

Submissions

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

To whom it may concern

I am not a business owner nor am I currently working in the entertainment industry despite my email address stating otherwise. This is a hangover (excuse the pun) from my days as a music journalist and DJ of some renown.

I will not provide you with the ample statistical evidence as to what has been lost in Sydney which sadly includes the two lives that were so callously extinguished at the hands of violent thugs. However, the night time economy has been irrevocably damaged by the lock out laws.

One only has to look at the lack of foot traffic in Kings Cross at ANY time of the night to substantiate this claim. Yes, incidents of violence have dropped across the board but so has the credibility of the belief that Sydney is a global city. Any truthful and transparent investigation of the circumstances of Sydney's hospitality industry will undeniably uncover this truth.

Its reputation has been tarnished beyond repair with many international acts now bypassing Sydney in favour of Melbourne and Perth. Many promoters are now considering relocating overseas where the lure for international acts is much more lucrative and where artists are welcomed with open arms.

There are EIGHT nightclubs left within the CBD. A serious reduction in the diversity and availability of venues and establishments catering to all citizens' needs. Consider the importance that international cities such as Amsterdam place on their night time economy. They have a mayoral position specifically catering for those businesses. They have 24 hour transport and an effective policing strategy that focuses on harm minimisation not enforcing prohibitive and draconian old world policies.

We are no longer a forward thinking, vibrant city but a place where the interests of the vocal and influential few outweigh the voices of the many. I know of one 30 year-old family owned business in Kings Cross that has closed its doors because of the destruction of its operating model. These are real people who have been sent to the wall by these policies. Hospitality workers and the industries that thrive around the night time economy are not second class citizens and deserve as much of a chance to thrive economically as the people who run big business.

The list of business that have closed since these lockouts have been in place are a matter of public record. The evidence is there

for all to see. There needs to be coordinated approach where people can enjoy themselves in a safe manner at an hour of their choosing. To punish the entire city for the acts of a few has made the city of Sydney appear fearful of its own citizens. Sydneysiders are not all potential criminals, thugs or bully boys. I have been involved in the industry for 20 years in Australia and longer overseas and have never once been involved in a violent incident.

As the recent study into domestic violence has indicated, it is the attitude of our young men that has to change. This is what must be taught to that minority of people that have spoiled it for everyone else. Without that seismic shift in education you can ban as many things as you like but it will not change the underlying mentality. These thugs will resort to violence no matter the circumstance, time or level of provocation.

To lock Sydneysiders out of enjoying their own city in a manner of their choosing and then exacerbating the issue by destroying the operating model of many responsible and successful businesses, shows a myopic capacity to ignore the obvious. To be considered a city of international standing we must think internationally. Think gloriously big not insularly small. We are a country that rises to challenges not shrinks inside a fearful shell. Show the world we are capable of making brave, inclusive decisions that benefit the entire community and which will enable us once again to become the entertainment hub of our region.

Regards

J B McCauley

