



October 9, 2019

Dear Mayor Durkan and Members of the Seattle City Council,

We are leading organizations in Washington State working to end sexual assault, domestic violence, and other forms of gender-based violence. We are deeply disturbed by the news, reported last week, that the Seattle Police Department has apparently abandoned existing policy on prostitution enforcement and resumed the practice of routinely arresting women in the sex trade in North Seattle.

As organizations with many decades of experience supporting survivors of violence and their communities, we feel compelled to denounce this practice. Threat of arrest and incarceration is no way to help victims or populations vulnerable to exploitation and violence. We must be clear: the targeting of these women for arrest by police perpetuates gender-based violence.

We call on city leadership to meaningfully invest in services and alternatives to arrest and incarceration as responses to the sex trade, and to immediately put a stop to these arrests. The City of Seattle can, and must, do better.

Sincerely,

*Coalition Ending Gender-Based Violence*

*King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC)*

*Legal Voice*

*Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs (WCSAP)*

*Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WSCADV)*