

# Objection to the current Lock-out Laws

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Selena [REDACTED]



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Dear Hon. Ian Callinan,

I would like to state my objection to the current Lock-out Laws rolled out across Sydney and the impact they are having on our potential as a culturally vibrant city. A city where the people of Sydney's large queer community can feel safe going to venues that cater to a welcoming and non-discriminatory crowd. One where a group of friends can see a fantastic local band that plays unusual boundary pushing music. And one where the young aren't told to go to bed under the pre-tense of reducing violence, when actually it is because rich people have moved into areas like Potts Point, and they would prefer everyone to be quiet on a Saturday night so they can get their beauty sleep.

The reality is, these measures are strangling Sydney's nightlife and they're making it difficult for venues to survive unless they cater to the lowest common denominator - which incidentally is the group with the biggest propensity for a culture of alcohol fuelled violence. It's becoming harder and harder to find venues that support music, tastes and events for those that don't fit into the mainstream. This may not seem like a serious issue to you, but despite what is convenient for those in power, we are a diverse bunch who just want the right to relax and have fun. Newtown and Sydney's Inner West is a place where people who have experienced intimidation, discrimination or persecution elsewhere can go to have fun and feel safe. Now the city's diverse nightlife is hanging by the thread of a frustrated mono-culture, the results of which mean Newtown is increasingly catering to a Kings Cross crowd and pushing out communities like the queer community. In an attempt to make Sydney "safer", these laws are destroying some of the safest places for these groups.

I work in the arts, culture and music industry, in radio. Our station exists to support a culturally vibrant city where the talent of local artists can be shared with the community. In many cases, these artists go on to be shared with the world. I've seen first hand the effect these lock-out laws are having on up-and-coming Australian bands, artists and performers. Music venues are suffering. Give them a chance to thrive.

What hurts me the most is the misinformation spread by the NSW state government. Violence in Sydney was already on the decline before these laws, laws which make no attempt to actually address the ingrained culture of alcohol fuelled violence that is at concerning levels in Australia. To say hospital numbers have reduced when actually that is purely a result of lowered foot traffic is not a victory for cultural change in Australia. It is

the same as "treating" a culture of domestic violence by forcing partners to sleep in separate rooms. Numbers of incidents might go down, but not by addressing the cause of the behavioural problem. In fact it would make having a healthy loving relationship almost impossible.

Thank you for reading this, an objection to the lock-out laws is not an endorsement for alcohol fuelled violence in any way, and I support reasonable measures to curb dangerous levels of consumption. But please, don't give us a bedtime and let us celebrate how culturally vibrant Sydney can be.

Kind regards,

Selena Shannon