

Regarding the current lockout and restricted liquor sale laws

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

Hi

I just moved back from 5 years in San Francisco.. what a difference half a decade makes.

Sydney is close to unrecognizable, in terms of the night life.. some of it good actually, but not a lot of it.

In the US virtually everywhere in the city shuts at 2am, and the cities are not dead by any means but it does feel somewhat restrictive but it's been the norm for so long people work around it. It's a simple line in the sand that's universal (in fact most of America has this 2am finish)

The aspects where having lived in 'pre-regulation' Sydney and San Francisco that Sydney feels overly controlled are less in the broad rules and more in the prescriptive.

Early in the night I can have a whisky (which is about 1/3 the pour here than in the US) in glass .. but after a certain time.. that drink specifically is not allowed.. as if somehow after a certain time one can no longer be trusted with the item being had before. If only people changed their character so quickly.

Closing of a bottle shop at 10pm is simply hilarious. Anywhere in the US alcohol bought in the store (and any store, most corner stores can sell you beer & wine at least) can be bought until 12am. As per here the bottle must remain unopened and not drunk on the street.

I think some regulation makes sense, but Sydney has without a doubt overshot the mark. I noticed recently that a very high profile tech startup (from SF originally) has [chosen Melbourne over Sydney](#) to open its office in the region (Singapore was also considered). They specifically cited the nightlife as a factor in this decision. I just moved my tech company back from SF also and the main factor that kept me in Sydney as opposed to Melbourne was 2 of the key people I wanted to hire live here and would be unlikely to move. But for this Melbourne was the front runner for us for the same reasons cited above (and below)

When you create overarching, highly specific and somewhat inconsistent rules that affect the freedoms of people who aren't doing anything wrong, the first to leave will be the creative class. The innovation hub Sydney wants to position itself as is specifically in danger and if you think it won't happen here, there is a very strong precedent.

In the last 5 years while I've been in San Francisco, the centrepiece of innovation has moved from Silicon Valley to San Francisco (about 60km further north). This is because the people who start, design, develop and market the technology companies you think of when you think of innovation and disruption (airbnb, uber, etc) are at their core creative people. They want to live in cities that are vibrant, interesting and largely unrestrictive. This was so marked that even the venture capital companies had to open/move their offices in SF itself to be 'relevant' to the tech companies & entrepreneurs they wanted to fund.

Hopefully this perspective, based in personal experience and observation, connects a few dots in your thinking

Happy to talk further if this is useful.

I can be reached on this email

Regards

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