

**Submission
No 24**

MEASURES TO REDUCE ALCOHOL AND DRUG-RELATED VIOLENCE

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Partially Confidential

I had currently turned 18 at the end of last year (2013) - experiencing a short time where there were no lockouts. This gave ample time to plan nights out as me and my friends saw fit, being able to go out to late dinners, concerts and other events before going out.

Not once did staying/going out to an early hour in the morning or deciding to have a drink later on in the night affect anyone around me - it was just me and my friends having fun, not affecting anyone around us.

However - this has since changed as the new lockout laws and alcohol laws have come in. Im not sure exactly how much research those in parliament have conducted within the clubs themselves - but if they have come into the clubs around the times they have decided are 'reasonable' they would have heard the very common 'quick 10 minutes until lock outs' or 'quick, 10 minutes until last drink', which have become a common motto by youth who are out with friends late at night.

This is also usually followed by a bulk impulse buy of several drinks. While a person would have most likely had maybe one or two drinks after this time, due to the restrictions they feel the need to buy 5 and drink them as quickly as possible.

As well others who decide to pre-drink for either social or economic reasons, drinking close to a whole bottle of vodka in 10 minutes, in order to drink it all and still make it in time to get into a club.

While these are events which likely occurred before these restrictions - they have now become a necessity rather than an occasional event.

After this has all occurred - those who are now extremely heavily intoxicated pour into the street, at the same time. These times are viewed by the public as a reasonable time to go home, and that by this time people should be getting home. However standing in kings-cross or the city, early in the morning surrounded by those who are now extremely sick, attempting to miss those who are being sick in the street as the clubs are closed, and waiting in the cold trying to get a cab because i missed the crazy 'last train home' - i do not feel safe. These new alcohol laws, lockout laws, club closing laws - have made me feel more unsafe than i have ever felt.

People do not drink less - they drink more in a shorter space of time as they feel they have too.

People do not go home earlier - they instead go onto the streets and public areas, more intoxicated than they usually would be, and due to the lack of clubs open, they instead get into fights, glass each other, king-hit ('coward-punch') each other, get sick in the streets, fear getting raped, take drugs instead, or find other dangerous and sometimes illegal activities in order to continue having a night out past the hours that the old men in parliament have deemed fit for youth less than half their age. Not to mention the lack of transport that are provided for those in which you are trying to get home early and safe, but instead stopping all trains and buses except for a night rider bus, which often come an hour in between, which does not solve any of these issues. As my father pointed out to me - when there is an event or music festival that runs late, there are hundreds of EXTRA bus services and trains in order to transport these people. The number of people going to these events is quite comparable to the number of people pouring into the city on a friday and saturday night, who all have different directions and times to get home. The number of times i have been forced to pay for an expensive (\$80+) cab ride home, or to walk home by myself from a train station in the dark by myself due to the night riders dropping me no where near my house. Risking my life.

Adolescent teenagers respond to independence, being able to decide when they cant drink, when they can go out and when they can go home. Once they feel they are being restricted, thats when they seek alternate ways to do what they want to do regardless of any restrictions - and this can be clearly seen at any inner-city street with clubs and bars on a friday and saturday night.

Whilst the public may few those who go out late (especially youth) as drunken, rebellious and irresponsible - the majority of those i have seen when i have been out have been quite kind. All the girls who i have met waiting in the lines of girls bathrooms on a night out have been lovely - all complimenting each others looks, talking about the music and the events of that night. People do not go out planning to get that drunk they're sick, or to get into a fight and make stupid decisions. This only occurs when people are restricted - forcing them to drink in shorter periods of time to make lockout/last drinks, pre-drink large amounts due to cab/alcohol prices, getting into fights as there are too many intoxicated people forces onto the packed/unsafe streets after lockouts with no way home. Im not denying there are issues with the club/night scene in Australia, however placing restrictions and attempting to force the solution onto those who wish to do what they want is not the answer.

Perhaps forcing laws created by those who do not actively go out to clubs is not the answer, but instead asking those who go out how they would like to get home, when they would like to drink and providing opportunity instead of restriction may be more beneficial.

Coming from an 18 year old who frequently goes out to clubs around the city and the cross - those going out are not as bad as the news or statistics portray. I have never had an issue with violence or alcohol - however being forced to drink and be in/out of a club at a certain time, and being places onto

the street with many others just looking to have a good time with no time home does not make me feel safe. Perhaps you should look into transport and alternate solutions to help people, not force and restrict them which just causes a rebellion. Thank you.