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# Submission to the Review of the Liquor Amendment Act 2014 by the Hon. IDF Callinan AC QC

KS Kevin Schrader 

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To: Liquor Law Review; 

Mon 4/04

Saved submissions

As a Sydney resident and a peaceful participant of its once vibrant nightlife, I am grateful for the opportunity to make this submission. I am writing to you because I have personally experienced the impacts that the lockout laws have had on our city – I have seen businesses close, witnessed the loss of jobs, lamented the lack of places to socialise with my mates and mourned the dwindling opportunities to listen to live, local music, stroll through art exhibitions and enjoy my weekend markets. I have lived in Kings Cross since February 2014 and it was the most beautiful place I had ever had the opportunity to live in.

During much of the 20th century Kings Cross was a home for Sydney's bohemians, artists and writers. Some of the famous creative people who have lived in this suburb have included the artist Russell Drysdale, the poet Kenneth Slessor, poet and author Dame Mary Gilmore, and the actor Peter Finch. Peter Finch once said, "Kings Cross was a wonderful place. Nothing since then, London, Paris, Hollywood or New York has been quite so wonderful. And although I lived on the edge of destitution, I have never been happier in my life."

Since the Second World War, Kings Cross has been a nightlife centre. This trend accelerated in the 1960s with the arrival of American servicemen on R and R (rest and recreation) leave from the Vietnam War. The lockout laws imposed have not only destroyed livelihoods and the freedom to live in a place one finds an identity, but they have fostered a cultural genocide. This is the last straw in a laundry list of failures by government to help grow Kings Cross into a reputable cultural icon.

Since the 1990s the demographics of Kings Cross has been changing again once again as affluent city professionals (often popularly dubbed yuppies) have discovered Kings Cross as a convenient place to live, close to their offices in the city, and tens of thousands of them are buying and renting real estate in the area.

This latest change is worrying to prominent Australian writers and local residents, Louis Nowra and Mandy Sayers, which they are concerned will lead to writers, artists, the elderly and other traditional residents no longer being able to afford to rent in Kings Cross/Potts Point.

They believe that that the new (affluent) people moving to Kings Cross have different attitudes and values to the the traditional residents and that money is of higher value to this government

opposed to the people's identity and culture.

We all agree that safe streets are a priority, but there are better ways to achieve this. Evidence and common sense suggests that a better planned response could have a greater effect on reducing alcohol-related violence without having the unintended consequences that the lockout laws have had.

What happened?

Sydney's night-time economy had an awkward start to life. It grew up and out too quickly and without being properly planned for. Before we knew it, tens of thousands of people were coming into a few precincts every Friday and Saturday night, and yet instead of being managed on the scale this required, Kings Cross was left to its own devices. The police were not willing or able to deal with the belligerent or violently inclined. The venues were packed and the streets were chaotic. When it all got too much or you decided it was time to go home, the busses and trains had stopped and the fight for a cab was a long one. Then, tragically, two young men lost their lives. The city mourned and rightly decided things had to change. The government's response, however, chose to deflect the blame and rushed through blanket laws without consultation. The lockout laws have been a failure.

What needs to change?

The lock-out laws have caused irreparable damage to the economic, social and cultural fabric of Sydney. Instead of the 1:30am lockout and 3.00am cease of service, the 7 key actions below should be implemented together to curb the violence and keep Sydney open for all to enjoy.

1. Developing best-practice policing strategies;
2. Investing in 24/7 public transport;
3. Implementing integrated urban planning reform;
4. Encouraging diversification of after-dark activities;
5. Establishing anti-violence education & intervention campaigns;
6. Incentivising well-run venues
7. Appointing a Night Mayor.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Schrader

[Redacted signature]

**Community. Creativity. Culture.**

[Redacted text]