

Former sex-trade workers to protest court decision

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Natasha Falle marches in downtown Winnipeg.

Photograph by: Walther Bernal, Global TV

TORONTO — Groups of former sex-trade workers plan to picket in front of Ontario Superior Court Tuesday to protest a recent landmark decision that saw three federal prostitution laws struck down as unconstitutional.

The women, who hail from across Ontario and British Columbia, are all former prostitutes and victims of human trafficking, said Natasha Falle, one of the organizers from Sex Trade 101.

Last week, Justice Susan Himel ruled in favour of three sex-trade workers who argued that laws prohibiting them from communicating for the purpose of prostitution, running a bawdy house and living off the avails of prostitution put their lives at risk.

The 131-page ruling effectively decriminalizes activities associated with the world's oldest trade.

But Falle argues that two of those laws — running a bawdy house and living off the avails of prostitution — further victimizes women who are under the control of pimps.

"From our lived experiences we know that some of the most exploitive and harmful practices happen indoors by pimps who profited off the exploitation of our bodies, who through this ruling are now

legitimated into businessmen," she said in a statement.

The federal government also opposes the ruling and is planning an appeal.

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