

**Submission  
No 74**

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

**Name:** Cr Jenny Green  
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## Councillor Jenny Green

Sydney Town Hall  
483 George Street  
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia

GPO Box 1591  
Sydney NSW 2001 Australia

Telephone +61 2 9288 5914  
[REDACTED]

cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au



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The Committee on Law and Safety

### Submission

I am a Councillor on the City of Sydney and a long-time resident of Potts Point / Kings Cross. Prior to the introduction of the new liquor laws I witnessed increasing alcohol related violence and antisocial behaviour in the area when thousands of people descended on the precinct every Friday and Saturday night, many of those having 'pre-fuelled' before coming to the area.

Since the introduction of the 1.30am lockout and cessation of service of alcohol at 3am, the Kings Cross precinct has undergone a dramatic change. There has been a reduction in the number of people aimlessly congregating on the streets and I believe arrests, violent attacks and hospital admissions have significantly reduced since the lockouts.

An independent review of the new measures was scheduled within two years of the introduction of these new laws, I am unclear if this review forms part of this process or if there will be additional reviews.

### Local residents and community

As with any review there are a number of stakeholders who contribute. Many of the business groups have formal structures to provide their feedback (such as the Chambers of Commerce), however the local community and residents often do not have representative bodies. Many voice their concerns and issues to me as their local government representative, and I believe it is important for local residents have the opportunity to contribute to these reviews.

The responses I have received from residents are that the existing measures are welcomed and that these measures have greatly improved their amenity. They have indicated to me that they want these measures to stay in place indefinitely.

I would also like to suggest planning reform that would enable councils to refuse development proposals for large liquor outlets when an area has reached saturation - which the Kings Cross / Potts Point area now has.

In relation to the granting of liquor licenses, currently there is no consultation process with local residents, and the accumulative effect of a large number of licensed premises can

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severely affect residents' amenity. This lack of consultation needs to be addressed, and any liquor licence application should include feedback from local residents.

#### **Local licensed businesses**

Kings Cross / Potts Point businesses have been trying to adapt their business models to cope with the changing environment: some have been more successful than others. The implementation of the new measures were with minimal consultation and little time for the businesses to adjust, and I would suggest that government bodies need to provide greater assistance to local businesses when significant changes like these will impact on businesses.

As a Councillor I have been proactive in assisting businesses by encouraging the administrators of large festivals (City of Sydney & Destination NSW) to consider small scale installations of the festivals in the Kings Cross area. If this eventuates it will assist the business economy and hopefully diversify the entertainment options on offer in the area so that all age groups and families can participate.

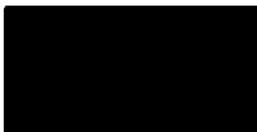
I would suggest reconsideration of the start time to 10pm for operation of ID scanners in establishments that have a dining service. Many licensed establishments whose primary focus is dinner service earlier in the evening are being significantly affected by adverse patron reaction.

#### **Additional review**

I would like to suggest a review be conducted by the CBD Entertainment Precinct Taskforce by end of this year and the results made public. The role of the Taskforce is crucial for bipartisan and collaborative delivery of new policies and reduction of red tape, and I would like to see this Taskforce become a permanent body to keep assessing and developing ongoing strategies for good governance especially related to alcohol availability, night time economies and public safety.

Comprehensive and regular evaluation will facilitate evidenced-based strategies for future development.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Green