

**Submission
No 594**

SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

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Having lived in many cities around the world, including Melbourne, Sydney and Toronto (in Canada), it's been heartbreaking to witness first hand the impact the lockout laws have had on both the nightlife in Sydney, as well as culture in terms of music and events.

There are many people who will be better placed to dive into the economic and social impact, including that the night-time economy is worth more than \$4 billion dollars and the fact that it employs over 35,000 peoples. So rather than spend time talking about something I don't have a deep level of understanding of, I'll give you some of the personal impact that lock-out laws have had on me and those around me:

- The noticeably lower foot traffic around once-popular night time areas, making me feel very unsafe walking home at night (I'm female)
- When family or friends from overseas or interstate want to visit me, we typically meet in Melbourne instead, as the city offers wider variety, late night eating opportunities, culture, music, the list goes on
- Arriving back after 11 from a long-haul flight and feeling very jetlagged, all you want is a nice glass of wine with friends, finding a quiet bar to relax in is impossible as most have to shut by 12
- Having to work late and wanting a glass of wine to help unwind, but bottle shops close before you can leave work
- Friends in bands or who are DJ's now struggle to get work in Sydney, with many having to move to Melbourne or give up on their music career. Imagine the loss of talent that we're seeing due to our inability to find sensible solutions to problems?
- While I don't have access to numbers, it scares me to think of the increasing impact this would have on tourism... from backpackers through to retirees, why would you want to visit a city that is so intent on stopping people from enjoying an evening out on the town?

It blows my mind that a city the size of Sydney cannot find a sensible way to deal with this problem outside of ruining it for everyone. I'm not saying the solution will be easy, but there are so many options and opportunities. Many of which would likely help towards the economy and helping build a lovely and diverse culture in Sydney. Such as:

- Smaller venues that are rewarded with responsible service of alcohol - Greater distribution of venues around the city and surrounds (look at the awful impact lockout laws have had on Newtown for example. Shifting the grossness of Kings Cross versus finding ways to deal with the problem at a cultural level)
- Better public transport that runs for 24 hours to make it easier and safer for people to get home
- Incentives for venues that don't centre around alcohol. Why does Sydney not have a late night cafe culture, and what can be done to help improve this?
- Late night trading for retail - help shift the focus of going out in the night away from just being alcohol related
- The appointment of a Night Mayor to help make sure it's all done to best benefit Sydney from both a social and economic perspective. (Preferably someone with proven experience in a city with a successful night-time economy)

I don't think it's too late to fix Sydney, but I am very concerned about waiting too much longer. This used to be an amazing city in the nighttime, and with a bit of TLC and smarts, could be so again.