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License, regulate sex workers Saskatoon's top cop says

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Saskatoon Police Chief Clive Weighill appears on Canada AM, Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2011.

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CTVNews.ca Staff

A Saskatchewan police chief says online ads are likely being used to mask the participation of underage people in the sex trade and believes his city should regulate its adult services to prevent exploitation.

"We've had a real proliferation of personal ads on the Internet and that's what's causing us the most concern," Saskatoon Police Chief Clive Weighill told CTV's Canada AM on Tuesday morning.

"The police don't have the authority to check up on people that put ads on the Internet and we're concerned about young women and young men under the age of 18 being involved in the sex trade."

Currently, both prostitution and escort agencies are legal, though on-the-street solicitation is not.

But Weighill said personal ads can be used to promote sexual services and they are not illegal to use for this purpose.

"I think first of all there's a popular misconception that prostitution is illegal and it's not," Weighill said.

"Of course, communicating in a public place for sex is against the law or living off the avails of prostitution is against the law. So we have a few Criminal Code sections that we can use for street prostitution, but it's not illegal to put a personal ad on the Internet."

That's why Weighill wants to see Saskatoon require all of the people providing adult services within the city to get a licence. That would give police the grounds to investigate cases where young people might be involved.

"That's what we're saying, for escort services, people that work in massage parlours and people that put personal ads on the Internet, we would ask that they

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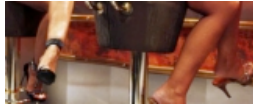
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Canada AM: Clive Weighill, police chief

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have a business licence, which would then give the authority to police to check up and see what's going on there," Weighill said.



**Saskatoon city council will be asked in the coming weeks to approve the police chief's report.**

"It would allow us then to go into the massage parlour and check the employees there to make sure that they are of age and the people that they're servicing are of age, the same with escorts and primarily with the people on the Internet ads."

Weighill said that anyone applying for a business licence would have to provide the city with their real age and identity and this would help prevent the involvement of minors in the sex trade. It could also help prevent cases of human trafficking.

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##### Geoff in Lethbridge

Regulating an licensing would make the government complicit in an immoral behaviour that spreads STIs, harms people's health and hearts and souls, and violates the precious nature of sexual relationships that are at their best within a committed loving marriage between a woman and her husband. God forbade prostitution for a good reason - it is grievously harmful, cheapening sex to a selfish thrill rather than one of mutual giving. Those who persist in breaking civil and moral laws must accept the consequences of it. Let's rather reach out to these prostitutes - mostly female - and offer them something far better for their life and happiness than regulating their selling out of their souls.

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##### JB in Ontario

The situation is ridiculous. We can make it better but it is difficult to stop the oldest profession in the world. If I had my way, I would be happy with one girl. It reduces the chances of disease having to use an escort service or soliciting for prostitution. I think a lot of people would be happier if they just had one mate, but that is just my opinion.

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##### Carl

Either ban the buying and selling of sex outright and enforce that law strictly, or legalize and regulate it. The current wishy-washy approach is useless. (It is currently illegal to communicate in public for the purpose of procuring sex for money, and it is illegal to live off the proceeds of prostitution or keep a common bawdy house, but the act of buying or selling sex itself is not a crime.)

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##### Niagara George

Wer in trouble... The only thing wrong with what you said is that you claim "Harper ... will use his position to do whatever he thinks is right, regardless of what anyone else thinks." What Harper has actually shown is that he will use his position to do whatever he thinks everyone else prefers, regardless of what he actually believes. Harper is the ultimate pragmatist. He would happily sell his soul for a continuation of the power he desperately craves. Prostitutes and Johns are no more important to him than recall elections, privatizing health care, elected senate and small government. He was/is strongly in favour of all of those, but has conveniently left them by the wayside, when he discovered that the majority of sensible Canadians did not agree with his strong neoCon views.

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##### Chris

Since when did we start calling hookers and prostitutes, "Sex Works" why are we legitimizing some thing that destroys thousands women's and girl's lives every year. What a wonderful society we live in.

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##### Laurie

Please, no licencing the exploitation of women even if they choose it for themselves. Men ...stop treating women as objects and start defending their dignity as human beings. Women ...value your dignity.

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##### SoldierAnt

It is about time that we regulate this industry. With regulation come

better working conditions for sex trade workers. Let us face facts; yes this is an industry that has exploited young women for ages. Once we recognize and regulate, and enforce by-laws associated with this industry it becomes somewhat more transparent and gives basic rights to those who ply their trade. I am not saying that regulating the industry will create some sort of workers' paradise, but it will give these women a level of legitimacy in society. They will no longer be invisible or irrelevant.

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#### **tongue in cheek**

Regulate and tax it like crazy. Can you imagine the amount of 'sin' tax that could be levied on this activity? Alcohol and tobacco taxes would

be nothing compared to this source of revenue for the government coffers.

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#### **Scott ON**

I'd really like to know who it would hurt, in a regulated industry. Do you think there would be more underage girls, or women forced into it if it was regulated? Honestly people, it's sex. Nothing more, nothing less. The sooner people get off their high horse and realize that, the better off we'll be. Personally, I love sex. If I could get paid to do it, I would too

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#### **The Village Idiot**

The government should also install coin meters on them so they can get a cut of the action.

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#### **hunter**

One thing I'm noticing is everyone wants the government to take care of you. Well grow up and take care of yourself. If your spouse is seeing a hooker, leave or get better in bed. If there medically checked and condom companies can sponsor these brothels, go for it. I don't go looking cause I get more than enough. Get the government out of these moral decisions. Let the people vote if these are things we want. I agree with the "red light district" where one could go to get hookers and drugs in controlled districts and "no recording devices allowed". I'll never go into them but I'll bet they'll be a lot of people. Heck even have smoking bars there so people can smoke cigs legally. No any one who works in them will have to be a smoker or doesn't care. No health rebuttles here. Red Light will be a clue and police could design and with the health industry control a lot of its operations. But all can't be done cause the criminals will scream there losing money and the government will not let that happen.

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#### **Roxy**

Regulation cannot discourage the behavior, but discourage it we must. We already have laws, yet the behavior persists; it is time for tougher laws then. We already have moral codes, yet the behavior persists; it is time to be more vocal. We already have hazard, yet the behavior persists; it is time to enhance the hazard. Prostitution is a dangerous and filthy business; let us allow it to become more so, not less. Do we not see that allowing the undesired behavior is simply assinine?

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#### **B fr Petawawa**

It is regulated in Germany, for the most part. They even have to have medical check ups on a regular basis. They are taxed as well. Husbands drop their wives off to work there. Yes I agree it should be regulated.

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#### **Wer in trouble**

Don't expect Harper to allow that. He has already shown he will use his position to do whatever he thinks is right, regardless of what anyone

else thinks.

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#### **shawbrooke**

Businesses cannot be subject to police intrusion because of a city license. It gives the cops way too much power. As it is, maybe they need to watch who goes in and out and ask for ID, which they can do

now with no real pretext. Prostitution ages people, so anyone looking young is probably very new. Rather than expose everyone to more government intrusion, I'd rather make prostitution illegal. Then there could be an all out public relations campaign against it - as in if you have to pay for it, get help there are therapists waiting to help you learn to relate to women. Bet that would decrease demand.

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#### **Scott (Alberta Party country)**

First, let's call the "trade" what it is... prostitution! Sex trade worker? Give me a political correctness break! If we tax this illegal activity then lets tax marijuana as well, it's even less harmful.

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#### **Mille**

I agree with these arguments. However, I am concerned that regulating prostitution may encourage men, who may have previously been too afraid, to utilize these services. I have nothing against the trade... however, it would be awful to spread disease, especially to innocent wives and girlfriends, as a result of this.

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#### **In love with a prostitute**

Clinton, you're delusion. There's a very distinct difference between sex and love. I know. My current partner is a former prostitute, it's how we met actually. Some women and I know plenty, love sex. Just sex, not the emotional attachments that society deems making love. Raw sex in it's purest form. And I hate to break it to you, but some women are really good at it, why should they not benefit from their talent. People are living in a stone age in regards to sex, especially here in N.A. It's time to wake up and just enjoy it. Regulating the industry would help protect all sides and have a financial upside for the government. It's win win win but the radicals taking the moral high ground will cry a river if it happens. Guaranteed.

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#### **rmhuber**

We need to be standing up for what is right, and shutting down the sex trade industry. Women and men are NOT products to be purchased. The right road is not always the easiest to walk upon.

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#### **Clinton**

Im always torn on this issue, because there are many sides to it. First are the women themselves. Men should understand that sex for a mentally healthy woman is an emotional experience. One she associates with affection (quite different than most males inner instincts towards sex). The big sacrifice a prostitute makes is after her

career she will usually be "dead" emotionally when it comes to sex. This comes from years (or months) of building an emotional wall to protect herself. She will never consider sex and love as the same (unless she seeks help). A comparison might be: imagine you could smile, but really couldn't laugh. That's a horrible thing for a woman to give up for a few bucks. Having said that, history has taught us prostitution will never stop, and can't be stopped. But it can be regulated. Which makes it safer and will save lives. As men we need to educate ourselves as to what exactly we are taking when we use women sexually in any situation. I believe most men wouldn't participate in the act if they knew and believed the consequences on the women's mental / emotional state.

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#### **Diane**

Legalizing prostitutes is one more step on the slippery slope on the diaprax road. People are being so easily manipulated that they have no idea what they are contributing to when they accept these arguments. Because people do it is no reason to sanction and legalize it. Wrong is wrong it will never be right.

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#### **Joe Blow**

The same should be for the phoney war on drugs. Treat it as a medical social/problems and remove the storm troopers with gun blazing and the fiat decree court system with this very serous problem. The myth that POLICE officers can control human behaviour is childish in thought process. The system was designed to invoke POLICE powers over the

people. Instead of having Peace Officers we now have government riot officers. Ask any good citizens that own a gun.

**Sorry, but...**

Can someone tell me why we can't just make it illegal to advertise for sexual services in newspapers and on the internet? I do agree the first priority should be to protect minors from exploitation in this industry, and I have no idealistic dream that prostitution will be eradicated. However, I still object to the practice on many levels and don't feel good about our legal system legitimizing it as a business. I just wish there was another way...

**J.C.**

I understand his frustration. The laws do not cover prostitution prohibition essentially. Therefore if they cannot enforce the laws then they might as well control the industry and get the taxes even HST from it. They can also control where it is permitted and where it is not through licensing. Hopefully outside the cities and not in residential areas.

**joan**

I find prostitution abhorrent and a situation in which many women and young girls are exploited and mistreated. Some are murdered or beaten or raped. Dangerous for all. I lived in Germany where they regulate the prostitution biz. We may as well do it in Saskatoon too because it won't disappear. Again, I find prostitution abhorrent but regulation would help alleviate some of the distress within the 'industry.'

**Paul ~ Kitchener**

Here is a Police Chief that is thinking and coming up with a sensible form of regulation within the laws of the land. This activity has been around since time immemorial and will be till time ends. We need to come into the 21st Century and make this oldest profession a legally monitored taxable business. We can provide sex workers with clean places to ply their trade, pay taxes on the earnings, maintain regular medical check-ups, and have police protection. This would really put a real control on minors in the trade, diseased street walkers, and take the criminal element away. When will we come out of the dark, and into the light of reality - hopefully soon !

**RiverviewNB**

So if I understand what he is saying, these people are doing nothing illegal and we don't have the right to harass so we want a provincial law that lets us harass them even though they may be doing nothing wrong. How about a law that lets the police enter any home because it may be a grow up even though most homes are not a grow op. They just want the right to go where ever they want and do what ever they want. Unless its a cop doing something wrong, then a paid vacation followed by the blue wall of silence and then back to work.

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