



SHOWING UP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

May 13, 2021

Dear Members of Provincial Parliament,

My name is Renee Dumaesque and I am writing on behalf of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) Toronto, a local chapter of an international organization committed to undermining white support for white supremacist systems and institutions. We work in support of and collaborate with local and national racial justice and decolonization organizing led by Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) organizers.

SURJ TO represents a body of deeply concerned Toronto residents who disapprove of and reject Ontario's Bill 251, *Combating Human Trafficking Act, 2021*. Bill 251 will undoubtedly fail to deliver on its stated objectives to address issues of exploitation and trafficking. By increasing police powers, Bill 251 will instead lead to enhanced surveillance and criminalization of Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities, especially racialized migrant sex workers who already experience disproportionate targeting and harassment from law enforcement.

Bill 251 is anti-sex work, anti-migrant and racist; narratives of human trafficking are shaped by racist stereotypes and the conflation of human trafficking with sex work. There is a long history of anti-trafficking rhetoric being used to drive moralistic agendas and fuel the expansion of policing, border control, and by-law enforcement under the guise of a violence against women and children mandate.

We urge Members of Provincial Parliament to listen to community and legal experts whose message is clear and consistent that policing does not protect those who are marginalized but results in greater harm; what is needed is sex worker, migrant, and labour rights. We call on you to strike down Bill 251, defund the police and invest in community-led voluntary supports and services.

Renee Dumaesque, RSW, MSW
SURJ Toronto