



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE April 25th, 2023**

**Sex Worker Invited and Uninvited to Missing and Murdered Indigenous People and Human Trafficking Panel for Being a Sex Worker**

Anchorage Alaska — The Community United For Safety and Protection (CUSP) calls foul on the Not Invisible Act Commission (NIA), a federal commission for rendering invisible a sex worker advocate, Amber Nickerson, by inviting and then disinviting her to speak on a panel regarding Murdered and Missing Indigenous People and Human Trafficking at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage on April 25, 2023.

Some of the questions Nickerson was invited to answer on the panel were:

- What are some of the gaps you see in services for families / survivors of trafficking?
- What do you need to better support families and survivors of trafficking?
- What are the barriers to accessing these resources?

Once it was known she was a sex worker advocate and had been previously charged with sex trafficking due to the overbroad definitions used in Alaska's sex trafficking statute which re-criminalizes prostitution as felony sex trafficking, her invitation to speak on the trafficking panel was rescinded the day before the panel.

It is crucial to allow sex workers and sex trafficking survivors to speak up about human trafficking policies because we have firsthand knowledge and expertise on the issues being addressed by the NIA.

By listening to sex workers and trafficking survivors, policymakers can gain a deeper understanding of the nuances and complexities of the issue.

“By not letting me discuss the issues on the panel, and not having anyone on the panel with sex industry experience, the Not Invisible Act committee shows it is not actually seeking solutions for sex trafficking survivors and those in the sex industry,” said Amber Nickerson after she heard she would not be on the panel.

“Criminalization of sex work under the guise of rescuing sex trafficking survivors, and not being able to access resources because someone is a sex worker are the barriers to accessing resources, one of the questions posed to the panel. By being denied access to participate on

this panel the NIA is contributing to the same stigma that creates barriers that keep sex trafficking victims trapped in the industry. There are indigenous people who are sex workers who do not feel safe coming forward and talking about their experiences, and my experience shows why. The very people they are seeking to help by talking about issues are the people they are denying being seen or heard.”

Sex workers and trafficking survivors often face stigma and discrimination, which can prevent us from accessing the services and support we need. By involving us in policy discussions, policymakers can help to break down these barriers and ensure that the policies they create are effective, inclusive, and equitable.

WEB LINK to event <https://web.cvent.com/event/02fc9701-d5ed-4502-a3fe-11a378cf3a29/websitePage:a307c951-d955-45bb-bc2c-d1ea8126d6a9>

Sex workers and sex trafficking survivors deserve to be heard in discussions where policies and laws that affect us are being implemented!

#### **MEDIA CONTACTS**

*Amber Nickerson*

*CUSP*

907 957 7352

[amberrickerson1974@gmail.com](mailto:amberrickerson1974@gmail.com)

###