

Erin Keys



April 4th 2016

The Hon. Ian Callinan AC QC

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you because I would like you to consider the current Lockout and liquor Laws and the effect on Sydney city - those who live there, tourists, late night punters and business owners. I have experienced the impacts that the lockout laws have had on Sydney – I have seen businesses close, other businesses struggle, new ventures lose money and grieved with friends about the new turn that Sydney has taken.

I currently live on the Central Coast, NSW - I commute each day into Sydney CBD for work and most weekends I travel down by train to support my partner who DJs at late night events at select venues throughout the city. He is usually booked for a time slot of 2 or 3am and since the lock outs, we arrive before 1:30am, and wait until his set time, and more often than not we are told the venue is closing due to the 3am ban on serving alcohol and the establishment cannot sustain their costs to stay open to the crowd that remain. So, without anywhere to go, we wait at Central Station, or in a park, or walk, until the first train home at 4:45am. Going out in Sydney has become laborious, and no longer feels safe or comfortable, or pleasurable. We will not go to the only open option that is available to us at this time - The Casino, as neither of us gamble nor are we that desperate to drink alcohol.

I agree that safe streets are a priority, but I feel that there are better ways to achieve this. I believe the scope of the inquiry should be broadened and include an enquiry into the validity of the lock out laws and the true objectives of this legislation; from my perspective, it feels like there was no true intended policy in the first place.

I ask that you consider the following:

Develop best-practice policing strategies; A 12-month trial exemption from the 1.30am lockout for well-managed premises and live music and performance venues view to removing the 1.30am lockout for all venues; Reconsideration of the blanket 3am 'last drinks' rule, taking into account a venue's compliance history, planning controls, and local factors; The development of a sustainable night-time economy, including support for the live music sector, and late-night transport improvements; Additional train services on Friday and Saturday nights until after venue closing times, to ensure people can get home quickly and safely.

I am 36 years old and because my partner's passions lay within the hours of 12am - 6am as a DJ, I too have to go out at this time. I have seen anti social behaviour, but I do not think the lockout laws have altered this - the anti social behaviour can still occur, irrespective of the time and the place. As an aside, perhaps the Government could begin to look into ways of introducing strategies that focus on educating young men and women in anti-violence education & intervention, in the hope of minimising and eradicating dangerous acts and "coward punch" behaviour all together.

As an artist involved with the community within Sydney, I think it is of paramount importance to nurture the diversification of creative pursuits, as well as, small businesses, live music venues, nightclubs and the arts.

Thank you,

Kindest Regards,
Erin Keys