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Submission for liquor laws review

BP

Ben Pearce To: Liquor Law Review; 

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Sun 3/04

Inbox



Action Items



To whom it may concern,

May I start by applauding the government for attempting to take some kind of action towards curbing violence in our capital city. I abhor violence and as a former King's School student, was horrified and shocked to hear of the loss of Thomas Kelly. It hit home.

Sadly, he lost his life in circumstances the subsequent lockdown laws would not have prevented.

Nor would they have stopped James Ian Longworth from knocking a bouncer to the ground, the attacks outside the Pitt St McDonald's in February this year, the massive brawl in the city CBD of March this year and tragically; the death of Daniel Christie while out celebrating New Years Eve.

The early closure of bottle shops and 'lock-ins' from 1:30am would have / and do nothing to detract from these violent incidences occurring.

So why are we trying to discourage a healthy nightlife rather than attack the actual problem?

What is the problem?

Violence.

Yes, drinking was involved in some of those instances. Some. But with millions of Australians enjoying a drink in the evening, it's clearly not a drinking problem.

It's a violence problem, and it needs to be fixed.

To this day, no plan of education through advertising or other means, no plan of extra police presence, no plan of a helpline for men who feel the need to 'act out', no social / peer-pressure campaign, no extra resources for psychologists, no extra sniffer dogs to rid the streets of ice or steroids or any other things designed to reduce *violence* have been put forward.

Measures to reduce drinking have been put forward. Bravo. But you haven't lifted a finger against the *violence* problem we still see happening in our streets.

I would say the lock-out laws don't do enough. They can't. They don't protect people from violence.

It would also be fair to say many concerned citizens of NSW think something is a little fishy.

What's fishy?

Well it's surprising with all these laws introduced 'to stop violence,' Australia's most violent venue, The Star, suffers no loss of trading hours, no restrictions on glass vs plastic, no scrutiny.

How does that work?

Australia's most violent venue suffers no restrictions, while the rest of the state is told to go to bed. Are these laws really about reducing violence?

Surely The Star would be a matter of priority?

Another curious fact is the Thomas Kelly foundation held their fundraiser there, at Australia's most violent venue, and Crown Casinos is officially listed as a donor.

Both are excluded from the lockout zone, one is excluded 3 years before it's even due to open.

The thing I struggle with about these laws, is are we trying to reduce violence or increase gambling. Gambling that benefits both the NSW State Government and St Vincent's hospital?

I wouldn't be so bold as to suggest corruption or a conspiracy theory. Nobody would be that bold.

But you can't have it both ways.

If this is a problem about violence, address the violence. Start programs that will directly target these violent members of our society.

And show us you are keen to reduce violence at Australia's most violent venue. If you feel the lockout laws are working, why not introduce the lockout laws there. Restrict their drinking hours. Make them swap to plastic. Stop them serving drinks after the allocated time.

Don't automatically put Crown Casino outside the lockout zone. The map looks ridiculous and we can all see what's going on.

Or scrap these laws and do things you know will reduce violence. Extra police presence. Properly funded anti violence campaigns. Engaging the community of our disaffected youth. Banning MMA and other violent sports. Reducing ice and steroid consumption.

With the extra tax revenue from our late night venues, you can afford to do so.

In short, I applaud you for attempting to reduce violence in our city, but it's about time you actually reduced violence in our city.

I know you're capable of it. Hell, even Bob Carr could do it.

Sincerely,

Ben Pearce