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To: Liquor Law Review;

Mon 4/04

Saved submissions

Dear Liquor Law Review Team and Mr. Callinan,

I'm a permanent residence of Australia living in Sydney for the last four years. For the last three years I have been living in Elizabeth Bay and the year before in Woolloomooloo (I know the Kings Cross area very well). To give you a bit of more background, the 30 years before (my entire life) I used to live in Berlin, Germany. Telling people where I am from usually ends up in responses like: "wow, Berlin great city. I had the best time" or "wow, I always wanted to go there". Why Berlin has this reputation and Sydney not I'm going to describe further down.

With the introduction of the lockout/liquor laws the NSW State Government and City Of Sydney has killed a huge part of Sydney's culture and nightlife scene. There have been already enough articles which proves the outcome in detail [e.g. 1]. Shocking and embarrassing for a NSW resident is the corrupt process behind the introduction of the lockout laws and the involvement of politicians in the casino business. Please read Matt Barriers review where he reveals the truth [2] in detail. I hope, you as a reader and resident of NSW feel similar.

While you are reviewing the lockout laws I would like to make some suggestions.

Mike Baird likes to refer to other cities around the world when finding reasons for the lockout laws to stay. Not sure if he ever lived abroad and experienced nightlife when he was young, but when millions of people live together in a city there will be always conflicts between them. You will always find uneducated idiots, you will always find aggressive and people making bad decisions. And yes, under the influence of alcohol chances are higher that those people will go more crazy. Those are characters which are hard to educate. But gladly, in a group of millions those are a only a small percentage. In NSW, these people have been taken as one of the main reasons for the introduction of the lockout laws, a whole state is suffering because of a few. People dying everyday in big cities around the world. People are punching each other on the streets every day. Alcohol or not - this comes with a big city, like Sydney. Instead of treating it's citizen like children it is time to rethink the State Government methods.

Look at my hometown Berlin with 3.5 million citizen. The city is known for having one of the most vibrant nightlife on earth and for being a cultural mecca. The city has no lockout laws, people can drink 24/7 in public. They are free and enjoy freedom. No alcohol or lockout rules dictate their life. Venues open and close when they want. The city educates youth about alcohol and aggressive behavior. The city cares

about people getting home safe on the weekends with trains running 24h including security. It's all working. Sure, there some geographical, cultural and historical differences between Berlin and Sydney, but you should rethink the lockout laws and try to find the real aggressors for the problems instead of generalising and punishing all, for the very sad mistakes of some individuals.

I suggest to remove all lockout/liquor laws over the next months and years. In a starting phase, venues which offer live music and live performances should be handed out a "free to act" license which allows to serve any kind of drinks as long as they want. Live music and performances are culturally more valuable than big, commercial venues such as Ivy, The Casino, or pubs. Also, small venues should be preferred for handing out those licenses. This way a smaller amount of people can be controlled and overseen easier. Less people, less conflict potential. Also private functions and organizers can apply for those licenses. In the beginning, licences are handed out to limited venues in a certain area only. Over time, more and more venues will be invited to the program. The plan is to loosen the lockout laws over time and to identify problematic venues and areas. Especially pubs/hotels which offer gambling or TAB's do not get permissions/licenses in the first stage of the program. Those venues have no positive effect on culture and support drinking and gambling.

Alternatively, the above licences could be handed out to venues who accept "club-members" only. A person has to be a member of the venue/club to enter. Those venues are not affected by any lockout law.

Venue security needs to increase/improve. A venue has to have better skilled security. I suggest a police representative and official skilled security team (no "cousin of cousin" mafia). A security team can make sure the venue is safe at any time and knows how to handle conflicts.

On weekends, the major train lines need to operate 24h.

In Kings Cross all sex related venues needs to be banned. Sydney's "red strip", needs to be relocated to another area. Strip clubs, whore houses. People who work in those industries and people who need those dodgy services are aggressors for problems (prostitution, drug dealing, money laundering). If you mix them up together with cultural venues and bars this can't go well (see old Kings Cross before the lockouts). I personally can never walk home without being invited into a strip club or to "check out the girls". The lockout laws have started cleaning up Kings Cross already.

Sydney's City nightlife is focusing on Kings Cross, Oxford Street and partially the CBD only. There is too much conflict potential if millions of people if they only have three main destinations to go out to. The growth of new cultural active areas needs to be supported. E.g. extended Darlinghurst Road, Moore Park, Upper Surry Hills/Lower Redfern.

Police education, NSW police officer are too aggressive. There is no room for second chances or discussion. NSW police officers punish right away. Educate police to give room for communication and education instead of punishing people without warning.

I hope the review will have a positive outcome on the society. The younger generation wants to be raised in an free environment same as their parents. Alcohol is not the problem. A city like Sydney needs to have an international reputation for offering a great nightlife with freedom and peace. All can be achieved without corruption and money-minded politicians. Only the right people can make those changes happen. That is you.

Regards,

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[1]

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/would-last-person-sydney-please-turn-lights-out-matt-barrie?trk=prof-post>

[2]

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/death-sydneys-nightlife-economic-collapse-its-night-time-matt-barrie?trk=prof-post>