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Submission to the review of alcohol

PM

Patrick McGrath 

To: Liquor Law Review; 



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Sat 2/04

Inbox

I lived in Potts Point aka The Cross for 16 years and moved out just last year. In the years following 2007/8 when the City of Sydney Council unleashed its Late Night Trading plan, we saw then numbers of licensed premises go from around 30 to around 300 over the space of a couple of years. This despite the fact that the area was densely populated with residents. Councils own research admitted that there were 25,000 people in/on the streets at 1am on Saturday mornings, the equivalent of emptying the Football Stadium into the Cross (Council's comparison, not mine). With it came awful, awful violence and the nightly ritual of violent drunks, paralytic girls, bloodied faces, screaming ambulances... residents live above, behind and overlooking the main strips and the clubs and pubs, but no-body cared for the residents as long as there were \$\$\$ to be made from more and more drunks. We begged Council to do something about it - at a public meeting held at the Rex Centre in about 2010 we told Clover Moore 'if you don't act to stop this, there is going to be fatalities'. Nobody acted, and then Thomas Kelly was killed around from my back door. It broke the hearts of all my neighbours, because we knew it had been preventable. We used to say, 'It will take the death of a blond-haired blue-eyed kid before anyone will stop this'. There is blood on the hands of the AHA and Council for permitting Kings Cross to degenerate into a nightly alcohol-soaked fight-club. When the lockouts were introduced, the effect was immediate - the crowds of visitors kept coming, but left earlier, and the scumbags who would normally cause the trouble just stayed away. It was a revelation. KX is NOT an entertainment precinct - its a residential village where people live and work. If the Council is so intent on creating a 'precinct' for all-night violent drunks, then do it at Darling Harbour or Fox studios precinct at Moore Park - no residents to endanger there, and let the drunks beat their brains out. And don't fall for the lies peddled by the AHA in the Cross - the 'closures' and job losses they go on about are minimal - we did a walk around about 12 months ago and counted 19 businesses with 'closed' or 'for lease' sign, but 12 of them had been closed 2-3 years before the lockouts - I'd guess the drunks and the violence closed them down, the lockouts had nothing to do with it! They are lying about the extent of loss of jobs, but even so if they can't adjust their business models to work with the new (minuscule) change in hours, then they don't deserve to stay in business. Keep the lockouts in the Cross and the CBD - extend them round the state - Australians have a problem with alcohol and someone in authority needs to be strong enough to do something pro-active about it; I travel regularly and trust me, we are already seen internationally as a 'danger zone' when it comes to alcohol and violence. Patrick McGrath, 

Regards,

Patrick McGrath

Community supporter