

**Submission  
No 91**

## **MEASURES TO REDUCE ALCOHOL AND DRUG-RELATED VIOLENCE**

**Organisation:** The Spice Cellar  
**Name:** Mr Murat Kilic  
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My name is Murat Kilic, I am the proprietor of The Spice Cellar lounge bar and club located in Martin Place. Our business is an owner operated family run business, run by myself and my partner Rebecca Alder.

As a parent and concerned citizen of Sydney, I too fully support the intention of the government to curb alcohol fuelled violence in our city. I want to see Sydney become a safe place for all people, especially young people to go out and not feel threatened when they walk the streets. However I sincerely believe a blanket law like the lockout laws punishes everyone for the mistakes of a few. Furthermore I believe that the lockout laws are the cause for an unfolding tragedy to Sydney's night economy, its nightlife and its late night culture.

Since I am a music professional, I have been working in the night economy for close to 20 years as a DJ, a promoter and nightclub operator. When Lord Mayor Clover Moore took office and promised to electrify Sydney's late night economy, she inspired people like myself to mortgage my house and start a business like the Spice Cellar. We started the business from our own money ground up, we have invested everything in to this business, it's our livelihood, with we support ourselves and our 3 year old child. We used to employ close to 30 casual and full time staff but we have had to almost halve our workforce since the introduction of the lockout laws. The lockouts have had a catastrophic affect on our business, our revenues have fallen close 40% to unsustainable low levels and we are very close to insolvency. Our venue has a squeaky clean record when it comes to compliance and violence. We have never had a violent incident at our venue and in fact, our venue is a part of the solution to the alcohol fuelled violence problem since it provides a safe place for young people to drink and have a good time without being threatened with violence. I honestly believe that venues that are run prudently like ours a part of the long term solution to the alcohol fuelled violence problem. I find it extremely understand difficult to understand why we have been punished so ruthlessly without even being consulted.

We finally felt like our government understood what we are about, we became self sufficient success business owners and became employers, something we were very proud of. Giving people employment is a truly satisfying part of what we do, so being forced to take people's jobs away from them since the lockouts were introduced has been one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. From students who were working in the bar to finance their studies, to bar backs who were supporting their low income families to the DJs who were working casually to support their artist careers. From a jobs perspective, the hardest hit have most certainly been the low income earners and I fear to see what the statistics will say regarding the contraction of the night economy in Sydney since the lockout laws were introduced.

We have been building our business with care for so long, to have it unravelled in a matter of months by a law which punishes those who are a part of the solution, it all seems misguided and unnecessarily harsh. The lockout laws have simply shifted human traffic from one place to another, out of Kings across and CBD to areas outside the lockout zone. Whilst the government is tightening its laws and trying to reduce the amount of violence on the street, the new laws has spawned a hive of activity in places like the Pymont, the Casino, Double Bay and Newtown. These locales are now the popular alternative due to the lockout of the CBD and King's Cross. The playing field is uncompetitive since venues outside the lockout zone are attracting all of our would be patrons after 130am when it is illegal for us to accept patrons.

We would like to see this fierce lockout end which is slowly destroying a lot of people's lives including mine. We are not looking for sympathy, we would just like to see everyone get their freedom back.