

Comments made about survivors, sex workers, and people in the sex trade who oppose further criminalization during Seattle Public Safety committee meeting, 1/27/2026

Timestamp	Speaker	Actual Statement	Derogatory Message
01:01:41	CM Bob Kettle	<p>What are the psychological aspects of society when people are not happy that letters are sent to homes of men who are in cars that frequent these areas? [...] And so what is the psychological piece of our society that is opposed to the letters to these men who are there on Aurora in those areas that we all know relates to the sex buying? [...] Why we have people in chambers when we as a council are trying to do something related to this problem on Aurora that was focused on the men? What is the psychological aspect of society that wants to protect the men who are doing this?</p>	<p>People who oppose prosecutors' and CM Kettle's approach, including many survivors, sex workers, and people in the sex trade, have psychological problems.</p>
01:03:05	Prosecutor Alex Voorhees	<p>It's a brilliant question and one that I struggle with every day doing this work and seeing the damage that is caused. I think on a macro level, look at the Epstein files. They still haven't been released. Why? Because there are powerful names within those files that people don't want to come out. For too long, we've protected men and their bad behavior.</p>	<p>People who oppose prosecutors' approach, including many survivors, sex workers, and people in the sex trade, are protecting powerful men and their bad behavior.</p>
01:04:46	CM Bob Kettle	<p>People here in Seattle, who decried Jeffrey Epstein and that whole piece, and they're demanding X, Y, and Z related to the Epstein cases. But then turn around and say, well, but here on Aurora, that is, as Councilmember Juarez says, the oldest profession. Or you say, well, they're doing that's their job. [...] You make your point about men, but there's so many women in our city who make that kind of two points that really not should be made together. Oh, Epstein, this, that, whatever. But then, oh, what a roar, that's just consenting adults or whatever. Or they decry the letters again by SPD to those johns or potential johns. [...] These people, the people come in here and yell at us because when we're trying to go in after the men, but we're the target. We as a city need to stop, take a deep breath, and think about that. When I read something online by the chattering classes in the city that talk about these pieces, they need to stop and look at themselves and say, hey, they need to review this briefing.</p>	<p>People who oppose prosecutors' and CM Kettle's approach, including many survivors, sex workers, and people in the sex trade, are hypocrites for decrying the crime of Jeffrey Epstein and his powerful associates, and are members of "chattering class" who yell at and target CMs while being ignorant about violence against women.</p>
01:10:14	CM Maritza Rivera	<p>One thing we haven't talked about that I do think is problematic as well is that there is a conflation about folks we've heard in chambers, women who have come to say, "I'm engaged in sex work and I am doing that. I'm choosing to do that." versus what we're talking about here, which is</p>	<p>Survivors, sex workers, and people in the sex trade who disagree with CM Rivera's approach are the privileged few and do not deserve to have their voices heard because policies she advances are not about them,</p>

		not consensual, it is sex trafficking, oftentimes involves minors, oftentimes children who are vulnerable. [...] And I think that's harmful. It's harmful to the women that you're trying to help.	even though they negatively impact them. Only people who deserve consideration are those too silenced to speak out for or against her ideas.
01:11:27	CM Maritza Rivera	Folks that come to chambers to say that what we're doing is hurting victims, when in fact what we're doing is trying to help victims. [...] It's like they're not listening. [...] Our actions, like the SOAP (stay out of reas of prostitution ordinance), which we had a lot of people come to chambers and fight against, again, it was meant to disrupt and have an opportunity to help the victims. And why people can't see that, that's what we're trying to do and that you all really are helping victims, is beyond me.	People who oppose prosecutors' and CM Rivera's approach, including many survivors, sex workers, and people in the sex trade, are not listening to them, rather than the other way around.
01:42:00	CM Bob Kettle	I've recently met and have been engaged with [newly inaugurated Mayor Katie Wilson and City Attorney Erika Evans], because this is important. And it's important for everybody who's now in these new seats to look at things as they are, not as they're described in, again, the chattering classes, because this is a major issue.	Mayor Katie Wilson and City Attorney Erika Evans who campaigned in opposition to parts of CM Kettle's policies, such as SOAP exclusion zones, should stop listening to the "chattering classes" including many survivors, sex workers, and people in the sex trade.
01:46:10	CM Debora Juarez	That whole Pretty Woman thing is just complete bullshit. That's not what's happening at all. And so when I hear that, it drives me crazy. [...] I'm going to call bullshit.	Survivors, sex workers, and people in the sex trade who disagree with CM Juarez buy into glamorized Hollywood depiction of sex trade and do not know the reality.
01:57:52	Prosecutor Alex Voorhees	[In response to CM Eddie Lin's question about voices of survivors who disagree with prosecutors' approach:] With respect to the survivor testimony for the opposition at the legislative committee hearing, what struck me is that every single one of those young women that spoke or spoke on behalf of another all talked about having been exploited as children, trafficked as children. And I think that that can't be unheard or unsaid because simply turning what was your exploitation into your only option for survival or your choice, if that is your choice, is your way, it's what you grew up with. It's what you know.	Survivors, sex workers, and people in the sex trade who disagree with prosecutors' approach are merely speaking out of childhood trauma because that is all they have and know, rather than individuals capable of forming their own opinions about which policies will benefit or harm them and their communities based on their own and others' lived experiences.
02:22:44	CM Maritza Rivera	I want to thank [prosecutors] because I do think that you all get attacked a lot for your work in this space as if somehow you are hurting victims because there is a difference of opinion. [...] So, for all the people that will attack prosecutors for doing the work that you're doing in this space [...] need to acknowledge that what you're really doing is trying to help victims or move victims from the situation and that you're connecting victims to services.	People who oppose prosecutors' approach, including many survivors, sex workers, and people in the sex trade, are unfairly "attacking" prosecutors for helping victims.