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Input to Liquor Law Review

SK

Sam Keayes 

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To: Liquor Law Review; ▾

Sun 3/04

Inbox

Dear Sir/Madam,

I feel compelled to provide an input on the review of so-called 'lock out laws' in Sydney, due to the damage that I see being done to the reputation of the city, in the eyes of tourists, visitors, talented workers and businesses. This is poor policy that will cause lasting damage to the economic growth and social well being of the city.

I believe that the Sydney lock-out laws should be revoked immediately because:

- As a leader of a business that currently employs >1000 people in high-value industrial design & manufacturing in Sydney, I can confirm that the fact that Sydney's nightlife has died as a result of these draconian laws is making it harder to convince talented people to live in Sydney. As a result, businesses will be more likely to hire individuals and invest in future growth in Melbourne or overseas.
- The night time economy is a significant employer of a range of minority groups that may not be able to work in 'traditional' jobs, due to other commitments during the day, or other reasons (e.g. students, parents, migrants with poor language skills). Vandalising this part of the economy disproportionately hurts these already more vulnerable groups.
- Sydney is rapidly gaining a reputation amongst tourists as having no culture to enjoy in the evening. Over time this will reduce visitors and spending in the city. A reputation once lost is very hard to replace.
- The role of Government should not be to tell individuals how to live their lives. 'Lock-out laws' are a significant infringement on personal freedom. The state should protect individuals from harm from others - policies such as varied licensing times, increased public lighting, increased police presence, public education campaigns and so on are very effective in achieving these aims. Banning Sydney night-life is a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

There are a wide variety of excellent policies implemented around the world to reduce the damaging social effects of alcohol abuse, and the specific problem of alcohol related violence. Destroying a vibrant part of Sydney's culture in the interests of a middle class political classes who prefer to sit at home and drink fine wine (or to go to bed at 1000pm) is cultural vandalism which will make the city a less vibrant, less attractive place to live.

I look forward to reading the outcome of your review,

Yours faithfully,

Sam Keayes
