

**Submission
No 556**

SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

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The Lockout Laws and over-policing of Sydney and NSW is an absolute joke. The over-reaching and intimidating tactics by NSW Police are disgusting and has destroyed not only destroyed our once vibrant city, but the livelihoods and careers of hundreds of thousands of people who worked in the hospitality industry and the city's soul.

The Lockouts laws were a poorly thought out, knee-jerk reaction to the two instances of a 'king-hit'. While these were of course tragic, punishing an entire industry, city and state for the actions of TWO people is a farce. Especially when there were literally hundreds of other policies that could've allowed the cities nightlife to continue but reduce the amount of violence and these incidents occurred BEFORE lockout laws would've been active. These include free public transport out of Kings Cross, 24/7 transport out of the city, staggered taxi change over times, etc. etc. The laws were nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt by Mike Baird to demonise those that nejoy going out at night while appealing to his hyper-conservative and religious voter base, many of which don't even LIVE in Sydney nor have they been out past 9pm since 1993.

Like many NSW politicians, he did not listen to any organisations or industry experts and made this decision on his own as a blatant PR stunt and vote grab. Thanks to this, Sydney is an international joke. I'm embarrassed to have international visitors in our once amazing and vibrant city and have to explain to them that they can't have a whiskey neat after a certain time. When they want to check out another bar after 1.30am, I have to explain that we can't leave. They ask why such backwards rules and I have no answer for them but simply apologise. The supposed 'nightlife hub' is dead and if you dare venture anywhere NEAR Kings Cross or any of other areas where remanence of Sydney's nightlife exists, you are constantly met with intimidating police presence that make you feel like a criminal for simply being out after dark.

Police constantly searching and interrogating innocent people after forcing their dog to sit on command just to justify their ENORMOUS budget. When I ask police why they do this, they explain they don't want to but must hit their quotas. It's become nothing more than a revenue raising exercise. The NSW Police were considered part of the community and were truly out there to look after us and protect us from harm. Now they exist as Gladys's attack dogs, policing us from ourselves and raising revenue at ANY opportunity they can. If you didn't destroy a \$16 BILLION industry you wouldn't need to try and re-coup this income via ridiculous fines and infringement notices.

I've seen friends and families have their entire life's work destroyed as their bars, restaurants and late-night eateries had to close due to absolutely no patronage. Think about it - when you go out to dinner, the chefs, waiters and other staff that serve you ALL NIGHT might not finish work until 1am or later (after they've cleaned up). If they just want to go to a bar close to their workplace, if it's after 1.30am it's 'too bad'. They've spent the entire night serving you and now they can't kick back and enjoy some time with THEIR friends because of this draconian law.

Let's not forget the Casino. THE MOST VIOLENT VENUE IN SYDNEY is given a free pass simply because it rakes in so much money and pays \$500m casino licence annually. It's blatant, disgusting corruption designed to funnel MORE income into one of the most DESTRUCTIVE pastimes - gambling.

If politicians ACTUALLY cared about our healthy and safety they'd apply these laws to the Casino where HUNDREDS of reports don't get filed and hidden from view. If not, they'd implement other policies to increase people's safety.

WE'RE NOT FCKING CHILDREN. STOP TREATING AS US SUCH.