

## **JUST COMMITTEE presentation- 5 minutes**

**February 11, 2022.**

**By:** Mrs. Cathy Peters

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Thank you Mr. Chair.

I am a former inner city high school teacher raising awareness about Human Sex Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation for the purpose of prostitution, which is **modern day slavery**.

### **Stats:**

13 years is the average age of recruitment, much younger for Indigenous girls. In the Vancouver area, the **target age has dropped** to 10-12 years old. CoVid has made this worse; traffickers are organized and sophisticated. 90% of the luring, grooming, buying and selling is **ONLINE** on social media platforms.

-54% of the sex trade are Indigenous, 70-90% in urban centers-they are **severely over-represented** in the sex industry. I told the BC Indigenous Chiefs in front of Justice Minister David Lametti- this is the **most egregious form of systemic racism** in Canada.

-82% involved in prostitution had **childhood sexual abuse/incest**

-72% live with **complex PTSD**

-95% in prostitution want to leave-it is NOT a choice or a job

**-84% of prostituted persons are pimped or trafficked** so organized crime and International crime syndicates are typically involved. Crime follows the money and traffickers make hundreds of thousands of dollars per victim per year.

My **GOAL** is to **traffick proof** every community in British Columbia **AND** to stop the full decriminalization of prostitution in Canada, by supporting the Federal Law **"The Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act"**.

I have been involved with sexual exploitation **prevention** for over 40 years and began raising awareness **fulltime**, for the last 8 years, since PCEPA, **became Federal Law**.

In 2014 I began presenting to politicians (all 3 levels of government), the police and the public. I explain PCEPA so that police would enforce it, the public would understand it and be able to report it.

**The Law has 4 parts:**

- 1. Targets the DEMAND by targeting the buyer of sex. The traffickers, facilitator, buyer of sex are criminalized**
- 2. Recognizes the seller of sex as a victim; usually female and is immune from prosecution**
- 3. Exit strategies are in place to assist the victim out of the sex trade.**
- 4. There is robust prevention education so youth, children and the vulnerable are not pulled into the sex industry.**

This Law focuses on the **source of harm**; the buyers of sex and the profiteers. The clear statement from Parliament was that girls and women in Canada are **NOT FOR SALE**; that they are full human beings, with dignity and human rights.

In 8 years I have made over 500 presentations to over 20,000 people, not including the presentations that can be viewed online.

The turning point was last March when the **Kamloops Mass grave** was reported. Since then I have made over 200 presentations to City Councils, Regional Districts, School Boards, Police Boards, schools, frontline service providers, Indigenous groups including MMIWG gatherings in British Columbia.

3 points:

1. PCEPA is not known or enforced in BC. Therefore, BC is the best Province in Canada to buy sex. Organized crime and International crime syndicates are typically involved.
2. PCEPA has not had a **National rollout campaign**- so Canadians have not heard of the Law and police are not getting the funding or training to enforce the Law.
3. The sex industry wants to repeal PCEPA to normalize, commercialize and institutionalize the sex industry in Canada-if this happens, Canada will become a global sex tourism destination and America's brothel. Indigenous women and girls will be first casualties. Canadians would **NEVER** support this.

**Consistent enforcement** and the strengthening of PCEPA combined with a robust **Educational campaign** is needed. Without the enforcement of the Law, the sex industry will continue to **rapidly grow**.

The REVIEW of PCEPA puts Canada at a **Tipping Point**; repealing or weakening the LAW will have a **catastrophic impact** on Canada.

**Conclusion:** I do not want anyone on this Committee to be under the **illusion** that the sex industry is **SAFE**. It can **never** be made SAFE. It is a **deadly industry**. I have presented with the forensics RCMP officer who picked up and identified the body pieces on the Robert Pickton farm. Trisha Baptie is presenting next hour, is a survivor and was a journalist for 2 years at the Pickton trial. Please read and understand the **Robert Pickton case thoroughly**; that describes the **REALITY** of the sex industry and how it works.