

Submission

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Wed 30/03/2016 4:27 PM

To: Liquor Law Review <liquorlawreview@justice.nsw.gov.au>;

To whom it may concern,

I would like to make a brief submission in regards to the lock out laws in Sydney.

I am a 33 year old artist from Sydney and have lived here for over 10 years.

Sydney is my home, and I have watched it change so much over the past decade. I have partied in Kings Cross, and spent many nights out late in my youth, but I have always been safe. Never once have I seen a fight. That's not to say that fights don't happen, but it is also fair to say that Sydney is still a very safe city to go out in, despite the few who behave badly.

We all know that the lock out laws are hypocritical and unfair on small and local businesses. I watched with excitement as small bars began to pop up around Sydney. I was proud of my city and the night time culture that seemed to be moving away from excessive drinking and ugly pokie pubs.

I worked as a bar tender at the Sandringham Hotel when I was studying at Sydney University. I wonder how I would have become an artist without being able to work flexible hours. It is so hard to be an artist in this town, and it looks to me as though it is becoming even harder for young people to have a vibrant work, life and study balance. The night time economy has helped artists and students do the near impossible job of doing it all in order to build a career.

I also worry about our freedom as Sydney-siders. I understand we all want a safe city but there are better ways to do it. I want our city to offer more jobs at night, more options of things to do at night.

I went to the Kendrick Lamar concert the other night and saw the most calm crowd (of I think 20,000) going in, and the most satisfied and calm crowd leaving. I was shocked because even I had fallen for the media rhetoric that young people can't behave themselves. It would have been nice to have somewhere to go and dance afterwards!

I encourage the review to look at the bigger picture when it comes to drinking culture. Why was the Kendrick concert so fun and peaceful? Probably because young people felt free, entertained, and fulfilled. Statistics don't mean everything. If the violence is down at St Vincent's Hospital, I'd love to know what it's like at RPA.

Not only that, but sure - people aren't out late anymore, but they're not networking, they're not having fun, they're not winding down after work, they're not learning about our city, other people, and they're probably frustrated with their city, it's government, and the lack of culture. What are we missing out on?

Let people be excited about what life has to offer in Sydney. I hope the reviews can focus on how to reduce violence, but also how to manage its nightlife, without completely destroying its night time economy.

We need to accept that Sydney isn't just one big suburb. It's a city, and it should be world class.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Jones
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