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Callinan Review

RM Richard McGrath 



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To: Liquor Law Review; Cc: ; 

Sun 3/04

Inbox

To The Callinan Review,

I support the current laws with 3am close and 1:30am patrons prevented from entering premises.

- I live in .
- I am 53.
- I have been coming to the X since 1981.
 - Until 1991 as a frequent 20 times a year Sydney visitor
 - As an Eastern suburbs resident since 1991
 - Woolloomooloo since 2008
- I love a drink and my doctor would describe me as a 'binge' drinker.

Before The X became a zoo I was a frequent user and this probably stopped in about 2009. That is when I started running marathons and would often run through the X at 5am on a Saturday but mainly Sunday morning. It always struck me how loud and raucous the drunks were. I used to just walk or cab home as did my friends. Running through in the morning I would be yelled at, no big deal to me, chased, not for long and have things thrown at me so I kept a safe distance so as unlikely to be hit. I or my friends were never like that.

One of the great things about my Marathons is the allow travel and I have done the last 7 New York Marathons and in various other parts of the world. New Orleans is the only place that I would describe as being like the X. One major difference I would observe there is that there police just do not put up with rubbished from pissed idiots. It would be very painful to be manhandled by one of the Big Easy's finest! I am often out to 5am after the NYCM and It takes some organising to get to different venues as you can not just stroll out of one into another, and despite the song some times the are closed.

My friends who have kids in their 20's tell me they have to pre fuel as the clubs are so expensive. I say really! I don't even think that it deserves a response.

I also hear that it so expensive to get home as there is no public transport. This reminds me of a story my dad told me when he was based at Holsworthy during WW2. He and his mate would steal a boat after the head count and row across the Georges river and get a train to the city.

They would be out all night in the sly grogers and eventually make it back to Central and sleep until the first train took them back row across the river and present for the head count. They did this every night. If people are not resourceful enough to get on the grog all night and not get home why should the state support the infrastructure to get them home home. 4M + people supporting 20,000 who spend \$8 a beer and \$10+ on a spirit and can't manage to get home.

It is really pleasing that alcohol related violence is significantly down since these laws have been in place. It is more pleasing that there have been no additional deaths. People have a right to be safe and it is the job of the legislators to make the community safe.

Has there been a knee jerk reaction with these lock out laws? Something had to be done with the 2 deaths and if I was premier and untimatley responsible I would have done the same thing. If a person is killed working in a public company the recriminations go all the way up with CEO feeling in their hip pocket

The current laws are a circuit breaker to an out of hand situation. It was just ugly in the X and from what I saw. Those people just did not need to be there.

2 years is not long enough as a circuit breaker. Despite publicity to the contrary I think the X is surviving quite well. Particularly for the residents. With a population of 18,000 business' are now catering for residents instead of blowin's from else where who can't get home when they are pissed. Are we going to miss the strip clubs and drug dealers?

Current legislation (2.71) allows for clubs to apply for an exception to the new laws. So whats the big deal? Before there seemed to be little stopping bars/hotels being open late and pouring their issues onto the streets. They did nothing to fix a problem they were partially individually totally collectively responsible for. Claiming a licence fee should supply police to deal with their drunk patrons does not cut it. If you don't do something about a problem someone will generally do something for you and that is the story of the lock out laws.

Lock out laws are great. Give them a few more years to allow the new business get going before you tinker with them and be very, very careful.

Sincerely,

Richard McGrath