

Vehicle seizure could turn around prostitution

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The Albuquerque City Council scheduled a proposed motor vehicle seizure ordinance for its Sept. 16 agenda.

The ordinance would allow the Albuquerque Police Department to seize vehicles operated by panderers of street prostitution. This ordinance makes financial sense, demonstrates compassion and corresponds with Judeo-Christian values.

According to the journal Issues in Mental Health Nursing, municipalities across the United States invest \$7.5 million to \$16 million to enforce prostitution laws and related programs. In contrast, the ordinance would allow seizure of a panderer's vehicle for 30 days at the owner's expense, and the city would sell the vehicle upon the second offense.

This works. It doubles as a cost saver and direct deterrent since it is difficult to solicit street prostitutes without a vehicle.

The ordinance would also compensate for the current system's inadequacies that fail to prevent excessive demand.

Two years ago, APD invited me to witness the panderers' feeding frenzy as they solicited undercover police officers on Central Avenue. Amazingly, I saw new panderers every 10 minutes approach the decoys in the motel parking lot while APD arrested the previous panderer only 100 feet away.

Now, it is up to our City Council to dampen the panderers from exploiting women in their most dreadful time.

Referring to the above-mentioned article, prostitutes certainly do not desire prostitution for sexual gratification, as do their panderers. Really, can anyone enjoy sex with the constant fear of receiving and giving STDs – while facing the fear of rape and physical abuse from a panderer?

The article further states, "Early childhood sexual abuse is another well-documented correlate to prostitution." Hence, I do not believe prostitution resides as anyone's No. 1 career choice but derives from life's tragedies, such as substance abuse.

Further, “drug use not only spurs entry into prostitution, but also contributes to the tenure of prostitution.” Therefore, we should consider the act of prostitution as a means to finance drug related offenses to maintain drug addictions.

Sadly, a panderer views a prostitute’s drug addiction as a cruel opportunity to receive inexpensive services.

Unfortunately this sort of exploitation is a familiar occurrence for a prostitute, especially in childhood at the hands of trusted love ones. Thus, we as blessed citizens should not view prostitutes as undesirables, but as opportunities for mercy.

In addition, Albuquerque not only needs to reduce pandering but also to assist prostitutes in leaving this drug infested profession. Thus, we should not view street prostitutes as individuals who plague our society, but women in need of a new chance at life.

Release is an Albuquerque advocacy group that seeks to abolish human trafficking.

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