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4 April 2016

Liquor Law Review
GPO Box 7060
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Sir/Madam

SUBMISSION TO THE LIQUOR LAW REVIEW

Sydney's night life - an opportunity for greater vision

With the review of the lockout laws about to get underway, I believe it's an opportunity for the NSW Government, local councils and communities to take a holistic approach to Sydney's night entertainment. It's an opportunity to consider more diverse and varied entertainment options for all and to put in place appropriate mechanisms in the CBD and the growing population hubs across Sydney for people to enjoy a safe night out.

As greater Sydney develops so does the demand for varied night entertainment options across the city, for example small live music venues, comedy, cabaret, live performance and theatre. There are numerous suburban hubs in addition to the CBD that could cater to the local population's night entertainment needs, provided there is local consultation and consent.

There is now an opportunity for authorities to review the cumulative impact of too many liquor licences in an area, the liquor licence approval process, transport availability and the required support for live music and performance based entertainment to be offered.

The majority of global cities do not limit their night entertainment options to a few streets in the CBD and nearby area, instead there are small evening entertainment quarters scattered across the broader city, each with its unique identity and offerings dependent on local needs and support. There could also be options to locate late night dance clubs (in addition to those operating in the CBD) in industrial zones minimising impact on residents which Paris and other European cities do, using regular shuttle buses for transport in and out.

Manage the development & operation of night entertainment

Local communities need to be assured that a rigorous process is in place to manage evening entertainment development and operation to ensure that the problems prior to the lockout laws in Kings Cross are not repeated. The evidence base shows limiting access to alcohol through reduced hours and outlet density are key. A 3am alcohol cessation allows areas to 'reset' for the daytime economy and the 10pm closure of bottle shops should continue.

Regarding the 1.30am lockout measure, certainly the immediate effect of this improved safety and amenity in the CBD and Kings Cross. The question for the government is how can safety and amenity be maintained while allowing people to move between venues, should these measures be lifted in the future?

Authorities need to consider the cumulative impact of the number of licenced venues in a small area especially when it's densely populated. Cumulative impact assessments need to be carried out before the granting of liquor licences along with the geocoding all existing licenced premises. Councils have very little ability to refuse new DAs on cumulative impact grounds and they are often overturned in the Land & Environment Court when they do.

The process of granting liquor licences must be reviewed, there is virtually no opportunity for local community input, an independent licencing panel that includes local council and community representation should be established. Currently licences are granted in perpetuity, this needs to change to defined periods of time.

Public transport options need to be improved on weekends to ensure people have access to frequent and reliable services to get home safely, which Melbourne is doing successfully.

Both Federal and State governments should increase funding for responsible alcohol consumption education. As cited in the recently released paper by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians the estimated social cost of alcohol misuse in Australia was between \$15 billion and \$36 billion, accruing largely from healthcare costs, road accidents and lost productivity. Each year, 5000 deaths were attributable to alcohol misuse, along with 150,000 hospitalisations. These serious issues must be addressed.

Support for varied entertainment options across the broader city

Since the introduction of the lockout laws anecdotal evidence suggests that there has been a revival of suburban pubs and new small bars opening up in suburban high streets catering to locals. Managed development of a diverse range of night entertainment options in both the CBD and suitable suburban locations will result in a safer night life, more options for all and will support the growth of local businesses and artists. It's extremely difficult for these types of businesses to be viable with a myriad of compliance requirements to navigate across several authorities, hence the need for a review of these processes.

Not all night time entertainment has to revolve around the approval of a liquor licence. The NSW Government promotes its support of cultural experiences, it could further this with financial support for more late night openings of the major galleries and museums and more flexibility around late night trading.

As a long-time resident in Potts Point, I now feel safe going out in my neighbourhood on Friday and Saturday nights and I can invite friends who live outside the area to my home which wasn't possible previously due to safety concerns. We need a solution that balances the safety of residents and visitors with mechanisms that promote diversified entertainment offerings across the city.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Green', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jenny Green