

**Submission  
No 175**

**INQUIRY INTO THE MUSIC AND ARTS ECONOMY IN  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Mr David Glover

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David Glover

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The Committee for the Music and Arts economy in New South Wales,

**A bit about me:**

- I am an avid fan of live and local music. I get out to live bands more than 100 times a year. I am lucky that I get to see some world class musicians that are Australian and living locally.
- I also manage a talented band of teenagers who have performed on some big stages and that has made me aware of the challenges and roadblocks that face musicians in general and youth performers in particular.

**My experiences:**

- The demise of established venues has been a great concern to me, especially when the government could have played a more active role in keeping them alive. Whether it be noise complaints, reliance on pokies, rezoning or lockout laws. There are numerous occasions where the authorities could assist in keeping music venues alive and in my opinion they haven't.
- Seeing a band of four 16 year olds being told to hide in the green room when police entered the premises of Sydney's most iconic music venue before the band were due to hit the stage. This is despite the licensing laws clearly stating that minors are allowed in the bar if they are performing. So many licensees are ignorant of the laws and take the easy option of saying no to young performers.
- No violence. Over the last 10 years I have been to thousands of gigs. I can't recall a single fight yet the government and media spread the message that it is "dangerous out there" and you would be safer staying at home than going out of a music venue.
- Musicians being totally devalued, being asked to play for free to "get exposure" while everyone else associated with the event is getting paid. One example I will never revisit is the Bastille festival at Circular Quay, my youth band played for free, to hundreds of people, they rehearsed twice, carted a hundred kilos of equipment worth over \$10k into the city, I paid a fortune to park, all for the organisers to cut the set time in half and provide atrocious sound. Everyone else, organisers, security, bar staff, ... are all being paid.
- My son, one of the band I manage, knows many musicians and understands how fickle the industry is and how difficult it is to make a living, regardless of how talented you might be. He has no expectation that he will continue to perform.

**What I think needs to change:**

I am sure many other submissions will cover the benefit to society of vibrant arts and music community so I will leave that to others.

I would like to make note that the world wide trend is towards increased leisure time and this needs to be factored into any plans - to be clear people are going to have more leisure time and will be looking for more opportunities to either express their creativity or to consume the fruits of other people's creativity.

I recognise that this is a multi-faceted problem to solve and my instinct is that we need to break the problem down and address the individual components.

But first to the headlines:

- If you are serious about music I believe we need a dedicated Minister. I have watched the Arts Ministry bounce around as a last thought For example, how does it make sense that Arts ts paired with resources, minerals and energy? Well it doesn't make sense. I believe we need a dedicated portfolio for arts and music - get a young MP who has a active social life and put them in charge. Just don't ask them to manage gambling or mining as well.
- Treat musicians like small business. That is what they are. Every government talks about their support for small business so include musicians.

Other suggestions:

- Support existing venues who are dealing with noise complaints from new neighbours
- Support rezoning initiatives that are trying to preserve areas for creativity. For example, the Marrickville creative hub. In the seventies the focus on was on preserving green space, we now need to focus on preserving or establishing creative space.
- Decrease the value of pokie machines to venue operators. The direct negative impacts on society of gambling is clear. The indirect impact on the music industry is not so clear but it is just a material. The government should learn to live without gambling revenue and stop supporting gambling.
- Similarly no government money should be directed to supporting or encouraging overseas acts to visit. Meanwhile make it a condition that they use local performers as their support acts.
- Make all venue operators aware of the rules when it comes to youths / minors performing.
- Eliminate lockout laws for music venues.
- Remove ID requirements for music venues. Late last year I was in Kings Cross to see a band, a >70 year old friend who is also a blues promoter, was with me and was refused entry because his pensioner card was not considered adequate identification!

I am aware of many other ideas out there and as mentioned don't consider this an easy problem to solve. I know that it will take time and effort, but I also know that with the right support from government we can make the change.

Regards

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