

Independent Liquor Law Review

Fellow human,

I am writing this submission as a resident of Sydney, a citizen of Australian and as someone whose livelihood is tied to live entertainment and the night economy.

Since moving to Sydney in June 2015 I have fallen in love with the vibrancy and passion of the communities of the inner Sydney suburbs and CBD. These communities are driven by, and rely on, the night economy. Whether that be live bands playing in a pub, DJs in a night club, wine, whisky and cocktail bars offering a place for one to relax after a week of work, theatres, comedy and performance to enliven the soul or even a nightclub where you can dance to your heart's and feet's content. These venues in turn support a myriad of links in the community chain; hospitality staff, artists, promoters and bookers, event managers, photographers, entertainment equipment suppliers, cab drivers, lighting and sound technicians, stage crew, cleaners, security, ticketing companies, ushers, door staff and even the unemployed who rely on the kindness of passers by. And while I have fallen in love with this vibrant community that Sydney has to offer – the love comes with conditions – If I haven't managed to get to it by 1:30am I can forget about it, if I decide to spread the love after 3pm I'll be going home alone and if I want to have relaxed night with it on the couch with a bottle of red, I better have got to it before 10pm because in this city, apparently after 10pm alcohol can't be purchased and consumed in a responsible manner.

With all these conditions placing a terrible strain on the night economy of Sydney, I am seriously contemplating the future of my career here in live entertainment which relies so much on the ability of venues to operate into the early hours of the morning. When other cities such as Melbourne are taking an approach to street violence in a strategic way (night public transport), why is it that the custodians of Sydney are trying to put blinkers on a horse rather than confronting what it is that really scares us? And what scares us? Our culture. Not the alcohol or drugs – no, those things are tools that some abuse, they are not the root of the problem – the root of the problem lies with our understanding, education and approach to those tools. By placing blinkers on society in a hope that these restrictions will create lasting change is misguided. I implore you to look at a mitigation strategy that doesn't just remove the 'hazard' but targets the 'driver' – our culture. Alcohol and drugs are only a hazard when abused and it is our culture that allows this abuse by not educating effectively to younger generations about safe and responsible consumption and promoting a greater understanding of the drivers and consequences of violence.

These laws to me are flawed; they target an effect and not the root cause. They punish many to try and fix a few. They promote fear when what we should have is understanding. They put a strain on our community when what the streets need is a stronger community. They tell the world that we don't trust each other, when what we should be saying, is Sydney and Australia is welcoming.

I ask that these laws be reconsidered and all associated resources be directed to finding a solution to street violence that goes to the source of the problem.

Thank you for reading,

Jaye