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Resolution: Seattle LGBTQ+ Commission on Opposition to SOAP/SODA Ordinances

WHEREAS the Seattle LGBTQ+ Commission's role is to advise public officials and City departments about issues particularly impacting LGBTQIA+ community members; and

WHEREAS the Seattle City Council has introduced legislation that will reinstate the repealed City of Seattle law against "prostitution loitering"; and

WHEREAS the Seattle City Council has introduced legislation that will create both Stay Out of Area of Prostitution (SOAP) and Stay Out of Drug Area (SODA) zones; and

WHEREAS the reinstatement of the "prostitution loitering" law and the creation of SOAP and SODA zones will endanger sex workers and people in the sex trade and disproportionately target LGBTQIA+ community members with unwarranted arrest and criminalization^{1 2}; and

WHEREAS the Seattle City Council has been encouraged by 40 advocacy and human rights groups³ to implement policies and procedures that support the inherent dignity of its constituents, regardless of their sexuality, gender identity, vocation, or social status; and

WHEREAS the creation of these zones will empower law enforcement to continue to target outreach workers when conducting harm reduction work in high-prostitution areas; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the City of Seattle LGBTQ+ Commission vehemently opposes the reinstatement of the repealed "prostitution loitering" law and the creation of SOAP and SODA zones in our city; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the City of Seattle LGBTQ+ Commission stands with advocacy groups, human rights organizations, and impacted community members in expressing our concerns about the proposed legislation from the Seattle City Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Seattle LGBTQ+ Commission invites key architect of SOAP and SODA zones, Councilmember Moore, to join us for an upcoming LGBTQ+ Commission meeting to explore strategies and data that promote safety and well-being for all people in our community, particularly those most impacted by this proposed legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Seattle LGBTQ+ Commissioners ask the people of Seattle to take action and tell the Seattle City Council not to reinstate the repealed "prostitution loitering" law and the creation of SOAP and SODA zones in our city by contacting

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Councilmember Cathy.Moore@seattle.gov, chief architect of this proposed legislation;
Councilmembers Sara.Nelson@seattle.gov; Joy.Hollingsworth@seattle.gov;
Tanya.Woo@seattle.gov; Rob.Saka@seattle.gov; Maritza.Rivera@seattle.gov;
Robert.Kettle@seattle.gov; Dan.Strauss@seattle.gov; and Seattle City Attorney Ann Davison
SeattleCityAttorney@seattle.gov.

Submitted to the Seattle City Council by the Seattle LGBTQ+ Commission

Sources:

1. Beckett, K., & Herbert, S. (2009). *Banished: The new social control in urban America*. Oxford University Press.
2. City of Seattle: Office for Civil Rights. (2018, October). Seattle reentry workgroup final report: Prepared in response to the City of Seattle Resolution 31637. *Seattle reentry workgroup final report*.
<https://www.seattle.gov/documents/departments/civilrights/policy/reentry%20workgroup%20final%20report.pdf>
3. Barnett, E. (2024, August 14). The City Council says cracking down on sex workers will create services, stop sex trafficking, and end gun violence. Don't believe them. *Publicola*.
<https://publicola.com/2024/08/13/the-city-council-says-cracking-down-on-sex-workers-will-create-services-stop-sex-trafficking-and-end-gun-violence-dont-believe-them/>