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# Lockout law review submission

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Sun 3/04

Inbox

In my opinion change needs to happen. Not the type of change that has been taking place over the last 5 years which has destroyed this great city's cultural, economic and lifestyle reputation and not necessarily a change to return things to business as they were prior to the last 5 years, although in my opinion that outcome would be preferable over the former. The change I would like to see is a cultural and functional change. A change which we see the city work better at all hours for all members of the community. We can learn from other cities and implement changes to the fabric of Sydney which would allow it to operate more effectively for the people experiencing it. The small bars laws that were introduced prior to the lockout laws were for a short while a boon for Sydney's cultural outlook and functioning. Adding diversity to a stale nightlife but these laws need to be manipulated to create an even more vibrant and diverse evening economy. We should be encouraging a late night food economy, like that seen in Spain, in a similar manner and be encouraging people to inhabit the pedestrian spaces of our streets, similar to a sunny evening in London or Dublin, just as much as they do the interiors of the bars, pubs and clubs. Sydney has some of the best climate in the world but too often we are forced indoors to socialise. I believe a more active and visible presence of all members of society will deter the negative actions of a few. The decreased sense of visibility at night leads us to believe that this period of day is more frightening and open to abuse by criminals however more activity of citizens, not less, will only strengthen community and lower crime rates. These actions would require more pedestrian space on our streets to encourage citizens to occupy more comfortable footpaths. We can see in the transformation of Times Square in New York just how beneficial a shift of this manner can be. The outside socialising experience encourages a relaxed casual vibe one which generates discussion and dulls any desire for the intensity of focussed binge drinking. Australia used to have a reputation for a relaxed, outdoor atmosphere and Sydney was at the heart of that atmosphere however that culture is quickly eroding. In encouraging more later night dining options and a stronger outdoor lifestyle culture diversifies the people using the city at all hours and staggers the times at which people exit entertainment areas instead of piling everyone out the door at one time, drunk and unfamiliar with the what has been going on in the world outside the pub or club they have just exited. Increasing footpath space slows traffic allowing the city and the streets to feel like a safer place to inhabit and returns the city and its entertainment zones into destinations instead of thoroughfares. To further strengthen the building of a stronger and safer night culture we should look to other actions taken by other great cities. A night mayor can be tasked with the job creatively building better solutions to boosting the cities economy and culture, in contrast with applying ill-thought out decisions that don't address issues as they exist. This policy is currently being adopted or has been adopted by many successful cities including London and

Amsterdam. The lockout laws as they were introduced were claimed to be doing so to counter a problem which was occurring outside their scope of influence. They have subsequently had a dramatic negative effect on all of us collectively. A 24hr transport service would allow the city to truly function day and night. Public transport is still the most spatially efficient way of moving people available to any city. Giving the public more choices attracts a greater diversity of people to make greater use of more of the city. The majority of Sydneys residents don't commit crimes and don't want people to commit crimes in our neighbourhoods. With these actions creating a city that more of us will want to enjoy boosts our economy, creates safer streets, and encourages a healthy and safer community for all.

Kind regards  
Michael Searle