



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 8, 2013: NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION TO SUPPORT SEX WORKER RIGHTS

On June 8, 2013, sex workers and our allies across Canada will come together to support sex worker rights and to call for the full decriminalization of sex work. These actions, in advance of next week's Supreme Court hearing of the appeal of *Attorney General of Canada et al vs. Terri-Jean Bedford et al*, are an opportunity for sex workers, our families and friends, and the public to stand in solidarity with sex workers and to show support for Terri-Jean Bedford, Amy Lebovitch and Valerie Scott in this last phase of their courageous fight against Canada's unjust and harmful prostitution laws.

As part of the National Day of Action, POWER (Prostitutes of Ottawa-Gatineau Work, Educate and Resist) will host a community teach-in at the Human Rights Monument on Saturday June 8 at 2 p.m. Guest speakers will include representatives from Families of Sisters in Spirit, the Drug Users' Advocacy League, and the Criminalization and Punishment Education Project.

"The prostitution laws violate human rights and threaten the safety of sex workers of all genders in all sectors of the industry," said Emily Symons, Chair of POWER's Board of Directors. "Criminalizing sex work directly or indirectly, or even criminalization of clients as they've done in Sweden, does nothing to stop it from happening, but rather puts sex workers in harm's way. In contrast, New Zealand decriminalized sex work in 2003, allowing sex workers to access police and human rights protection, giving them more control over their working conditions and allowing them to take measures to protect themselves. We'd like to see Canada do the same."

"We'd like to invite sex workers, our allies and members of the public to join us on Saturday to learn more about the history of the *Bedford* case and the issues that will be argued before the Supreme Court next week" added Fred Chabot, a member of POWER's Board of Director. "It will be a chance for us to explain the direct, negative impact these laws have on the lives and working conditions of sex workers, and to invite participants to join us in calling for the removal of all prostitution laws, allowing sex workers to work in safety and dignity."

Event Details:

Community Teach-in: Sex Workers We Support You!
Saturday, June 8, 2pm EDT

Human Rights Monument (Elgin & Lisgar)

Rain Location: Jack Purcell Centre, 320 Jack Purcell Lane
<https://www.facebook.com/events/167988816702559/?ref=3>

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