

Against lock-out laws

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To: Liquor Law Review; 

Fri 1/04

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While the below points require much extrapolation and discussion to fully understand them, I have tried to be concise and to the point.

May I first point out that I actually am not a late night clubber. I prefer a casual drink with friends at home that on occasion will lead to us out to a nice place where we can continue to enjoy each other's company and soak up the atmosphere of a many people with the same idea... to have fun, socialise and enjoy Sydney.

I am wholeheartedly against the lock-out laws for the below reasons:

1. **I want Sydney to continue to be globally relevant.** Sydney is a great city but already non-Australians are recognising Sydney as a Nanny-State that is not worth travelling to. This has lasting effects and will create a view that Sydney was once a great city but has become complacent and drifted into irrelevance. I want Sydney to be a global city and lock-out laws are a step in the wrong direction that will have far more long lasting and reaching externalities than we can model in the short-term. Food and nightlife are major factors in any global city, why shoot ourselves in the foot by shutting them down?
2. **I want all cross-sections of Sydney to feel like the State wants them here,** values their contribution to our culture and society and wants them to succeed. The flow on effect of shutting pubs will run its way down the supply line and affect all bars, the restaurants that people would begin their night at and even the local pubs that Sydney is known around the world for (a sad reality that we will lose living history by letting them all go under and turned into apartments....). The people providing experiences through restaurants, bars, pubs etc should be valued as they are definitely giving millions the chance to "have a good night" however they want that night to play out. I could not imagine the feeling that that State is persecuting an industry that I am part of and hold dearly... what happened to "for the people" ...?
3. **The lock-out laws do not tackle the real problem or even the low hanging fruit.** The huge social and economic costs are not derived from the token amount of drinking that happens in the early hours of the morning. Chronic alcohol addiction, constant drinking and subsequent related activities (smoking, pokies, gambling etc... all of which are barely impacted by the lock-out-laws and if Packer has his way at Barangaroo with the BS demarcation of the lockout boundary, will increase inevitably) cost our society dearly, in the home, to the individual and in the public sphere. Why not take the politically brave option and tackle these instead of passing knee-jerk reactionary laws from a moral high-horse?

Yes it is tougher to tackle chronic societal problems, hopefully we have politicians brave enough to do so before the laws go any further.

4. **Logically the argument does not make sense.** Car crashes happen and this does not lead us to prohibit the driving of cars. Instead we accept that there are risks and we put in place laws that will mitigate these risks. With alcohol we should accept that there are side-effects and put in place laws to mitigate these such as de-centralising drinking and allowing many small venues around Sydney to soak up capacity. The lock out laws are doing the exact opposite and will concentrate late night drinkers which will inevitably lead to the same problem we are trying to stop, a concentration of intoxicated people in an area with long lines, not enough public transport to get home and little choice.

It is frustrating when politicians clearly act for political points as opposed to doing what they genuinely believe is best for the people who elected them and the city/state that they have a responsibility to serve and raise up to the best it can be.

Let's see if they continue to cover their ears and stand behind BS arguments that paint false dichotomies ("if you are against lockout laws you are for violence"... really?)

I am against Lockout laws and for the election of brave politicians willing to do the hard right instead of the easy wrong.

Kind regards
Tim

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