

**Submission
No 727**

SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

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I am a professional musician who has studied at the Sydney Conservatorium, makes his living from performing and loves more than anything to engage with live music as a consumer. The lockout laws have had a substantial financial, social and personal impact on my life.

When I was studying I was making a living playing at small venues around the city. People were always out eating, drinking and spending their hard earned cash. It is not an exaggeration when I say that almost all of the venues I used to play are now gone or cannot support live music anymore due to decreased foot traffic.

I travel a lot for work and even abroad I get people questioning me about these lockout laws. I have so many friends who have moved city, state and country in order try and make a living. When an American says to you 'What the hell is going on with your politics? And what's with those lockout laws', you know there is something hugely wrong.

I understand that people can still go out and have a good time until 1.30 and stopping entry from that point might not sound like a big deal but it has totally soiled Sydney's reputation as a city where anything interesting happens! Honestly, it's so disheartening for a city that used to be, even in my lifetime, an amazing place to live, work and recreate.

People now just assume that nothing is on during the evening hours and as such, don't even try to go out and look. It's a shame that I am surprised when a restaurant has live music or even that a venue has remained open for more than a year. The amount of revenue being lost by not taking advantage of the night economy is staggering. Melbourne is miles ahead of us in this arena and that's exactly why so many of my colleagues have already moved there.

These are things the city is screaming out for

- Running trains and other public transport for 24 hours on Friday and Saturday nights, like in London and Melbourne;
- Strengthening the management of liquor licences to provide incentives for good management and penalties for poorly managed venues; and

encouraging venues across the city to avoid concentrations in areas like Kings Cross or the city centre.

- A night time major
- More NSW cultural funding
- Greater education towards the systemic problem of cultural binge drinking that plagues our society.

When you have to apologise to visitors about the lack of interesting things to do in your city, when the reputation of Sydney as a fun place has been ruined and when a city becomes so expensive that you cannot live it anymore, then it's time to change.

Listen to the people who work in this industry. The people who's families rely on night time work to put food on the table. Politicians keep going on about the 'Fair go'. The people who work in the night time industry (musicians, techs, entertainers, hospitality staff, drivers, the list goes on) are some of the hardest working people you will ever meet. Often working 2 or 3 jobs to raise a family. By ripping the cultural heart out of Sydney you are not giving these people a fair go. In an already stagnant economy, this is your chance to kick start a new era of growth in the night time sector.