going on dates and attending lavish events with wealthy men. She claims she was not told she would be required to perform sexual acts.”

- c. “The plaintiff claims she was forced to have sex with several men per day for four and a half years, and that all of the proceeds went to Sanchez or her husband.”
- d. “The suit also claims that local police officers were complicit in protecting the trafficking ring from authorities, in exchange for sexual services. It alleged that two Fairfax County police officers alerted Sanchez when the department would be doing sex trafficking stings and tipped her off about when they would be searching sites like Backpage.com and Eros.com, where she allegedly advertised her services. In exchange, the suit states, “Sanchez made Jane Doe available to them for sexual services gratis.”
- e. “This is far from the first allegation of a police officer taking advantage of a sex worker. Seventeen percent of sex workers surveyed in a 2003 report by the Urban Justice Center of New York reported being sexually harassed by police, including one sex worker who reported being raped by police and another who reported being stalked. A similar percentage of sex workers in Washington, D.C., reported being propositioned by police in 2008. In 2018, seven New York police officers and a former police detective were charged with operating underground brothels in Brooklyn.”
- f. Read more: [Trafficking Victim: They Made Me Have Sex With Cops](#)

## 56. Rhode Island

- a. Reporting: [State holds first meeting of a Commission on Sex Work](#)
- b. “The first meeting of a new legislative commission was held on Monday at the State House. Burdened with the long title “Commission to Study Ensuring Racial Equity and Optimizing Health and Safety Laws Affecting Marginalized Individuals,”
- c. “the enabling legislation ([H5250](#)) makes it clear that the “purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study and provide recommendations on the health and safety impact of revising laws related to commercial sexual activity, identifying the methods of human trafficking and exploitation to develop strategies to reduce these activities, and ensuring accountability in the treatment of marginalized and targeted communities by police.”
- d. “In other words, it’s a commission to study sex work, as distinct from and separate from human trafficking. As such, it may be the first such state level legislative commission in the country.”

- e. The first meeting of the Sex Work Commission is scheduled for December 20th, 2021. Involved groups and organizers, such as Coyote RI and Amnesty International, can also be found [at the article link](#).

## 57. **Nebraska**

- a. Nebraska groups don't want sex ed because.. Porn?
- b. Quote: "Young people are going to be googling the content they are learning in class ... So if they're teaching about overt sexual actions in class it can lead to more pornography exposure"
- c. This actually tracks right in with their attempts to pretend this is about what kids are being exposed to in school in order to get people to censor the internet.
- d. Reporting (?): [Nebraska Department of Education Excluded Religious Groups From Sex Ed Curriculum Team](#)
- e. (Levity from Mike: "[Wait until they find out about what comes up for chastity.](#)")
- f. We've seen a lot of back and forth with this in the public arena - conservatives both complain that children are being educated about sex via porn while ALSO working to remove sex ed from schools at every level.
- g. It makes no sense logically, but as a bad faith maneuver to simply put sexual discussion back in the closet and get all the discriminatory policy we've been seeing proposed, it's been pretty effective.
- h. See also, in VA: Opinion: [My school board's rejection of 'sexually explicit' books sends a cruel message to students like my daughter](#) - our enemies are incredibly good at making us fight the same fights all over the country all of a sudden at once!

## 58. **Colorado**

- a. New op ed: ["It feels like your life doesn't matter": How Colorado anti-prostitution laws may make sex workers less safe](#)

## 59. **Ohio**

- a. New Reporting: [The Ohio AG says stings rescue trafficking victims. Often that means they're arrested.](#)



## 60. **Indiana**

- a. “After a protracted, years-long legal battle with local authorities over zoning regulations and freedom of expression, Hustler Hollywood will finally open a boutique in north Indianapolis.”
- b. “The crux of the controversy concerned what the city code meant by “adult entertainment company,” a provision that was cited by local politicians and anti-sex activists to prevent the store from opening.”
- c. Read more at Xbiz: [Hustler Hollywood Will Open in Indianapolis After Years-Long Fight](#)

## 61. **Oregon**

### a. **Oregon Sex Work Decrim Petition Drive**

1. [Via Melissa Gira Grant on twitter](#):
2. “The Oregon sex work decrim campaign has taken a very odd and divisive turn—no other sex work decrim campaign is seeking to define “sex work” in the law, let alone further define sex workers as “employees.”
3. “[Earlier this year I talked to sex worker rights advocates](#) fighting for decrim in Oregon. They wanted full decriminalization—which is not what this new petition drive is.”
4. “As @SusanElizabeth reported at the time, their effort was about passing a law to repeal statutes which criminalize prostitution, statutes which criminalize some forms of sex work—and that doesn't require defining “sex work” in the law.”
5. “All that is to say, I don't think journalists (or advocates) can accurately cast this OR petition drive as “decriminalization”—because it is WAY broader—and because it does not resemble any sex work decriminalization effort I have seen anywhere in the world in the last 50 years.”
6. Related Coverage: [Advocates Launch Petition to Decriminalize Sex Work in Oregon](#)

### b. **Stings**

1. New reporting: [Portland Police's "Human Trafficking" Arrests Aren't What They Seem](#)
2. See Also: [Report Reveals Critical Need for Decriminalization of Sex Work in Oregon](#)
- c. **[Fucking Nick Kristoff](#)** is running for governor. Nothing productive to share.
  1. Well, here's an article: [Sex workers like me fear what will happen if Nick Kristof succeeds in his political career](#)
  2. And: [Oregon Sex Workers Say a Kristof Governorship Could Jeopardize Their Workplace Safety and Rights](#)
  3. Wish we could just ignore this jerk - but Harris is vice president. If anyone is currently organizing against his run, or knows about it, let us know and we'll add the info here!

62. **Any** other state bills, hearings, efforts with updates today?

## International Legislative and Policy Topics

In no particular order, sorry!

### 63. **Europe**

- a. ESWA call - "Apply to become one of the trainers of the first #BIPOC Sex Worker Academy organised by #ESWA! [All the information is right HERE](#) "
- b. [Twitter thread to promote](#)

### 64. **UK**

#### a. **Ofcom Regulator**

1. "UK regulator Ofcom has just announced that select online platforms — including TikTok and OnlyFans — now have to comply with age-verification and content removal policies or face potential blocks on their services." via [Mike Stabile on twitter](#)
2. Update?

#### b. **Positive Ruling on deportation!**

1. Reporting: [Trafficking victims should be granted leave to remain in UK, high court rules](#) (yes, they are mostly being deported)

- c. And there's this: [Police face hundreds of sexual assault complaints](#)

## 65. Ireland

- a. Org blog post: [The Irish trade union movement throws sex workers under a bus](#)
- b. "The Irish Congress of Trade Unions is an umbrella organisation representing nearly all the active trade unions in Ireland, north and south"
- c. "ICTU has made a submission to the Irish government's public consultation on the prostitution laws. As you can see, where their submission is reproduced is full, most of it is just a cut-and-paste job of text sent to them by the Turn Off The Red Light campaign, which seeks the introduction of the Swedish model."
- d. "But there is one part of ICTU's original contribution which I found remarkable. A few paragraphs down the submission cites – clearly for the purpose of endorsing – the view of the Technical, Electrical & Engineering Union's General Secretary that: *prostitution could not be considered "work"*
- e. This comes as local worker groups are, obviously, fighting attempts to introduce more "end demand" style policy.

## 66. Canada

- a. **Online Harms Legislation**

1. Updates?

## 67. Philippines

- a. Analysis: [Exit denied: women losing the right to leave in the Philippines](#)
- b. "The global campaign against trafficking has proved more powerful than the constitution in the Philippines"
- c. "In the two decades since it has assumed the role of a "global sheriff" in the fight against 'modern-day slavery', the United States has wielded vast influence on anti-trafficking policies abroad."

- d. “As the experiences of migrant sex workers from the Philippines illustrate, these policies have disproportionately circumscribed the mobility of women workers, restricting both their emigration and immigration.”

## 68. **Australia**

### a. **eSafety**

1. BOSE submission deadline had been extended to November 12 2021  
<https://infrastructure.gov.au/have-your-say/draft-online-safety-basic-online-safety-expectations-determination-2021-consultation>
2. AssemblyFour used FOI(A) to “uncover secret emails between Australian 'eSafety' Commissioner Julie Grant and the faith-based anti-sex work group NCOSE”
3. Reporting: [Caught in ‘porn wars’: backlash over internet censor going on anti-porn podcast](#)
4. Updates?

### b. **Banking Discrimination**

1. A major front (visible to us english speaking organizers at least), some recent reporting and interviews with Australian workers: [How Banks Are Exploiting A Loophole To Legally Discriminate Against Sex Workers](#)

### c. **MasterCard’s ID thing**

1. Didn’t see major updates this meeting, will research for next time.

### d. **Australian Prime Minister & Deputy PM pushing for heavier regulation on social media.**

1. Didn’t see major updates this meeting, will research for next time.

## 69. **England, Scotland and Wales**

- a. National Ugly Mugs is doing paid research surveys in the localities they service.
- b. “The interview will be anonymous and will take about an hour. Because your knowledge and time are valued, you will receive a £75 shopping

voucher. Interested, or want more information? You can message me [[on twitter](#)] or email [Lilith@uglymugs.org](mailto:Lilith@uglymugs.org)”

## 70. Thailand

- a. Reporting: [Activist Group Formally Submits Proposal to Repel Anti-Porn Legislation](#)
- b. “A group led by a local OnlyFans creator and a pro-democracy activist formally submitted yesterday a petition to amend Thai law and legalize the production and distribution of adult content in Thailand.”
- c. “The leaders called the existing Thai obscenity statute — which is harsh but often flouted in practice — “obsolete and archaic, essentially barring all pornography.”
- d. “Thai people are prohibited from creating adult images and videos on internally recognized legal adult platforms that can earn a pleasurable amount of money for their living, especially during the COVID-19 global pandemic,” the group argued.
- e. “According to the news report, the advisor to the speaker of the House of Representatives “received the demand and stated to the press that officials would check the statement in the petition under constitutional correctness.”
- f. Read more here: [Social independent group, led by Thai Onlyfans star “Khai-Nao”, submits petition to legalize pornography in Thailand.](#)

## 71. India

- a. Reporting: [Sex workers reject Diwali gifts from cops](#)
- b. Tightly organized Indian workers continue being an inspiration to the rest of us:
- c. “Diwali milan organized by the police in the red light are off Ganga Jamuna faced opposition from sex workers for whom the police had organized the program”
- d. “The program had to be wrapped up hurriedly after the women started reiterating their demand that cops allow sex work there and lift restrictions on engaging customers”.

## 72. Germany

### **a. Online Safety**

1. The absolute mad men finally did it, blocking three adult sites on the domain level for not complying with a one-man-regional-beurocrat crusader weaponizing all the save the children rhetoric we've been talking about.
2. The sites, YouPorn, PornHub, and MyDirtyHobby are mainstream sites with fairly standard moderation, who are not guilty of ignoring the laws they claim (they like to say no sites ID etc) setting absolutely terrible precedent.
3. "Minor state bureaucrat Tobias Schmid, of the State Media Authority of North Rhine-Westphalia, has been single-handedly monopolizing anti-porn headlines in Germany for years. Schmid has stated that his goal is to "shut down" all major tube sites over alleged age-verification infractions."
4. "AP reports that "the court said the decision taken by the Media Authority of North Rhine-Westphalia state to ban the sites in Germany didn't breach national, European or international law."
5. "Judges ruled that German law applies because "children and young people are at risk of serious and grave danger from freely available pornographic internet sites."
6. This idea that porn existing itself is a "serious and grave danger" to children is rarely supported but popularly repeated.
7. The ruling can be appealed. Another site targeted, xHamster, was not blocked this time for unclear reasons.
8. Reporting at Xbiz: [German Court Sides With Anti-Porn Crusader, Blocks 3 Adult Sites](#)

### **b. Prostitution Law**

1. Reporting: [Sex workers speak out against German prostitution law](#)
2. "It has been five years since the German government enacted the prostitution protection act. Lawmakers say it protects vulnerable people; many sex workers say it is discriminatory, stigmatizing and has increased risks."

3. "A federal evaluation of the act is planned to be completed by 2025; an interim report covers only the years 2017 and 2018. So far, there is not enough evidence to show whether any of the act's laws, for example in reducing human trafficking, have been successful."
4. Several states have published their own evaluations in the meantime: "Sex workers and professional politicians criticize that the law does not meet the requirements of better protection against trafficking and an improvement in the situation of prostitutes. They fear stigmatization and discrimination as a result of the obligation to register with the authorities and state. They say prostitutes, in particular, remain unprotected because the law is not geared to their needs."

### 73. Scotland

- a. Coverage of an Edinburgh legal case: [Stripper could be forced to drop pay claim after judge refuses request to keep identity secret.](#)
- b. "The woman, who worked in Edinburgh's Burke and Hare while she was a student, was for £1,800 in holiday pay from the bar."
- c. "She is now working in a different job and moved away from the venue, but argued her identity becoming public would damage her mental health and put her at risk of violence."
- d. "But an employment tribunal judge refused her request for anonymity, after accepting there was evidence that customers had threatened to follow her home from Burke and Hare."
- e. "The bar denied this, but Lord Summers concluded "she had willingly undertaken the risk of abuse and violence when she worked as a stripper". He also stated the woman knew "working as a stripper might harm her career prospects".
- f. The comments, for obvious reason, have "sparked an outcry and widespread safety fears for sex workers at risk of exploitation"

### 74. Afghanistan

- a. Reporting: [Afghanistan: When Religious Zealots Win, Porn Just Goes Underground](#)
- b. "A new report by MIT's prestigious Technology Review shows how sexual expression and adult content continue to exist as an underground

phenomenon when religious zealots impose their views on the general population”

- c. Read the report here: [Can Afghanistan's underground “sneakernet” survive the Taliban?](#)

## 75. Spain

- a. Spain's socialist Prime Minister promises to "abolish" prostitution.
- b. [@labour4decrim on twitter](#): “It is not socialist to take away the work of 300,000 mostly migrant women workers. Only rights can stop exploitation, not more raids, not more police.”
- c. Reporting: [Spanish prime minister vows to abolish prostitution, saying it ‘enslaves’ women](#)
- d. Prostitution has been “decriminalized” in Spain since 1995, though it's not full decrim. From the reporting (which is not exactly from our lens):
- e. “But pimping or acting as a proxy between a sex worker and a potential client is illegal. That has created a legal loophole where businesses are able to obtain a license to establish clubs that may function as brothels but can't hire sex workers directly; the sex workers are made to “rent” the rooms they work in — a situation that means they don't have the legal benefits and protections of other workers.”
- f. Labour4Decrim also notes they have “no workers rights” - limiting their access to much other workers do have.
- g. “In 2020, nearly 100 academics, artists, writers, jurists and former prostitutes reportedly signed a manifesto calling for prostitution in Spain to be abolished. The document pointed out that an overwhelming percentage of sex workers were women living in poverty, with no proof they'd chosen prostitution over some other viable alternative.”
- h. “The Spanish government didn't provide any details of the plan to outlaw prostitution Sunday” but obviously this is a note of concern for Spanish sex workers.
- i. The proposal is opposed by the Spanish Committee of Support for Sex workers who “argue that prostitution should be recognized as a legitimate economic activity, rather than abolished, and its workers accorded the same rights as other workers.”



- j. More reporting, apparently this is supposedly to “counter the far right” - [“Why Does Spain’s Progressive Prime Minister Want to Ban Prostitution?”](#) at Foreign Policy
- k. “The intention is to end the demand for prostitution by penalizing those who pay for sex rather than those who get paid for having sex, thereby minimizing harm to an already vulnerable population.”
- l. Pitched as “female empowerment” and “women’s rights”, once again appealing to the feelings and emotions of a privileged class of women who vote, by creating policy that most terribly impacts migrants and others already pushed out of the system and unable to politically fight back by that method.
- m. Right, left, fascist, socialist, everyone loves a good old ‘save the women / save the children’ crusade!
- n. It will be worth watching this unfold, just as similar “end demand” proposals are put forth by “feminists” and “conservatives” globally, with the same exact bill text and jargon fit into theoretically completely different political frameworks.

76. **Any** international bills, hearings, efforts with updates today?

## **Tech/Platform Issues, Legal Cases (Technical), Misc Topics**

### **77. Google**

- a. You may see prompts to update your “sensitive content” settings - and we’re definitely seeing more sex work political stuff lumped in under this. No bueno.

### **78. Twitter**

- a. New leadership! Huge news, of course, Jack is stepping down and there’s a lot of reshuffling. *But what does it all mean??? \*whines\**
- b. Frankly, we don’t really know yet. The major policy of focus is the one mentioned in this headline: [Twitter Is Going to Make It Harder to Share Videos and Pictures Taken in Public](#) (which of course is already being abused to suspend anti-fascists trying to track violence)
- c. New leadership comes from the “engineering” side of things and apparently has had a hand in trying to “make sure the algorithm doesn’t

show as much harmful content” which is absolutely worrying. And we know historically leadership changes are often inflection points that drastically change site policy.

d. For example, attacks on Tumblr had been going on for a while, but after leadership changed Tumblr took different approaches and eventually imploded. There’s nothing standing in the way of something similar happening at twitter, despite their previous public statements about plans monetizing adult content in particular.

e. At the same time, we simply don’t have enough information yet to panic.

f. *New Tip Jar Feature*

1. [Reports of issues](#) from sex workers, with [conflicting](#) advice around if the TOS allows adult content. Enforcement is not consistent - at this time we’d just say be careful with it (and using PayPal in general)

## 79. **AVNstars**

a. The adult feed platform announced that it will be seizing to process transactions for adult content in January of the new year.

b. [In a press release](#), the management cited banking discrimination.

c. ““Unfortunately, AVN and GayVN Stars has not been immune to the banking discrimination that so many of our industry friends have also encountered recently,” AVN Media Network CEO Tony Rios said in the press release. “We have had numerous corporate accounts shuttered in the past year alone.”

d. “We lost probably 16 bank accounts this year. It's just exhausting,” Rios told me in a phone call. “The adult industry has always had banking problems. I can think back to losing my first bank account in like, 1996. It's just par for the course. But I think that at this point, the stakes are so much higher, when you're talking 10's of 1000's of creators that really rely on this,” he said.”

e. Read More at Vice: [Another Porn Site Says Banks Forced It to Stop Paying Sex Workers](#)

f. This is obviously a huge blow to the many sex workers on the platform, some of whom just recently moved from OnlyFans believing a more

explicitly pro-sex work platform (which was currently advertising as “safe”) would be a better place to build their business.

- g. This unfortunate event is yet another nail in the coffin of the theory that sex work site instability is due to bad management intentions, or a lack of support for sex work. AVN is a long time adult industry company that is well respected and enjoyed for their awards shows and community events.
- h. If anything, the current existence of OnlyFans while PornHub has also still not regained payments shows that perhaps being a little “down low” and “mainstream” is a smart move for sites fighting sex work stigma - but it will be little comfort to those knowing history, since OF could still also lose payments any minute.
- i. [Long twitter thread on the matter](#), what to do next, and if it’s even worth trying to predict the “next good site”
- j. (IMHO there’s no way to predict which site is “next” - fans will pick it once OF actually dies and it won’t be the one sex workers would poll as wanting, it never has been. At some point we’ll know where critical mass of saved payment information is, right now it’s still on OnlyFans.)

#### 80. **ManyVids**

- a. Workers expressed concern on seeing stuff about safe for work clips on the new homepage, to summarize quickly we don’t believe this is indicative of any plan to drop adult content.

#### 81. **Patreon**

- a. After meetings with adult content creators they’ve released fairly detailed guidance for compliance with MasterCard policies - such as saying documentation will be required for “real people” “*visually*” appearing in adult content, which was a concern by people wondering about voice acting and other non-photographic/video visual content.
- b. See [their guidance update at this link](#). (Patreon already kicked most sex work way back in the run up to SESTA, see [OpenLetterToPatreon.com](#))

#### 82. **iWantClips**

- a. Released updated guidance, talking about their AI system, what MasterCard has asked of them, what they can legally do and not do (they can’t change your description for you etc), and sharing categories that

should see increased enforcement (“extreme harm”, “banned word workarounds”)

- b. [View the whole two pages of changes here on their twitter.](#)
- c. (They’re practically begging people to “help” by stopping uploading some categories and filling the queue since they’re obviously having trouble paying for these increased tech and hours costs around moderation - which tracks with user reports of very slow site functioning)
- d. Another way to look at this, as [a worker stated on twitter](#), “IWC will now be reviewing/censoring custom clips at apparently every stage of the process.” but unfortunately this full manual review is exactly what MasterCard changed in their new policies - the impact is as predicted.

### 83. **OnlyFans**

#### a. **November TOS Update**

1. OnlyFans made some TOS changes and sent out a kind of vague DM just saying there are changes. What are the particular changes?
2. Biggest ones are that it now specifies OnlyFans profiles are a contract made between the company and an *individual person*, while previously guidance had said it was ok for companies and agencies to run pages.
3. There were updates about how “advertising” will be moderated, adding additional warning to not have fraudulent, misleading advertising, etc. Some stuff about saying you can’t register domains with the “onlyfans” name and other branding confusion related changes.
4. Co-authors of content do not *need* a verified onlyfans account anymore (tbh, this was never clearly stated either way), instead clarifying you need to keep the ID/age info and are fully liable for payments to co-authors.
5. Mostly a lot of punctuation basically - [this post on reddit goes through it in detail](#). Takeaway: No reason for creator alarm in this update.

#### b. **Biometrics Lawsuit**

1. (Via Mike Stabile [on Twitter](#)) and reporting at [Cook County Record](#):
2. “A class action lawsuit against OnlyFans has been filed in Illinois, accusing the company of violating the state’s Biometric Information Protection Act. Previous suits against Facebook and others have resulted in settlements of between \$1k-\$5k per person...”
3. “The Plaintiff, Jane Doe, joined the platform in 2019. Despite being previously verified and wanting to keep her account anonymous, she alleges that she was forced to submit to biometric facial scanning that violated the Illinois BIPA.”
4. “This underscores the sometimes conflicting needs of platforms — who, to accusations of CSAM leveled by antis — are having to engage in increased surveillance of sex workers. This could lead not potential problems not just with BIPA, the GDPR, and other digital privacy laws.”
5. [Read more on twitter here](#). You can [view a PDF of the full complain filed here](#).
6. Another article at XBiz: [OnlyFans Sued Under Controversial Illinois 'Biometric Privacy' Law](#)

**c. Congressional / DOJ “Investigation”**

1. Previously [over 100 members of congress](#) sent a letter to the Department of Justice demanding an investigation into OnlyFans based on propaganda reporting [we’ve previously debunked](#).
2. As far as we know this hasn’t really gone anywhere, but it’s all PR plays anyway designed to influence the public and get companies like MasterCard to pull out.
3. [In a recent thread](#), Mike Stabile dissects the article used in efforts by Rep Ann Wagner to demand an investigation (titled “Clearwater Man Kidnaps, Beats Woman, Threatens More Violence Unless She Opens OnlyFans Account Police Say”)
4. “The only problem? No one in the case actually has an OnlyFans account.”
5. “The story revolves around a man who abducts a woman and demands she open an OnlyFans account and make videos with him. She doesn’t, but she does escapes and reports him to police.”

6. "Of course, law enforcement and media name checks OnlyFans because it gets attention! But it doesn't even reach the level of making a video, let alone getting verified and opening an account."
7. "But Wagner wants OnlyFans and the banks investigated for its role in the crime."
8. "In another citation, police say they found videos of the phone of an underage trafficking victim. She allegedly told cops that he uploaded similar videos to OF."
9. "And yet, police don't actually file any charges for distribution of illegal content. [Or apparently report it to OnlyFans] Which they would if they could."
10. Frankly the political posuturing in these investigation calls is just another constant front in the disinfo war against safe independent sex work. It's not surprising they would create a press narrative emphasizing a story of about a black man kidnapping people and try to associate it with work - it's the classic "white slavery" / "pimp" narrative ressuructed with today's SEO friendly big target.
11. This is still very serious, because as Ameen Sol (of sex work crypto company Spankchain) [notes](#), "The banks that didn't drop OnlyFans? Now under [proposed] investigation by FinCen to find out why they didn't - they will be named and shamed into submission."
12. [Wagner specifically mentions](#) this saying there needs to be a "thorough investigation of the agreements made between OnlyFans and its financial partners, specifically focusing on the 'assurances' that preceded OnlyFans' decision to continue allowing the sale of sexually explicit content."

## 84. **PornHub**

### a. **Girls Do Porn**

1. A settlement has been reached between Pornhub and the victims of Girls Do Porn
2. (CW: sexual abuse)
3. "The men running GDP coerced women into shooting hardcore sex on camera, sometimes to the point of rape, that then appeared on

Pornhub and all over the internet—something that's not at all normal or acceptable in the adult industry”

4. “Fifty victims who were coerced into having sex on camera by Girls Do Porn have reached a settlement with MindGeek, Pornhub's parent company, according to a court document filed Friday. (10/16)”
5. ““The Parties reached a mutual resolution to resolve the dispute and the terms are confidential,” Brian Holm, the women's lawyer, told Motherboard.”
6. “In 2019, Girls Do Porn owners were found guilty of intimidating and coercing 22 women into having sex on camera and lying to them about how widely the videos would be distributed.” *(this update is about the platform culpability, not that criminal case)*
7. “In December of 2020, 40 victims filed a lawsuit against MindGeek for a litany of accusations, including knowingly benefiting from Girls Do Porn videos on Pornhub and failing to moderate the images circulating rampantly on its network of tube sites.”
8. “The lawsuit was later expanded to include 50 plaintiffs. In total, the lawsuit demanded more than \$40 million in damages—at least \$1 million per plaintiff—as well as the money MindGeek earned from hosting and promoting their videos and legal fees.”
9. “On July 7, the women and MindGeek filed a joint motion to suspend proceedings for 30 days so they could discuss a “possible resolution of this action (including potential mediation or other alternative dispute resolution.” The court granted the motion. A court document filed Friday noted that a settlement agreement had been reached and dismissed the claims.”
10. It’s hard to say if this sets any precedent or settles intense debates about how much responsibility the platform has for content uploaded by agencies/producers in partnership.
11. It doesn’t seem the settlement included MindGeek making any sort of public statement of accountability, which perhaps is why they decided to settle out of court in the first place, and to avoid further public debate.

12. “The parties reached a mutual resolution to resolve the dispute and the terms are confidential,” MindGeek said in a statement.  
“MindGeek has zero tolerance for the posting of illegal content on its platforms, and has instituted a comprehensive, industry-leading trust and safety policy to identify and eradicate any illegal material from its community. We are committed to remaining at the forefront of internet safety, and taking every measure to prevent bad actors from posting illegal content online.”
13. It is true that PornHub has [implemented many overreaching changes on their site since 2019](#), and the GDP case has been a major instance of actual abuse in the industry that has both been a spark for much needed reform and has also been politicized intensely by bad faith campaigners.
14. From this organizer’s perspective, one of the key takeaways is that the coercive activities and rape has been roundly denounced by all corners of the adult industry - and it’s probably a good thing the incredibly rich mega-company MindGeek did *something* to compensate the victims since the criminal proceedings seem to have done little to materially support them and it’s possible the producers didn’t really have the funds to use in compensation.
15. Whether PornHub’s role was one of knowing financial benefit as alleged or of unknowing harmful negligence is likely going to continue being a subject of hot debate, despite the settlement.
16. The confidential terms, without the evidence (damning or exculpatory) we might have seen in a full fledged court battle, do little to shed further light on the situation.
17. In terms of policy. it’s worth noting this is being used to campaign for all kinds of age checking and “consent” paperwork - but the producers DID have paperwork, which is part of what made this hard for the victims.
18. We should approach the issues with nuance so as to not accidentally simply place more power in the hands of those who can afford the lawyers to create the contracts.
19. Read more: [‘Girls Do Porn’ Victims Reach Settlement With Pornhub](#)



**a. Blocking Sex Education**

1. The fairly strict platform has continued being fairly strict in unfair ways and harmful ways:
2. ““TikTok appears to be blocking some essential sex education content from the app, all while misinformation around sex ed and other topics like vaccines runs rampant.”
3. Reporting: [Why is TikTok removing sex ed videos?](#)

**b. / Content reporting in general**

1. [“I need my girlfriend off TikTok’: How hackers game abuse-reporting systems](#)
2. Hackers is putting this strongly, bottom line is any reporting system with mandatory takedowns for reports (like antis insist on for adult content) is easily abused by bad faith actors (with or without bots)
3. Previous reporting from same investigation, which showed it impacted certain groups more: [Fed up with TikTok. Black creators are moving on](#)
4. **See Also, a peak behind the scenes:** [Brazilian Workers Paid Equivalent Of 70 Cents An Hour To Transcribe Tiktoks](#)

**86. Instagram / Link Stickers**

- a. Things certainly haven’t been getting better at one of the most notorious banners of sex workers accts and the latest enforcemnet loss is “link stickers”.
- b. Via Vice: “Many Instagram users saw a notification that if they have violated the platform's Community Guidelines in the past, they will no longer be allowed to use links in Stories.”
- c. “Many of the people who first started speaking out about this change were in the adult industry, sex workers who are often the first people to experience censorship and discrimination online, before it trickles to the rest of a platform’s users.”
- d. “They suspect that Instagram is taking away their ability to use link stickers because of adult content they post on other platforms, and that

this decision is just the latest move from a company that discriminates against sex workers.”

- e. “For a very long time now (about 3 years) IG has been working on ways to force sex workers, erotic artists, and queer creators off of it’s platform,” Annie Brown, founder of Lips, an alternative social media app for women, non-binary people, the LGBTQIA+ community and their fans, told me. She received the notification that she will no longer be able to use link stickers.”
  - f. “One of the first ways they did this was to remove stories with swipe up links to outside, subscription sites like OnlyFans,” Brown said. Instagram has removed posts that use hashtags like sex, sexy, lesbian, gay, bi, body love, body positive, and trans, she said, so people have to find new ways to work around the algorithm: “That’s why you will oftentimes see accounts spelling out the term sex in various ways like ‘s3x’ or ‘segg,’” Brown said.
  - g. Read the rest of the article here: [Instagram Is Punishing Users by Taking Away Their Link Stickers](#)
  - h. See Also: [Sex Ed. One Instagram Post at a Time](#)
87. **Instagram / Meta** (are we all actually going to get away with them not wanting to be called Facebook after all the bad Facebook press? Guess so)
- a. “Meta is redefining identity authentication via images of your face to not be “face recognition” or “collecting biometric data””
  - b. Quote: “To take a video selfie, please give instagram access to your camera. This video will never be visible on instagam and will be deleted within 30 days. *This won’t use face recognition or collect biometrics*”
  - c. “Hmm I wonder why they might do that? (it’s because the privacy laws they’ve been fighting in court use those terms)”
  - d. [Thread on twitter for more info.](#)
  - e. **Takeaway:** These terms aren’t well legally defined, giving companies a lot of leeway on how to describe their intrusive practices.
  - f. See conflicting damage control reporting - mostly referring to the tagging feature: [Inside Facebook’s decision to eliminate facial recognition — for now](#) / [Facebook is ending use of facial recognition software, deleting data on more than a billion people](#)

## 88. Facebook

- a. Reporting: [Facebook responsible for 94% of 69 million child sex abuse images reported by US tech firms](#)
- b. Yet again, practically the same number we've seen before, showing that the problem is not a porn site problem - FB has ALWAYS banned all nudity!

## 89. "Facebook Papers"

- a. On Nov 22nd Gizmodo ("partnered with experts from NYU, UMass Amherst, Columbia, Marquette, and the ACLU ") released the full "Facebook Papers" making up the historic leak by Frances Haugen at the center of much recent public debate.
- b. Obviously of interest for anyone working on platform policy.
- c. [Thread about the release on twitter here](#). Article: [We're Making the Facebook Papers Public. Here's Why and How](#)
- d. They say they are working with their committee to figure out how and what to ethically release.
- e. See also: [The Facebook Files at WSJ](#)

## 90. Apple

- a. Is adding "online IDs" to their wallet. Blegh.
- b. PR Release: [Apple announces first states signed up to adopt driver's licenses and state IDs in Apple Wallet](#)
- c. See Also: [Apple iOS privacy settings to change now](#)

## 91. Gaggle (*Not a "google" typo*)

- a. "School search monitoring software Gaggle flags LGBTQ-related terms like "gay" and "lesbian", ostensibly to track student accessing online pornography — but those flags have been outing LGBTQ kids to their parents."
- b. Reporting: [Minneapolis schools are spying on queer students & outing them to teachers and parents](#)

## 92. Saved in America

- a. Yet another “anti-trafficking” group exposed as fraudulent.
  - b. Reporting: [Former Supporters Walk Away from Anti-Trafficking Group](#)
  - c. Article goes into detail of a little [local government corruption](#) as well for good measure.
93. **Ghisaine Maxwell**
- a. Trial ongoing since mid-november. Tons of reporting, here’s one: [Ghislaine Maxwell. Epstein’s Companion. Goes on Trial](#)
94. **Any other** current platform safety / enforcement issues we should know about?

## Next Steps

95. **Next Meeting**
- a. We’re now meeting on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month.
  - b. Next meeting is January 9th, 2022
  - c. Zoom link in the same: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87362124751>
96. **Vote on who leads the next call**
- a. Next call is lead by: Ashley probably.
97. Please send agenda items, calls to action, appendix blurbs, etc for **January 9th at 1pm** to Ashley ([ashley@swopbehindbars.org](mailto:ashley@swopbehindbars.org))
98. There is a recurring [google calendar event you can add to your calendar here](#). Let Ashley know if you have problems!
99. Check the updates below for more timely notes and links and the appendix for more information and blurbs on the meeting topics.
100. Look out for the agenda turned newsletter - and get in touch with each other where it makes sense! Thank you all!

# Actionables

We're working on some new public efforts to share this stuff quicker in an ongoing manner. For the moment, this section will likely be a little bare so we can use our hours to try and get a better ongoing system in place. We think maybe 60 pages today was enough!

if you'd like to help - especially if you're good at web dev troubleshooting - [please send an email!](#)