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# Submission for Review of Lockout Laws and Liquor limitation

EM Ed Coogan, Melbourne 



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To: Liquor Law Review; 

Fri 1/04

Inbox

Hi,

I am a Melbourne resident, my submission is based around my views as a previous frequent visitor to Sydney and of what happened here in the early part of the last decade, along similar lines as what is happening there.

Please consider the impacts these ridiculous lockout and curfew laws have on NSWs tourism industry, as well as theore serious social impacts of the thousands of hospital and arts jobs destroyed, creative cultures impacted, and the general embarassment Sydney / Baird brought on themselves with these lockout laws, bottleshop curfews and shifting the onus and punitive measures of idiots antisocial behaviour onto hospitality workers such as bar staff and bouncers.

I lived in Sydney as a child in the early 80s, from my early memories and parents stories, it does seem to be a more violent city than Melbourne. This does have something to do with alcohol and substance abuse, but the impacts of these curfews etc outweigh any perceived benefits many times over. There is no magic bullet to resolve the anti social attitude of some members of society has grown over decades due to social exclusion, tension and alienation, issues that are much more to blame for random violence than a bar selling drinks after a certain hour.

Last time I went to Sydney was in 2013 to see a DJ from Detroit play (no Melbourne gig was booked for this artist). The time I went to Sydney before that I saw Al Green for free at the Domain earlier as part of the Sydney festival, and I travelled in 2009 and 2010 for the fantastic Days Like This festival in early January (both years). I would travel to Sydney almost solely to go out and see music.

But its over and I see no point in returning at present.

The decimation of Sydneys nightlife and musical culture has put me off travelling there altogether. From my social media feeds via friends in Sydney, and following the news, it seems like Sydney is now the world's biggest country town - that once had a soul, and a world class club and music industry, but now seems like the plot of the movie Footloose.

Idiots, and alienated idiots, are the issue, not all clubs and pubs. This country has a violence

problem and it is more evident in Sydney than elsewhere perhaps, but the actions of the Baird government are not addressing the real issues. If they were serious about it, these curfews would extend to the Casino which is so over represented in Emergency services attendance figures, but somehow not 'part of the issue'.

Melbourne tried this lockout approach and a terrible scheme linking live music to alcohol related violence that required security staff if any live music was played (as bad as they were, it seems these 2am lockouts and bouncer costs for anywhere having an open mic night, were still nowhere near as sweeping and draconian as what has happened in Sydney) and it failed miserably, increasing alcohol related violence in the short term, and costing many hospitality jobs.

After Liquor Licensing Vic realised this, and the Labor government realised it had alienated thousands of voters through their knee jerk reaction, things changed for the better, and this occurred across the political spectrum. Creative industries were nurtured and supported, now we have a global reputation as a live music haven and so much more. Sydney on the other hand has a nice bridge, great (packed) beaches and now there is nothing to do at night except gamble. From my outsiders perspective, any sign of frivolity seems to be deemed a risk to public order, which can only exacerbate anti social attitudes, because you can't have a vibrant, happy society without freedom of expression.

I have no interest in returning to Sydney as a tourist until the same inevitable admission of failure and subsequent push to support music culture and responsible nighttime culture occurs like it did here in Melbourne. And we are so much better for it.

It's after 1am now (lockout time) so I best stop writing and wish you every success in finding the solution to these violence problems (hint - its not shutting everything, except the casino, at a certain hour).

Good luck

Ed Coogan, Melbourne.