Written evidence submitted by the Elim Pentecostal Churches

I am writing on behalf of the Elim Pentecostal Churches in Great Britain and our General Superintendent, Revd. John Glass, in response to the Home Affairs Select Committee Inquiry on Prostitution, specifically in relation to the point that the burden of criminality should shift to the buyers of sex rather than those who sell it.

Elim is the largest Pentecostal denomination in the UK; we have over 600 churches around the UK and Northern Ireland with over 70,000 people in attendance on Sundays.

Our concern is that the demand for prostitution fuels the exploitation of vulnerable people and we urge the Committee to put forward the recommendation to make it a criminal offence to pay for sexual services. Evidence from Sweden and Norway suggests that this would also reduce levels of prostitution – both in terms of an actual decrease and also having a deterrent effect.¹

As the All Party Parliamentary Group on Prostitution has pointed out in the “Shifting the Burden” March 2014 Report, we do not believe the current law, which requires proof of coercion as well as proof of an attempt to buy sex, is adequate.

We would also like the Committee to look at more effective exit and support services for those wanting to leave prostitution.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission.

Yours Sincerely,

Revd. Dominic De Souza
Parliamentary Officer