Justice Committee  
Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Bill - Stage 2  
Written submission from Unite the Union  

Offence of engaging in paid-for sexual activity (and related new offences)  

Unite fully supports the amendment proposed by Trish Godman MSP which would create an offence of engaging in paid for sexual activity.  

Summary of our position:  

- We believe that prostitution is a form of violence against women and harmful for those that are involved and also for the communities in where it exists.  
- We consider that prostitution exacerbat es existing gender inequality as it is predominantly women who sell sex and men who buy. It is also unsatisfactory that at the moment within the indoor sex industry it is largely the sellers who are charged e.g. with brothel keeping or living off immoral earnings, whereby the buyers are treated with impunity.  
- We firmly reject the notion of prostitution as a form of work. Legitimising prostitution as a normal job fails to acknowledge the marginalisation and lack of choices which results in women being drawn into the sex industry in the first place.  
- There is a clear link between prostitution, trafficking and organised crime and strong legislation may go some way to prevent an influx of trafficked women into Glasgow to meet the demand during the Commonwealth Games in 2014.  
- We think it is important that the law considers “facilitation” and “advertising” as part of the offence as this would help disrupt the organisers, pimps and traffickers, who profit from, create and support the sex trade in Scotland.  
- Tackling demand for prostitution would have the important role of challenging current attitudes towards prostitution and send out a message that prostitution is not a normal, legitimate form of work or entertainment.  
- We would like to see demand criminalised and women supported to exit prostitution, and more education for all to prevent prostitution from happening.  

We do not support amendments 8A-D (lodged by Margo Macdonald) or amendment 461 (lodged by Nigel Don).  

Unite the Union  
17 March 2010