

**Submission  
No 595**

## **SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

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## SUBMISSION INTO THE REVIEW OF LOCKOUT LAWS

I am a 47 year old resident of Potts Point. I don't have kids and chose to live in the heart of the city to take advantage of my freedom to enjoy the activities that vibrant city living can offer. I have travelled the world and it is sad that Sydney, with such potential lags so far behind cities like Berlin, New York even Bueno Aires.

I have regularly enjoyed Sydney nightlife in Oxford St, Kings Cross, CBD and Newtown throughout my adult life, going out to clubs or bars a few times a month into the early or even mid hours of the morning.

When the lockouts were implemented, this negatively affected my life in a number of ways.

1. Long time Venues closed that I regularly went to e.g. q bar, Phoenix, spectrum, goldfish, zoo project . Apart from the great enjoyment these places gave me and my friends, these venues regularly hosted and were training grounds for local bands and djs who have gone on to incredible international success e.g. pnau, Hayden James, Alison wonderland
2. Reduction in smaller, new clubbing nights. One of the joys of a really great night out is going to multiple venues/parties. With lockouts, you need to be at your final venue by 130/2pm - otherwise your night out is over. And you want that final venue to be a full vibrant venue, because you can't change your mind and go somewhere else after lockout. What this means is that big well known venues become safe choices (e.g. Arq, ivy etc), but smaller venues and one-off nights are a risky choice - as they may be dead or close early. So when the lockouts started, my friends and I stopped going to the smaller nights and promoters stopped putting these on so much because people stopped going. I miss out on the excitement of going to new and exciting events and Nsw misses out on the innovation and entrepreneurialism that they provide.
3. No exciting new venues. As a long time Sydney resident, it has been terrific to see new venues open over the years (Arq, home, ivy etc)- often with incredible fit outs and sound systems. With the lockout laws in place and together with heavy handed police often threatening owners and promoters with shutdown for violations beyond their reasonable control (a single fight, or occasional drug incidents), there have been very few new venues or fitouts occurring. And this is not surprising, as why would businesses invest large amounts of money in nightlife business when the govt or police can so capriciously change the rules to ruin a business. This has made Sydney a much less exciting place for me.
4. General embarrassment to be living in Nsw - overseas visitors not able to get a scotch on the rocks after midnight, no shots after midnight, not able to enter an empty kings cross venue (say kings cross hotel) after 9pm on a Tuesday night because I forgot my photo card. All of these rules defy common sense (who are they protecting ?) and only hurts consumers and businesses. They also make Sydney a global laughing stock.
5. Loss of jobs in the hospitality and retail industries that develop along side a vibrant night life.
6. I am also concerned that in Potts Point the changes were more about shoring up the monopoly of the Casino and ushering massive dodgy building development, like the recent plans for the Bourbon Hotel which thank goodness were defeated. But its also annoying that people can move next door to the King Cross Hotel and then have the temerity to want the Kings Cross Hotel to shut its balcony for noise. Seriously!

So I strongly urge the NSW Government to remove the lockout laws and replace them with rules that encourage nightlife venues and promoters with certainty and proportionate penalties for any breaches. Punish the criminals, not businesses and people like me.



Rita Mallia

2 July 2019