



**END** DEMAND  
ILLINOIS



Chicago  
Coalition  
for the  
Homeless

## VOTE NO ON “PROSTITUTION-FREE ZONES”

- The Zones **will not remove prostitution from impacted neighborhoods** because they do not address the underlying causes or realities of prostitution.
- The Zones will have a **discriminatory impact on women, particularly women of color**, who represent over 2/3 of all Chicago’s prostitution-related arrests.
- Ordinances that establish **exclusion zones face serious constitutional challenges** including double jeopardy, vagueness, and violations of the freedoms of association and intrastate travel. In addition, they cannot be narrowly tailored to pass strict scrutiny tests by courts.
- The ordinance places **extraordinary discretion in the superintendent of police** to define zones based on vague subjective criteria that could include unsubstantiated reports.

### Impact of Prostitution

- Prostitution-related activities harm individuals, neighborhoods, and entire communities.
- The overwhelming majority of women in prostitution were sexually abused as children, and many currently experience homelessness, substance abuse, and mental health issues.
- Many prostituted women and girls in Chicago report they could not leave the sex trade without physical harm from a pimp. A majority report they were currently subject to coercion by their pimps, including threats, monetary withholding, and verbal abuse.
- Many people who buy sex understand the harms women suffer in prostitution and some acknowledge their role in the exploitation.
- Pimps and Traffickers also understand that they must continue to recruit young girls into the sex trade to meet high demand by customers.
- Communities’ limited resources are wasted on ineffective responses to prostitution. Prostitution activities also contribute to unhealthy environments for families and businesses.

### Effective Approaches to Ending Commercial Sexual Exploitation

- Law enforcement efforts that focus on traffickers, pimps, and customers – the real infrastructure of the sex trade.
- Provide communities with tools and resources to learn the realities of prostitution and take action to prevent future exploitation.
- Offer trauma-informed services to prostituted people to provide meaningful alternatives to the hopelessness and violence of the sex trade.
- Connect with diversion programs for prostituted women such as WINGS in the Cook County Circuit Court, which offer women services to support permanent, positive changes for themselves and their families.

If you have questions, please contact Drea Hall, organizer, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless at [drea@chicagohomeless.org](mailto:drea@chicagohomeless.org) or Lynne Johnson, advocacy director, Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation, [lynne@caase.org](mailto:lynne@caase.org).