

Sydney Lockout Laws Review

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Wed 30/03/2016 3:49 PM

To: Liquor Law Review <liquorlawreview@justice.nsw.gov.au>;

To Whom it may concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to the controversy around the lockout law. Firstly I would like to talk a little about myself. I'm a 37 year old male, married and on the pathway to having a family soon. I'm an engineer by trade however and now doing consultancy work. I have a keen interest in music, I like to go to events, I Dj and produce music in my leisure time. I'm a firm believe that I have a positive influence on society however I am concerned about rulings such as this one and it's impact on society.

I will make it clear that I do not agree with the lockout laws. I believe that the intent was right, but it was executed poorly. I do not believe that it is safer and I think the repercussions of the laws are far beyond what we may understand.

I think firstly that both the government and the representative of the bar and club industry have a common goal being safety. We all want to enjoy our night out without being harassed or feeling threatened or concerned about a friend or family member. I'm not only talking about violence, but also sexual harassment, verbal abuse and other kinds of anti-social behavior. Hospitality staff especially want this as it is most likely to affect them.

We all know that to fix a problem we need to understand the problem. This is where I feel the laws have let us down. 99% of young adults (that go clubbing) are responsible and do not get in fights. They are good people and want what's best for themselves, their friends and family. They are ideal citizens. Those 99% of good citizens should be the governments eyes and ears to try and understand the problem. The lockout laws have alienated this group so in effect, you have lost your greatest ally hence making it more difficult to understand and remedy.

One thing I don't think the government understand is that the bar and nightclub scene is much more than just people getting drunk and getting into fights. I have many friends whom have worked in the bar industry. Pretty much everyone has to work Friday and Saturday night. So what they usually do is go to work, then when they finish they go to another bar (that's open later) up the road for a few drinks. Now most people would say "they should just go home" but the reality is that they are often going out to support a mate of theirs who has just started a new bar, or opened an new club. They all support each other which is one of the keys to the hospitality industry (which is also good for our economy). Also they go out afterwards to network other opportunities for themselves just like a businessman would on Friday afternoon. The lockout laws prevent this ability to network. These are the people who want safer streets but instead they end up losing their job or business. This is not punishing the culprits but taking it out on bar owners and staff who have spent their entire working life building a business or career.

Although the rate of attacks has decreased, we all know foot traffic has also decreased. In fact, I have been to the cross and it's dead. This is not new information however I would like to point out would you prefer your kids to be walking down a street at midnight by themselves when there is no one around or when its populated with people?

Finally I would like to say that we should be looking overseas to see what they have done. Look at Amsterdam. These cities have had high rates of violence however some districts they don't even need cops! I think Sydney is a great city if we all work together and build it together!

Regards,
Tony

Tony Amopiu

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