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Public Submission on Sydney's Lockout Laws

IM

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To: Liquor Law Review; 

Fri 1/04

Inbox

I am a 28 year old male who has lived in Sydney for the majority of my life. I was lucky enough to be over 18 in the years when Sydney did not have these current laws. I remember it being a vibrant place both in the early evenings, but also at night. The restaurant you went to would be next to the pub you would go to before ending up at the club next door. Sadly, as the club has closed, the pub had to and then the restaurant, and then the cafe down the road which people liked.

The laws have simply destroyed a massive part of the culture of what Sydney was. It's a ghost town at night now. There are basically no clubs left in Sydney, let alone in Kings Cross where they have all evaporated. What a sad place to lose - Kings Cross - one of the most vibrant and fascinating parts of a once great city. While it wasn't perfect in any way, it was a part of the city that was special.

Oxford street - once famous for its gay culture and fun places to hang out has also died. The homosexual community in Sydney must be thinking - why do we even do Mardi Gras here - we should move. The city is dying, and it is a sad sad thing to watch.

I recently spent a weekend in Melbourne. The licensing laws there are significantly more relaxed. No lockouts, and indeed, places were open past 5am on Good Friday/Saturday. It is a city that is buzzing with energy. On every corner there is a trendy bar, or a backstreet cafe or restaurant. This was something Sydney once wanted to emulate, and for a time briefly before the lockout laws came in we were getting there. Surry Hills was being transformed, as well as other areas around town. But lockout has stopped that in its tracks. Why would anyone open a licensed venue here anymore? Killing the nightlife scene does more than just kill bars and clubs. It affects restaurants and cafes and other business nearby.

And the violence hasn't been stopped by lockout either. It's still there. Some of it has moved location, some of it has moved times, but on any given night you can still find some idiot getting involved in an altercation with some other idiot.

These laws not only need to be repealed, but positive actions to reverse this rot need to be enacted immediately, before the entire city dies. I urge all parties to take action to save Sydney.

Thanks

Ian