

Lock out laws

Andrew Starr [REDACTED]

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To: Liquor Law Review <liquorlawreview@justice.nsw.gov.au>;

Dear Commissioner,

I am a drag performer working on Oxford Street. The lockout law has had a great impact on the Sydney nightlife. It has reduced opportunities for work. Both time for performances has been reduced and many venues have shut. I have spoken to many patrons including many overseas tourist and they are very unhappy about the early closing time and reduction in their freedom of movement between venues. They are going to return to their countries and tell their friends about their experience. This means less tourist less money for Sydney. The lockout laws may encourage travel to Melbourne. In all the nights I have gone out in Sydney I have never felt threatened. I always feel safe in the venues. They are well policed with great security. At Stonewall Hotel where I work excessive drinking is discouraged. Intoxicated people are not admitted or asked to leave. It should be noted that the issues that brought on the lockout were violent assaults that happened early in the evening and though shock horrible events the lockout would have made no difference if an assault occurs at 9.30. Sydney nightlife is about more than just drinking, its about hanging out with friends, chatting and socialising with your tribe. This means there has to be some diversity in Sydney nightlife. The reaction to violence at Kings Cross and downtown Sydney have had a devastating impact on Sydney's gay nightlife shutting down too many venues. I feel there is a risk of future Gay and lesbian Mardi Gras parading up a street that contains only convenience stores, takeaway food outlets and Tw dollar shops. I resent being told when to go home, or that I have an alternative in going to Star City. This does not represent my sense of self, in either what, how or where to express myself. Now I am an older person now and do not regularly go out late. But if I want why should that right be taken away from me. When I was young the late nights were more important. I have heard so many comments from older people, asking Why do people want to out so late. The reason is that young people are doing more than drinking in late night venues, finding partners, forming relationships and having fun. Having fun is not a crime.

Regards

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