

March 18, 2013

Ögmundur Jónasson
Innanríkisráðuneytið
Sölvhólsögötu
Reykjavík

Dear Mr. Jónasson,

We are writing to express our support for current efforts in Iceland to develop and implement legal limits on violent Internet pornography. As scholars, medical and public health professionals, social service providers, and community activists, we commend your government's determination to confront the harms of pornography. As part of a comprehensive approach to violence prevention, sex education, and public health, legally limiting Internet pornography will reduce the power of this multi-billion dollar global industry to distort and diminish the lives, opportunities, and relationships of Icelandic citizens.

Especially commendable is your government's commitment to protect children from the harms of pornography. We recognize in other contexts (e.g., advertising) that children's unique developmental needs mandate protecting them from predatory corporate interests. As pornography invades children's lives and psyches at ever earlier ages and with ever more distressing effects, this recognition must be applied to pornography. It is naïve and unrealistic to expect parents and schools to counter effectively the influence of this powerful and pervasive industry. Rather, society must act on its compelling interest in providing a safe and nourishing environment for children. We applaud your government's effort to exercise collective responsibility for children's well-being by placing limits on a toxic media environment from which they cannot otherwise be sufficiently shielded.

We understand that your deliberations remain at an early stage and that many important aspects of the proposed legislation remain to be worked out. That said, we commend your government's stated intention to define pornography narrowly (as sexual material involving violence and degradation), thus ensuring Icelandic citizens' access to the fullest possible range of online information consistent with the protection of children and of women's civil right to equality. As your efforts continue to develop, we would urge you not to be dissuaded by dark invocations of totalitarianism or of an unregulated black market in pornography. The pornography industry could hardly be any less regulated than it is currently, nor could the motivations and methods of the Icelandic initiative differ more starkly from those of authoritarian governments.

From adopting the so-called "Nordic" approach to prostitution in 2009 to banning strip clubs in 2010, and having stood virtually alone among nations in holding banks to account in the wake of the global financial crisis, Iceland is a global leader both in gender equality and in confronting corporate power. We are inspired by your boldness and innovation in protecting children, honoring women's rights to safety and equality, and maintaining the integrity of Icelandic culture against the onslaught of an unrestrained industry of sexual exploitation. As a group of similarly committed scholars, activists, and professionals across the globe, we stand with you and look forward to seeing the final result of your efforts.

Sincerely,

- Dr. Esohe Aghatise, Executive Director, Associazione Iroko Onlus, Turin, Italy
- Ruthanna Barnett, Human Rights Lawyer, Santa Cruz, California, USA/Oxford, England
- Roseanne Barr, Actress, Producer (“Roseanne”), USA
- Dr. Kathleen Barry, Author, “Female Sexual Slavery” and “Prostitution of Sexuality,” Professor Emerita, Penn State University, USA
- Angela Beausang, Chair, Roks (The National Organization for Women’s Shelters and Young Women’s Shelters), Sweden
- Julie Bindel, Journalist and Feminist Activist, London, England
- Edda Björgvinsdóttir, Actress, Iceland
- Dr. Ana Bridges, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Arkansas, USA
- Anne Burns, Health Improvement Lead, Child & Maternal Health, Health Improvement Team NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Scotland, Scotland
- Tanith Carey, Author, “Where Has My Little Girl Gone?” London, England
- Vivien Caldwell, Solicitor, The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscals Service, Glasgow, Scotland, former Local Councillor, Renfrewshire, Scotland
- Elaine Carr, Clinical Psychologist, Coathill Hospital, Coatbridge, Scotland
- Vednita Carter, Founder and Executive Director, Breaking Free (Anti-Trafficking Organization), St. Paul, Minn., USA
- Alexandra Charles, President, Ordförande, 1.6miljonerklubben, Stockholm, Sweden
- Chris Cherry, Director of Communications, South Carolina Democratic Women's Council, USA
- Collective Shout, Leading Anti-Pornography Organization, Australia
- Dr. Deirdre Condit, Associate Professor of Political Science, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia, USA
- Angie Conroy, Activist, Strategic Advisor, Strey Khmer, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
- Dr. Gail Dines, author of “Pornland,” Professor of Sociology and Chair of American Studies, Wheelock College Boston, Mass., USA
- Anni Donaldson, Violence Against Women Team Lead, West Dunbartonshire Violence Against Women Partnership, Glasgow, Scotland
- Kezia Dugdale, Member, Scottish Parliament, Shadow Minister for Youth Employment, Lothian Region (Labour & Co-op) Scotland
- Sharon Dunn, Scottish Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation
- Matthew B. Ezzell, Ph, Assistant Professor of Sociology, James Madison University
Harrisonburg, Va., USA
- Dr. Melissa Farley, Executive Director, Prostitution Research & Education, USA
- The Feminist Party of Germany
- Camilla Silva Floistrup, Project Manager, Danish Institute for Human Rights, Copenhagen, Denmark
- Robert L. Franklin, MS, Sexual Violence Prevention Professional, Virginia, USA

- Fredrika-Bremer Association (Oldest Women's Movement Organisation in Sweden)
- Dawn Fyffe, Say Women, Glasgow, Scotland
- Marlyn Glen, Former Member, Scottish Parliament
- Ruchira Gupta, President, Apne Aap Women Worldwide (sex trafficking), India
- Sophie Gwyther, Team Leader, Children and Young People's Service, Fife Women's Aid, Scotland
- Professor Simon Hackett and Dr. Nicole Westmarland, Durham University Centre for Research into Violence and Abuse (CRiVA), UK
- Kolbrún Halldórsdóttir, President, Federation of Icelandic Artists
- Elizabeth Handsley (Northwestern) Professor of Law, Flinders University; President, Australian Council on Children and the Media (ACCM)
- Birgitta Hansson, Union President, Sweden Union, Soroptimistklubbar
- Maree Hawken, coordinator, Queensland Women's Health Network, Australia
- Dr. Susan Hawthorne, Publisher, Spinifex Press, Adjunct Professor, James Cook University
- Ann Hayne, Gender-Based Violence Manager, Coathill Hospital, Coatbridge, Scotland
- Marta Torres Herrero, Violence Program Coordinator, Pozuelo de Alarcon, Spain
- Wiveca Holst, Swedish Expert, The Observatory European, Women's Lobby
- Derrick Jensen, Author, "Endgame," Crescent City, California, USA
- Cherie Jimenez, Director, Kim's Project (Anti-trafficking), Boston, Mass., USA
- Dr. Jennifer A. Johnson, Associate Professor and Chair of Sociology, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia, USA
- Hetty Johnston, Founder and Executive Director, Bravehearts (child abuse prevention), Australia
- Dr. Sue Jones, Centre for Gender and Violence Research, School for Policy Studies, Bristol University, UK
- Guðrún Jónsdóttir, Spokesperson for Stigamot, Reykjavík, Iceland
- Jackson Katz, Ph.D., Director, MVP Strategies, Long Beach, Calif., USA
- Dr. Liz Kelly, Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit, London Metropolitan University London, England
- Jenny Kemp, Coordinator, Zero Tolerance Campaign, Scotland
- Connie J. Kirkland, National Certified Counselor, Certified Trauma Specialist, Association of Traumatic Stress Specialists, Northern Virginia Community College, USA
- Dr. Renate Klein, Associate Professor (retired), Women's Studies, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia; Publisher, Spinifex Press
- Elizabeth Koepping, Associate Director, CSWC, School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh, Scotland
- Iluta Lace, Manager, Association Resource Centre for Women, MARTA, Riga, Latvia
- Dr. David Levy, Professor and Chair, Business School, University of Massachusetts, Boston, USA
- Dr. Julia Long, Author, Activist, VAWG Services Manager, UK

- Linda MacDonald, MEd, BN, RN, Nurse and Human Rights Defender for Women, Persons Against Non-State Torture, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Finn Mackay, Founder, London Feminist Network; Centre for Gender and Violence Research, University of Bristol, UK
- Jan Macleod, Senior Development Office, Women's Support Project, Glasgow, Scotland
- Dr. Ramesh Manocha, Convenor and Chairman, "The Right to Childhood," CEO Healthed and Generation Next, Australia
- Malka Marcovich, Mediterranean Network Against Trafficking in Women; International Coalition Zero Impunity
- Dr. Betty McLellan, Coalition for a Feminist Agenda, Townsville, Queensland, Australia
- Robin Morgan, Author, Activist, USA
- Kate Morrissey, Counselling and Supervision Services, Manchester; UK Feminist Network
- Sarah Morton, Co-Director, Knowledge Exchange, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships (CRFR), University of Edinburgh, Scotland
- Wendy Murphy, JD, Professor of Sexual Violence Law, New England Law, Boston, Mass., USA; Former Sex Crimes Prosecutor
- Pauline Myers, National Chairman, Townswomen's Guilds, Birmingham, England
- The National Organization for Women's Shelter and Young Women's Shelters, Sweden
- Rachel McPherson LLB (Hons) M.Res (Law), Institute for Society and Social Research, Glasgow, Caledonian University
- Eleanor Mills, Associate Editor, The Sunday Times, England, UK
- Bel Mooney, Author, Columnist, UK
- Hiroshi Nakasatomi, Associate Professor, University of Tokushima, Japan
- The Hon. Alastair Nicholson, AO RFD QC, Former Chief Justice of the Family Court and Founding Patron, Children's Rights International, Australia
- Dr. Caroline Norma, RMIT University, Australia, School of Social, Urban and Global Studies
- Dr. Lesley Orr, Feminist Historian, Theologian; Acting Chair, Zero Tolerance Trust (Fighting Male Violence Against Women), Scotland
- Sue Palmer, Author of "Toxic Childhood," Edinburgh, Scotland
- Bridget Penhale, Reader in Mental Health, School of Nursing Sciences, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK
- Dianne Post, International Human Rights Attorney, Phoenix, Arizona, USA
- Dr. Helen Pringle, School of Social Sciences, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
- Norma Ramos, Esq. Executive Director, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, Int'l.
- Rape Crisis Scotland
- Rape Crisis Glasgow, Scotland, Emma Ritch, Chair; Isabelle Kerr, Manager
- Eha Reitelmann, General Secretary, Estonian Women's Associations Roundtable

- Dr. John Sanbonmatsu, Associate Professor, Philosophy, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Mass., USA
- Amber Schalke, Feminist Party of Germany; Renate Schmidtsdorff-Aicher, Treasurer; Margot Müller, National Spokeswoman
- Dr. Marsha Scott, Convener Engender, Scotland
- Elaine Smith, Member, Scottish Parliament
- Rt. Hon. Jacqui Smith, British Home Secretary (2007-09), UK
- Gloria Steinem, Writer, Lecturer, Co-founder, Ms Magazine
- Ane Stoe, Ottar (Feminst Organization), Norway
- John Stoltenberg, MDiv, MFA, Author, Washington, DC, USA
- Jacci Stoyale, Amnesty Paisley (Campaign Against Human Trafficking), Scotland
- Swedish Medical Women's Association, Gothenburg, Sweden (Johanna Berg, National, Coordinator)
- Swedish Women's Lobby, Gertrud Åström, President, Stockholm, Sweden
- Melinda Tankard Reist, Editor, "Big Porn Inc.," Australia
- Emily Thomson, Lecturer, Co-Director of Women in Scotland's Economy Research Centre, Glasgow, Caledonian University
- Liane Timmermann, MillionWomenRise, Wales, UK
- Linda Thompson, National Development Officer, Women's Support Project, Scotland
- Teresa Ulloa Ziaurriz, Regional Director, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women and Girls in Latin America and the Caribbean; Winner, 2011 Gleitsman International Activist Award (Harvard)
- Megan Walker, Executive Director, London Abused Women's Centre, London, Ontario. Canada
- Vivien Walsh, Professor, Innovation Studies, University of Manchester, England, Author, "Whose Choice?"
- Lori Watson, Associate Professor, Philosophy, University San Diego, Calif., USA
- Karin Werkman, Researcher, The Netherlands
- Maria Weston, Nurse, National Health Service, Nottingham, England, UK
- Dr. Rebecca Whisnant, Associate Professor, Philosophy, University of Dayton, Ohio, USA
- Women Graduates' Association, Dr. Catherine Dahlstrom, Associate Professor, Stockholm, Sweden
- Women's Front of Norway, Agnete Strøm, International Coordinator
- WOCAD: Women's Organisations Committee on Alcohol and Drug Issues, Stockholm, Sweden
- John Woods, Consultant Psychotherapist, The Portman Clinic, London, England