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H

Hugh [REDACTED]

To: Liquor Law Review; 



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Mon 4/04

Saved submissions

To whom it may concern,

It is my honest opinion that the current 'lockout laws' that are in effect in areas of Sydney are an unjust infringement on the rights of law abiding citizens as a result of actions by a complete minority. Whilst night time violence and, in particular, alcohol fueled violence is most definitely an important issue that must be resolved within our community, the current solution of imposing a blanket ban across certain geographic areas does not feel like an adequate solution.

As a 19 year old I regularly go out for entertainment in the CBD during the nighttime. Sadly, I have witnessed many of my preferred venues close down, of which a few have explicitly noted downturns in customer levels as a result of 'lockout laws' as a significant factor in their decision to stop operating (see Hugo's bar and Bar Century as two examples).

Moreover, working in the hospitality industry it feels like a certain punishment to see that while I can work a long shift serving alcohol (I work in a bar and have my RSA certification), I am unable to subsequently enter another venue after finishing my shift that is still open to have a drink with work mates or friends.

One of my most pressing issues with the current state of the legislation concerns the way that the geographical areas are decided. Whilst I am definitely not for extending lockout laws, liquor licencing should definitely be free from (the aura of) corruption. I'm referencing this argument to the way that it excludes gambling venues - it almost seems that in this sense one can argue that the two wrongs (gambling and alcohol consumption) make a right.

There have been numerous alternative solutions which have been proposed. Some of the alternatives that I find most appealing are:

- The City of Sydney's submission to exclude well managed venues from these restrictions (this will help to promote safe nightlife and cultural life in Sydney)
- Increased night time transportation. I recently traveled through Europe and was able to experience nightlife in cities which have dramatically different approaches, one noticeable example being Berlin. One of the things I found most effective in fostering a safe nightlife was that they had public transport services running regularly throughout the night and that it was easy and safe to both get to and from different venues. Linking back to my previous point about apparent corruption, extending the light-rail past the casino throughout the night would be a nice small step to show that our Government's actions aren't at the whim of big business.
- The appointment of a night mayor. This approach has been trialed in other cities such as

Amsterdam and London with success. I think the over-arching goal is that we wish to achieve cultural change as it's not alcohol consumption that is the problem but the associated violence and that a nighttime mayor as a physical embodiment of this cultural change is a good option.

After working in the hospitality industry and regularly going out in Sydney after the installment of 'lockout laws' I am firmly of the opinion that there are better solutions which need to be implemented as soon as possible. I hope that this review will help our society to improve our approach to nightlife in Sydney so that it can be safe and fun for all.

Yours sincerely,  
Hugh Pearce